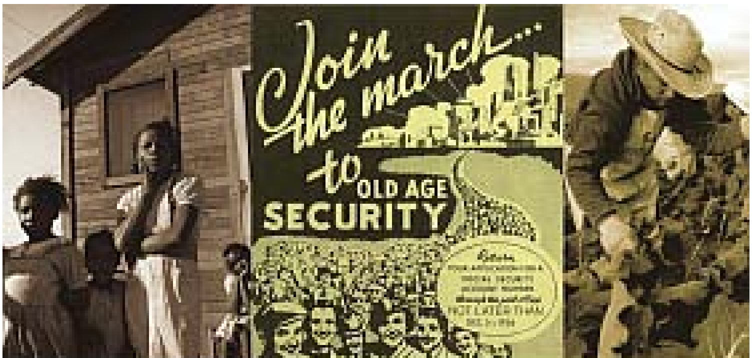

POVERTY
IN THE UNITED STATES
AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HISTORY, POLITICS AND POLICY

Gwendolyn Mink & Alice O'Connor

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An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, and Policy

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Contents

VOLUME 1

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Contributors

Emily K. Abel
University of California, Los Angeles
School of Public Health
Los Angeles, California

W. Andrew Achenbaum
University of Houston
Graduate School of Social Work
Houston, Texas

Martha Ackelsberg
Smith College
Department of Government and Women's Studies Program
Northampton, Massachusetts

Vivyan C. Adair
Hamilton College
Department of Women's Studies
Clinton, New York

Randy Albelda
University of Massachusetts Boston
Economics Department
Boston, Massachusetts

Ruth M. Alexander
Colorado State University
Department of History
Fort Collins, Colorado

Rebecca A. Allahyari
School of American Research
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Barbara Bair
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

John Baranski
Fort Lewis College
Department of History
Durango, Colorado

Lucy G. Barber
California State Archives
Sacramento, California

Rosalyn Baxandall
State University of New York, Old Westbury
Chair and Professor of American Studies
New York, New York

Daniel E. Bender
University of Waterloo
History Department
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Jared Bernstein
Economic Policy Institute
Washington, D.C.

Dwight B. Billings
University of Kentucky
Department of Sociology
Lexington, Kentucky

Elizabeth Blackmar
Columbia University
Department of History
New York, New York

Fred Block
University of California, Davis
Department of Sociology
Davis, California

Charles C. Bolton
University of Southern Mississippi
Department of History
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Eileen Boris
University of California, Santa Barbara
Women's Studies Program
Santa Barbara, California

Heather Boushey
Center for Economic and Policy Research
Economist
Washington, D.C.

Rose M. Brewer
University of Minnesota–Twin Cities
Department of African American and African Studies
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Evelyn Z. Brodkin
University of Chicago
School of Social Service Administration
Chicago, Illinois

Dorothea Browder
University of Wisconsin–Madison
History Department
Madison, Wisconsin

Michael K. Brown
University of California, Santa Cruz
Department of Politics
Santa Cruz, California

Lisa D. Brush
University of Pittsburgh
Department of Sociology
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Heather E. Bullock
University of California, Santa Cruz
Psychology Department
Santa Cruz, California

Steven B. Burg
Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
Assistant Professor of History
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

Jay Carlander
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Mina Carson
Oregon State University
Department of History
Corvallis, Oregon

Sarah Case
Independent Scholar
Santa Barbara, California

Nancy K. Cauthen
Columbia University
National Center for Children in Poverty
New York, New York

Noel A. Cazenave
University of Connecticut
Department of Sociology
Storrs, Connecticut

Grace Chang
University of California, Santa Barbara
Women's Studies Program
Santa Barbara, California

Christine N. Cimini
University of Denver
College of Law
Denver, Colorado

Aixa Cintron
Russell Sage Foundation
New York, New York

Elisabeth S. Clemens
University of Chicago
Department of Sociology
Chicago, Illinois

Daniel M. Cobb
D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History
The Newberry Library
Chicago, Illinois

Sheila D. Collins
William Paterson University
Political Science Department
Wayne, New Jersey

Susan A. Comerford
The University of Vermont
College of Education and Social Services
Burlington, Vermont

Ruth Crocker
Auburn University
Department of History/Women's Studies
Auburn, Alabama

Lisa A. Crooms
Howard University
School of Law
Washington, D.C.

Martha F. Davis
Northeastern University
School of Law
Boston, Massachusetts

Ronald L. F. Davis
California State University, Northridge
Professor of History
Northridge, California

Adela de la Torre
University of California, Davis
Chicana/o Studies Program
Davis, California

Maritza De La Trinidad
University of Arizona
Department of History
Tucson, Arizona

Mary Jo Deegan
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Department of Sociology
Lincoln, Nebraska

Karen deVries
University of California, Santa Cruz
History of Consciousness
Santa Cruz, California

Bonnie Thornton Dill
University of Maryland
Department of Women's Studies
College Park, Maryland

Matthew Diller
Fordham University
School of Law
New York, New York

Diane Dujon
Massachusetts Welfare Rights Union; Survivors, Inc.
University of Massachusetts/Boston
Boston, Massachusetts

Cynthia M. Duncan
The University of New Hampshire
Director, The Carsey Institute
Durham, New Hampshire

Peter Edelman
Georgetown University
Law Center
Washington, D.C.

Anne B. W. Effland
Economic Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

Peter Eisinger
Wayne State University
College of Urban, Labor, and Metropolitan Affairs
Detroit, Michigan

Ronald D. Eller
University of Kentucky
Department of History
Lexington, Kentucky

Jennifer L. Erkulwater
University of Richmond
Political Science Department
Richmond, Virginia

Carol Faulkner
State University of New York, College at Geneseo
Department of History
Geneseo, New York

Cara A. Finnegan
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Department of Speech Communication
Urbana, Illinois

Gordon M. Fisher
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
Washington, D.C.

Sheldon Friedman
AFL-CIO
Department of Public Policy
Washington, D.C.

Jennifer Frost
University of Auckland
Department of History
Auckland, New Zealand

Lynn H. Fujiwara
University of Oregon
Women's and Gender Studies Program
Eugene, Oregon

Mary O. Furner
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Herbert J. Gans
Columbia University
Department of Sociology
New York, New York

Kent B. Germany
University of Virginia
Miller Center of Public Affairs
Charlottesville, Virginia

Michele Estrin Gilman
University of Baltimore
School of Law
Baltimore, Maryland

Daniel P. Gitterman
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Assistant Professor of Public Policy
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

John M. Glen
Ball State University
Department of History
Muncie, Indiana

Jonathan A. Glickstein
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Gertrude Schaffner Goldberg
Director, Doctoral Program, School of Social Work
Adelphi University
Garden City, New York

Michael Goldfield
Wayne State University
College of Urban, Labor, and Metropolitan Affairs
Detroit, Michigan

Joanne L. Goodwin
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Department of History
Las Vegas, Nevada

Linda Gordon
New York University
Professor of History
New York, New York

Dawn M. Greeley
Independent Scholar
Silver Spring, Maryland

James N. Gregory
University of Washington
Department of History
Seattle, Washington

Timothy A. Hacsi
University of Massachusetts Boston
Department of History
Boston, Massachusetts

Jonathan L. Hafetz
Gibbons, Del Deo, Dolan, Griffinger & Vecchione
John J. Gibbons Fellow in Public Interest and Constitutional Law
New York, New York

David E. Hamilton
University of Kentucky
Department of History
Lexington, Kentucky

Joel F. Handler
University of California, Los Angeles
Richard C. Maxwell Professor of Law and Professor of Policy Studies
Los Angeles, California

Bradley A. Hansen
Mary Washington College
Department of Economics
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Susan B. Hansen
University of Pittsburgh
Department of Political Science
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Cynthia Harrison
George Washington University
History Department/Women's Studies Program
Washington, D.C.

Heidi Hartmann
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Washington, D.C.

R. Allen Hays
University of Northern Iowa
Director, Graduate Program in Public Policy
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Kara Heffernan
Center for Neighborhood Technology
Chicago, Illinois

G. Mark Hendrickson
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Ruth Wallis Herndon
University of Toledo
Department of History
Toledo, Ohio

Frank Tobias Higbie
The Newberry Library
Dr. William M. Scholl Center for Family and Community History
Chicago, Illinois

Thomas M. Hilbink
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Department of Legal Studies
Amherst, Massachusetts

Christine Firer Hinze
Marquette University
Associate Professor, Christian Ethics
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Beatrix Hoffman
Northern Illinois University
Department of History
DeKalb, Illinois

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman
San Diego State University
Department of History
San Diego, California

Douglas Imig
University of Memphis
Hooks Institute of Political Science
Memphis, Tennessee

Maurice Isserman
Hamilton College
Department of History
Clinton, New York

Thomas F. Jackson
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
History Department
Greensboro, North Carolina

Dolores E. Janiewski
Victoria University of Wellington/Te Whare
School of History, Philosophy, Politics, and International Relations
Wellington, New Zealand

Volker Janssen
University of California, San Diego
Department of History
San Diego, California

Laura S. Jensen
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Department of Political Science
Amherst, Massachusetts

Ollie A. Johnson III
Alfred University
Department of African American Studies/Social Sciences
Alfred, New York

Julia S. Jordan-Zachery
Howard University
Department of Political Science
Washington, D.C.

Michael B. Kahan
Stanford University
Program on Urban Studies and the History Department
Stanford, California

Elif Kale-Lostuvali
University of California, Berkeley
Department of Sociology
Berkeley, California

Devesh Kapur
Harvard University
Department of Government
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Michael B. Katz
University of Pennsylvania
History Department
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lisa A. Keister
The Ohio State University
Department of Sociology
Columbus, Ohio

Grant H. Kester
University of California, San Diego
Department of Visual Arts
San Diego, California

Jennifer Klein
Yale University
Department of History
New Haven, Connecticut

Eric Klinenberg
New York University
Department of Sociology
New York, New York

Anne Kornhauser
Princeton University
New York, New York

Robert Korstad
Duke University
Sanford Institute of Public Policy
Durham, North Carolina

Isaac Kramnick
Cornell University
Department of Government
Ithaca, New York

John Krinsky
The City College of the City University of New York
Department of Political Science
New York, New York

Kenneth L. Kusmer
Temple University
Department of History
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Robert J. Lacey
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Political Science Department
Amherst, Massachusetts

Molly Ladd-Taylor
York University
Department of History
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Leslie Leighninger
Arizona State University
School of Social Work
Tempe, Arizona

Sherry Leiwant
Legal Momentum
NOW Legal Defense
Senior Attorney
New York, New York

Lisa Levenstein
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
History Department
Greensboro, North Carolina

Nelson Lichtenstein
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Ann Chih Lin
University of Michigan
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and Department of Political Science
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Kriste Lindenmeyer
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Department of History
Baltimore, Maryland

Diane Lindstrom
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Department of History
Madison, Wisconsin

Kathryn Lofton
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Department of Religious Studies
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Theodore J. Lowi
Cornell University
Government Department
Ithaca, New York

Kristin Luker
University of California, Berkeley
Sociology and the Program in Jurisprudence and Social Policy, Boalt Hall School of Law
Berkeley, California

Nancy MacLean
Northwestern University
Department of History
Evanston, Illinois

Lisa Magaña
Arizona State University
Department of Chicana/o Studies
Tempe, Arizona

Lawrence H. Mamiya
Vassar College
Religion Department and Africana Studies Program
Poughkeepsie, New York

Anne M. Manuel
University of Michigan
Political Science Department
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Jason D. Martinek
Carnegie Mellon University
Department of History
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Carol Mattingly
University of Louisville
Department of English
Louisville, Kentucky

Leslie McCall
Rutgers University
Department of Sociology and Department of Women's and Gender Studies
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Carole R. McCann
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Women's Studies Program
Baltimore, Maryland

Martha T. McCluskey
State University of New York, Buffalo
Law School
Buffalo, New York

Elaine McCrate
University of Vermont
Economics Department and Women's Studies Department
Burlington, Vermont

Richard W. McHugh
National Employment Law Project
Staff Attorney
Dexter, Michigan

Amy E. McLaughlin
University of Maryland
Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity
College Park, Maryland

Suzanne Mettler
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University
Department of Political Science
Syracuse, New York

Sonya Michel
University of Maryland
Department of American Studies and Department of History
College Park, Maryland

Cheryl M. Miller
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Department of Public Policy
Baltimore, Maryland

Jennifer Mittelstadt
Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, New York

Sandra Morgen
University of Oregon
Center for the Study of Women in Society and Department of Anthropology
Eugene, Oregon

Andrew Morris
Union College
Department of History
Schenectady, New York

Robyn Muncy
University of Maryland
Department of History
College Park, Maryland

Premilla Nadasen
Queens College, City University of New York
History Department
Flushing, New York

Nancy A. Naples
University of Connecticut
Sociology/Women's Studies
Hartford, Connecticut

Immanuel Ness
Brooklyn College, City University of New York
Department of Political Science
New York, New York

Kenneth J. Neubeck
University of Connecticut
Professor Emeritus of Sociology
Storrs, Connecticut

Julie A. Nice
University of Denver
College of Law
Denver, Colorado

Carl H. Nightingale
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Associate Professor of History
Amherst, Massachusetts

Erin O'Brien
Kent State University
Department of Political Science
Kent, Ohio

Ruth O'Brien
The City University of New York
Political Science Program, the Graduate Center and Government Department, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
New York, New York

Edward T. O'Donnell
College of the Holy Cross
Department of History
Worcester, Massachusetts

Margaret Pugh O'Mara
Stanford University
Department of History
Stanford, California

Laury Oaks
University of California, Santa Barbara
Women's Studies Program
Santa Barbara, California

Acela Minerva Ojeda
University of California, Riverside
Sociology Department
Riverside, California

Paul Ong
University of California, Los Angeles
School of Public Policy and Social Research
Los Angeles, California

Richard Parker
Harvard University
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jacqueline K. Payne
Assistant Director of Government Relations
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Washington, D.C.

Diana M. Pearce
University of Washington
School of Social Work
Seattle, Washington

Jamie Peck
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Department of Geography
Madison, Wisconsin

Stephen Pimpare
Yeshiva University
New York, New York

Frances Fox Piven
The City University of New York
The Graduate Center
New York, New York

Anthony M. Platt
California State University, Sacramento
Division of Social Work
Sacramento, California

Janet E. Poppendieck
Hunter College, City University of New York
Department of Sociology
New York, New York

Steven Pressman
Monmouth University
Department of Economics and Finance
West Long Branch, New Jersey

Wendell E. Pritchett
University of Pennsylvania
Law School
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Karen Quintiliani
California State University, Long Beach
Department of Anthropology
Long Beach, California

Ellen Reese
University of California, Riverside
Department of Sociology
Riverside, California

Belinda I. Reyes
University of California, Merced
Merced, California

Ann M. Robbart
University of Massachusetts Boston
Public Policy/McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies
Boston, Massachusetts

Dorothy E. Roberts
Northwestern University
School of Law
Chicago, Illinois

David Brian Robertson
University of Missouri, St. Louis
Department of Political Science
St. Louis, Missouri

David A. Rochefort
Northeastern University
Department of Political Science
Boston, Massachusetts

Rebecca K. Root
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Political Science Department
Amherst, Massachusetts

David Rosner
Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Departments of History and Sociomedical Sciences
New York, New York

Elizabeth Sanders
Cornell University
Department of Government
Ithaca, New York

Sanford F. Schram
Bryn Mawr College
Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

Bruce J. Schulman
Boston University
Department of History
Boston, Massachusetts

Danielle S. Seiden
University of California, Los Angeles
Center for Community Health
Los Angeles, California

Amanda I. Seligman
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
Department of History
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Andrea Y. Simpson
University of Richmond
Department of Political Science
Richmond, Virginia

Peter Siskind
Princeton University
History Department
Princeton, New Jersey

Anna Marie Smith
Cornell University
Government Department
Ithaca, New York

Jason Scott Smith
Harvard University
Harvard-Newcomen Fellow
Boston, Massachusetts

Steven Rathgeb Smith
University of Washington
Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs
Seattle, Washington

Rickie Solinger
Independent Scholar
New Paltz, New York

Joe Soss
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Department of Political Science
Madison, Wisconsin

Mark J. Stern
University of Pennsylvania
Department of Social Work/Department of History
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Landon R. Y. Storrs
University of Houston
Department of History
Houston, Texas

Dara Z. Strolovitch
University of Minnesota
Department of Political Science
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Matthew A. Sutton
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Heidi J. Swarts
Syracuse University
Department of Political Science
Syracuse, New York

Dana Takagi
University of California, Santa Cruz
Department of Sociology
Santa Cruz, California

Lorrin R. Thomas
Rutgers University
Department of History
Camden, New Jersey

Ann R. Tickamyer
Ohio University
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Athens, Ohio

Chris Tilly
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Department of Regional Economic and Social Development
Lowell, Massachusetts

David Torres-Rouff
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of History
Santa Barbara, California

Joe William Trotter Jr.
Carnegie Mellon University
Department of History
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Laura Tuennerman-Kaplan
California University of Pennsylvania
Department of History and Political Science
California, Pennsylvania

Lauri Umansky
Suffolk University
Department of History
Boston, Massachusetts

Abel Valenzuela Jr.
University of California, Los Angeles
Cesar E. Chavez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction in Chicana/o Studies and Department of Urban Planning
Los Angeles, California

Dennis J. Ventry Jr.
New York University
School of Law
New York, New York

Udaya Wagle
University of Massachusetts Boston
McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies
Boston, Massachusetts

Mark R. Warren
Harvard University
Graduate School of Education
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jeffrey B. Wenger
University of Georgia
Department of Public Administration and Policy, School of Public and International Affairs
Athens, Georgia

Robert Whaples
Wake Forest University
Department of Economics
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Diane Winston
University of Southern California
Annenberg School for Communication
Los Angeles, California

Ann Withorn
University of Massachusetts Boston
College of Public and Community Service
Brookline, Massachusetts

Preface

Understanding the history of poverty in the United States necessarily takes us to many facets of the American past. Central, of course, are the diverse experiences of the many people who have lived in and struggled against poverty. But also important are the economic transformations, the social movements, the competing ideas and ideologies, and the political debates and policy decisions that have made poverty—and the struggle against it—integral parts of the broader American experience since the colonial era. The history of poverty, then, is about the rise of laissez-faire capitalism and efforts to tame and redress its inequities. It is about the divisions of power and prejudice that have systematically denied opportunity to people of color, women, and the unorganized working classes—and the ongoing efforts of civil rights, feminist, welfare rights, and labor activists to challenge those divisions through legislation, litigation, and grassroots political organizing. It is about the creation and evolution of a national system of government-subsidized social welfare in the twentieth century, backed by a combination of reform coalitions, social scientific ideas, and shifting value commitments. And it is about such critical historical developments as the Great Depression of the 1930s, the War on Poverty of the 1960s, and the so-called end of welfare of the 1990s, which have brought issues of poverty and social welfare—however momentarily—to the top of the nation's political agenda.

In *Poverty in the United States: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, and Policy*, we offer the elements of such a multifaceted perspective, presenting the dynamics of poverty and social welfare in broad historical context while providing information about more specific political, social, and policy developments. The encyclopedia opens with a series of chronologically organized essays, written by leading historians of their respective eras, that discuss the occurrence, perceptions of, and changing political and moral responses to poverty as part of the broad sweep of American history. It then turns to more topical, alphabetically organized entries that identify, describe, and interpret the core issues, events, debates, concepts, social and political movements, legislative developments, and social experiences that have shaped poverty and social welfare historically and that continue to influence policy debates in the twenty-first century. Drawing on the expertise of historians, political scientists, economists, legal scholars, and social welfare practitioners, these entries illustrate the value of interdisciplinary analysis and interpretation. Interspersed throughout are excerpts from key primary source documents, including speeches, congressional testimony, court decisions, and photographs, that both illustrate and influence changing popular perceptions of poverty and the poor.

We are fortunate to have had guidance from editorial advisers Frances Fox Piven and Eileen Boris in conceptualizing and compiling this encyclopedia. Their advice, along with the knowledge of our many contributors, has been instrumental in making *Poverty in the United States* both a comprehensive resource and a gateway to deeper inquiry about issues of enduring historical and contemporary significance.

Gwendolyn Mink and Alice O'Connor

A Chronological Introduction in Five Essays

Colonial Period through the Early Republic

The history of poverty and social welfare in the United States dates back to the country's origins and has been deeply ingrained in the American experience ever since. Indeed, poverty and social welfare are closely linked to the major political, economic, and social developments that shaped the nation throughout its history.

In early American history, poverty grew out of the processes of immigration, conquest, and enforced labor that accompanied the European settlement of North America and the founding of the United States. At the same time, and even as the experience of poverty became more widespread, this period laid the groundwork for the idea of America as a "land of plenty" and the home of a revolutionary ideology. Future generations would invoke that ideology to protest enduring social and economic inequalities and the poverty conditions they produced.

In retrospect, colonial America sometimes appears to have been a golden era, when communities were marked principally by hope and opportunity. Colonial promoters in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe certainly strove to give that impression. In his *Discourse on Western Planting* ([1584] 1877), English social theorist Richard Hakluyt argued for colonizing North America in part to provide a place where the children of "the wandering beggars of England" might be "unladen" and "better bred up . . . to their own more happy state." In his *Historical and Geographical Account of the Province and Country of Pensilvania* (1698), Gabriel Thomas described the newly established colony as a place where "poor people (both men and women) of all kinds, can here get three times the wages for their labour they can in England or Wales"; furthermore, he noted, food was plentiful and cheap, children were born "beautiful to behold," and inhabitants "live friendly and well together." The hopeful image persisted. In 1773, American printer John Greenleaf produced a one-volume abridgment of *Burn's Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer,* an English legal manual for local magistrates. For his American version, Greenleaf eliminated all the information "of no possible use or importance to us in *America,*" including the entire 250-page entry on "The Poor."

Greenleaf had seriously miscalculated what might be useful to American officials, for the American colonies never knew a time without poverty. In every seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European-American community, officials were elected or appointed to oversee the poor. In fact, when Greenleaf printed his abridged volume, poverty was on the rise everywhere in North America, most especially in Greenleaf's town of Boston (Nash 1979, 312–338). Philadelphia, too, was overwhelmed; one scholar has estimated that during the latter part of the 1700s, at least 15 percent of Philadelphia's inhabitants were unable to provide themselves with the necessities of life (Alexander 1980, 9). Certainly, many colonists did realize the promise of prosperity in the expanding economy of North America, but many others saw no part of it. Poverty and poor relief wore familiar faces.

Poverty came to colonial America in different forms. Some immigrants, desperate to leave behind the problems of their European hometowns, spent all they had to cross the ocean, hoping to eke out a living in a new place. Often the pioneering settlers faced starvation in the first years; the mortality rate would have been even higher if the Native Americans had not assisted these fledgling communities with food and instructions in living off the land. Many Europeans who could not otherwise afford the journey sold themselves into indentured servitude in exchange for ocean passage; some were actually kidnapped and forced into bondage. Still other immigrants were African captives, forcibly transported across the Atlantic by European slave traders and subjected to poverty conditions as slaves in colonial America; these unwilling arrivals constituted a majority of *all* North American immigrants in the eighteenth century. Further, many of the original Native American inhabitants were impoverished by European settlement. Decimated by warfare and disease and surrounded by European houses, farms, and fences, surviving Native people were forced to abandon traditional occupations of hunting, fishing, and agriculture. In a story repeated many times over, Native people living "behind the frontier" struggled to feed their families and eventually resorted to menial labor in the households of European colonists or peddled traditional craft items door to door.

As European settlement expanded and colonies matured, poverty increased. Acquiring land—the most reliable way of achieving economic independence in a predominantly agrarian society—became harder and harder, both for new immigrants and for the original settlers' grandchildren and great-grandchildren trying to farm successively smaller inheritances, and some of them migrated to more-populous towns in search of a living. At the same time, voluntary European immigrants streamed into port towns in North America seeking work. Accordingly, poverty became concentrated in such places as Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, and Charleston. As poverty grew over the course of the eighteenth century, so did the gap between rich and poor: While wealthier colonists purchased material goods as evidence of their rising prosperity and elevated social standing, the low status of the poor became ever more noticeable and was marked by their lack of material goods.

An early American dictionary (1789) defined the poor as "those who are in the lowest rank of the community, those who cannot subsist but by the charity of others" (quoted in Alexander 1980, 8). A thin line separated these charity-dependent poor from those commonly referred to as "the poorer sort"—independent laboring people who barely scraped by and whose conditions of life would today be considered below the poverty level. The poorer sort lived in an insecure environment where menial jobs brought little hope for advancement and where wages seldom stretched to provide "competent" food, clothing, rent, firewood, and medical care. An otherwise minor misfortune could instigate a crisis for these "near poor" and prompt a desperate application for public relief. Relief provided the necessities of life, but it also brought the humiliation of official oversight; the poor had "overseers," much as servants and slaves did. Being poor meant social and economic dependence.

In terms of occupations, "the poorer sort" and "the poor" tended to be tenants of small or unproductive farms; skilled artisans such as shoemakers, tailors, and coopers; unskilled laborers, such as seasonal farmhands, domestic day servants, washerwomen, and woodcutters; sailors; bound servants; and slaves. The last two groups are usually considered a separate category of unfree labor, but even though masters were obligated to provide the essentials of life, many servants and slaves experienced daily life much as the poor did: owning no property, living in straitened material circumstances, and having no expectations of future advancement.

Certain groups were particularly at risk of becoming impoverished: African Americans, Native Americans, women without spouses or partners, children, the elderly. These people were especially vulnerable to outside forces—economic downturns, weather disasters, poor harvests, wars, disease epidemics—and had few resources to cope with such personal difficulties as disabling injuries, handicaps, chronic illnesses, alcoholism, death or desertion of spouse or parent, or the birth of a child out of wedlock.

Recent scholarship has demonstrated that race and gender were key factors in early American poverty. African slavery and the military conquest of Native America stripped people of color of property and effectively barred them from receiving training in skilled labor, the two main avenues of economic advancement. Women, too, were economically disadvantaged. Work was highly gendered in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America, and male tasks were valued significantly more than were female tasks. Women customarily received half to two-thirds what men did for an equivalent amount of work. The legal principle of coverture diminished married women's property rights by transferring control of the property to their husbands. In addition, pregnancy and child rearing complicated women's work lives; having babies made women vulnerable as wage earners precisely when they needed extra income to feed extra mouths. Widows with young children and mothers of "bastard" children swelled the relief lists in every community and were especially overrepresented among the poor in colonial Philadelphia (Wulf 2000, 153–179).

Poverty was a grinding experience in early America. Although charity or relief was available to some on a limited basis, most had to work or starve. They worked at the most tedious and grueling tasks—the jobs that no one else wanted to do—in their neighbors' households, fields, workshops, and wharves. Poor women helped with the grain harvest and picked fruits and vegetables in agrarian areas; in every community, they did the unpleasant "housewifery" tasks such as spinning thread, cleaning chamber pots, and nursing the sick. Poor men chopped wood, mended equipment, swept streets, and carried loads. Their hard labor often resulted in injury or illness, but they had no emergency funds to tide them over when ill health, bad weather, or the capriciousness of employers halted their labors.

The scanty wages such labor earned were never enough to provide a "sufficiency" of life's essentials. The poor lived in rented houses or rooms within other people's homes, in quarters that were often small, cramped, in bad repair, and sparsely furnished. There was seldom enough firewood for adequate cooking and heating. Meals were frequently thin, unsatisfying, and less than regular. The make and material of their clothing and shoes (if they had them) effectively communicated their low status. Their possessions were few and unremarkable.

Such bleak conditions—overwork, inferior housing, inadequate food and clothing—made the poor vulnerable to illness. Unsanitary living conditions and poor hygiene resulted in infections and chronic problems such as worms. Living in close quarters in cramped housing spurred the spread of contagious diseases like smallpox, which periodically swept through North America in the 1700s, and yellow fever, which arrived in port cities in the 1790s. The search for work also put the poor at a disadvantage, since such migrations exposed them to different disease environments. Working in wet and icy weather in insufficient shoes and clothing increased the risk of respiratory ailments, frozen feet and fingers, and broken bones from falls. In eighteenth-century Philadelphia, the poor were far more likely than the upper classes to fall ill and die (Smith 1990, 55–56).

Given all these disadvantages, it is not surprising that the family lives of the poor were often as fragile as their jobs and their health. The search for work divided spouses from each other and parents from their children. A high mortality rate left holes in family units. Conflict and violence were not uncommon in financially struggling households. Wives were abandoned by their husbands; children were deserted by their parents. The grim realities of living in poverty in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries stand in stark contrast to the hopeful predictions of colonial promoters and to Greenleaf's cheerful assumption that laws governing the poor were of "no possible use or importance" in colonial America.

Just as poverty had many faces, so social welfare took many forms in colonial America. Family offered the first line of defense against poverty, and in most cases relatives would naturally turn to each other for support. Reluctant kin—particularly negligent adult children of elderly parents—were prodded along by magistrates, who were empowered by colonial laws to require parents and grandparents (if they had the ability) to take care of their children and grandchildren. Beyond family, friends and neighbors might assist a struggling household, providing necessities and services in moments of distress. Religious groups often assisted the poor in their number: The Jewish community in colonial Newport had a synagogue charity fund to help members in distress; Dutch Reformed congregations in New York maintained alms chests; the Philadelphia Society of Friends opened an almshouse for needy Quakers in 1713; itinerant Anglican minister George Whitefield established the Bethesda Orphanage for Boys in Savannah, Georgia, in 1740. In the most populous communities, charities and mutual aid societies also sprang up in the eighteenth century: The Philadelphia Hospital was opened in 1751, expressly to minister to the poor who were ill.

Public support was the last resort, both by custom and as a matter of law. Every colony had some system of social welfare that was fashioned after English law and precedent. English parliamentary legislation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (referred to collectively as the "poor laws") codified and regularized the patchwork of relief that had sprung up after the dissolution of the manors, monasteries, and guilds that had formerly given aid to those in distress. These poor laws made local government responsible for poor relief—to be funded out of the general tax or by means of a special poor tax—and theoretically ensured that all inhabitants would receive the necessities of life in times of crisis. The poor laws equipped magistrates with three principal ways to address poverty: Warning out removed needy people who legally "belonged" to another community. Orphan or pauper apprenticeship placed poor children in labor contracts with masters who provided daily maintenance in exchange for work. Poor relief (sometimes termed "outdoor relief") gave money, goods, and services directly to poor people or placed such persons with caretakers who were repaid out of the public purse.

No common system of relief existed in colonial America. Rather, each British North American colony enacted legislation that made poor relief a local (town or county) matter. In 1642, Plymouth colony enacted a series of statutes that provided for the "poore" in the towns where they resided. English colonists fashioned a poor-relief system in New York as soon as they took control of the colony from the Netherlands in 1664; by 1696, they had opened a hospital for ailing paupers. South Carolina passed its first poor-relief act in 1695; Pennsylvania, in 1706; and North Carolina, in 1749. Colonial legislation also stipulated who would be responsible for the poor. Sometimes specially appointed or elected overseers, guardians, or wardens of the poor took on this task separately; other times it was part of the larger responsibilities of selectmen, aldermen, church wardens, vestrymen, or justices of the peace, depending on the political and judicial structure of the colony.

Official managers of the poor stepped in when all other supports failed. In some cases, the tax assessors might "consider the poor" and grant exemptions to struggling widows, for example. In other cases, the poor were allowed to graze a cow or plant a vegetable garden on public land. When such indirect support proved insufficient, officials arranged for the direct supply of necessities such as rent money, firewood, food, blankets, or even a small stipend.

As the practice of warning out indicates, receipt of relief hinged on whether the needy person had a legal settlement in the community and was entitled to public tax money. If poor people moved about in search of work, they would have to return to their place of legal residence for help when they fell into need. Some of the warned out were too ill or too recalcitrant to leave on their own and had to be removed by constables. Countless poor people were moved from one local jurisdiction to another in colonial America; those whose place of residence could not be identified were usually put to work in a labor contract or in a workhouse. The time and money officials invested in this sorting and transporting was considered to be worth the effort, since communities thereby avoided the greater cost of supporting dependent people over the long term. The system of warning out or removal was practiced everywhere in colonial America, but with special vigor in New England during the eighteenth century. It fell particularly hard on people of color and on women without spouses, who constituted the majority of those removed (Herndon 2001, 16–20).

Binding out poor children in apprenticeship indentures was the most common method local authorities employed to address the widespread problem of child poverty. As early as the 1630s, orphan courts in Maryland, for example, began binding out unfortunate youngsters. Every colony followed suit. In orphan or pauper apprenticeship, illegitimate and destitute children—as well as orphans—were taken from their surviving parents and raised to adulthood (usually defined as twenty-one for boys and eighteen for girls) in more-prosperous households. Town or county magistrates negotiated terms with potential masters. Generally, the master was bound to provide the child with all the necessities of life as well as basic literacy education and training in some manual skill; the child was bound to live with, obey, and labor for the master. Work training was the form education took for most children in colonial America and constituted practical preparation for adulthood. A master who would stand in the role of parents and see that a child learned basic husbandry (boys) or housewifery (girls) skills, as well as reading and writing, effectively removed that child from the list of the town's poor and saved the taxpayers a considerable sum.

Warning out and binding out cost the community something in the way of fees to administrators and constables, but most poor-relief funds were spent for "outdoor relief"—money, goods, and services that went directly to the poor or to those responsible for keeping them. Although outdoor relief sometimes involved direct payment, it was also paid to people who served as individual keepers or caretakers by boarding or providing goods and services to the poor. A wide network of local citizens usually participated in this enterprise. Some were paid for making clothes and shoes for the poor, others for providing food or firewood, repairing their houses, nursing them when they fell ill, and digging their graves. Most often, such third-party payments went to those who took in the poor as lodgers, daily providing food, shelter, and heat and making the poor person part of the household.

Group institutions for the poor appeared quickly in colonial America, though only in the most populous towns and only tentatively in the early years. Boston had its first almshouse in 1660 and opened its first workhouse in 1739. New York City had a poorhouse by 1700 and constructed a municipal almshouse in 1735. Philadelphia tried a series of group institutions in the early 1700s and finally constructed a "bettering house"—a combined workhouse and almshouse—in 1766. Charleston built a workhouse in 1734 and opened an orphan house—the first municipal orphanage in the country—in 1792. Even where workhouses or almshouses were constructed, however, a secondary system of outdoor relief continued to exist. For the most part, the poor were treated on a case-by-case basis and according to the needs and interests of the community throughout the colonial and Revolutionary eras.

Because each case was addressed individually, receipt of support depended in part on the way the needy person presented himself or herself to those authorities who would judge the circumstances. In most places, colonial magistrates distinguished between the "worthy" and "unworthy" or the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. A person was more likely to merit support if he or she displayed an attitude of deference toward authorities. Those who received relief were expected to be grateful and submissive toward their betters.

Overseers (the "betters") desired that the provision of relief be as brief as possible, that it be as cheap as possible, and that recipients contribute to their support through their own labor. Most relief was intended as a temporary measure to deal with temporary circumstances: a laborer sidelined by a broken leg; an unmarried mother unable to work during the final stage of pregnancy and the "lying-in" after delivery. Long-term, continuous support of individuals—usually because of totally disabling injury or handicap—was much less common. Public relief was also meager, designed to provide only the absolute essentials. Officials were constantly on the lookout for less-expensive ways to keep the poor. Sometimes poor people were moved from one caretaker to another as overseers struck a better bargain. In Charleston in the early 1700s, potential caretakers publicly bid against each other for the business of taking in the sick poor; the lowest bidder won (Bellows 1993, 5). Later in the century, many New England communities turned to similar publicly held "poor auctions" to dispose of indigent persons to the keeper who offered the cheapest rate.

As such public "shows" indicate, being on relief was not a private matter. Taxpayers expected an accounting of how their money was being spent, and in most colonies before the Revolutionary era, those receiving relief were required to wear on their clothing a special badge bearing the letter *P* or some other symbol (*NY* in New York). Even though it was not private, however, relief was very personal. The names and faces of the poor were usually known to magistrates in agrarian communities; in more-populous towns, magistrates sometimes required an endorsement of relief applications so that the poor person could demonstrate a personal link to the community.

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, poverty steadily rose in North America. As the American economy expanded and became more industrialized, wealth became increasingly stratified and poverty became more obvious and more entrenched, particularly in the most populous towns. Accordingly, poor-relief costs climbed throughout the eighteenth century. This was particularly evident in such places as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, but even in the countryside—where poverty and vagrancy were considerably less frequent—poor relief rose over the course of the 1700s. During the pinched years following the Revolutionary War, taxpayers urged officials to find cheaper methods of caring for the poor, and numerous agrarian communities experimented with workhouses and poorhouses. Not until the nineteenth century did poor farms and almshouses come to dominate the landscape, but the shift had already begun decades before.

As poverty and poor relief changed, so did attitudes toward the poor. In some regions, the language that officials used to distinguish among the poor underwent its own transformation: from "worthy" versus "unworthy" poor to "industrious" versus "idle" poor or "respectable" versus "improper" poor. Increasingly, the idea that the poor were dangerous and prone to vice and crime crept into the language of the overseers of the poor.

Whatever benefits the Revolution brought to the middling sort, it did little for the material or even the political standing of the poor. Everywhere, overseers began to characterize the poor less often as unfortunate neighbors and more often as an undifferentiated mass of strangers with dangerous tendencies. The early decades of the nineteenth century saw efforts to crack down on or even to eliminate poor relief in many localities, to limit the sense of community responsibility for the needy, and to restrict assistance to the "deserving" poor. Simultaneously, treatment of the poor became increasingly racialized. Children of color were more likely than white children to be bound out in post-Revolutionary Rhode Island, Maryland, and Virginia, for example, and the contracts for children of color in all regions promised them less-adequate work training, literacy education, and eventual payment for labor. Adults of color were disproportionately subjected to warning out and removal in New England, especially after the Revolutionary War. Separate systems of charity and public relief for people of color were put in place: Charleston's Orphan House, for example, admitted only white children (Bellows 1993, 121). In the northern states, gradual emancipation laws and the forces of Revolutionary ideology prompted many masters to free their slaves, but people of color left slavery with no resources to establish themselves and found themselves relegated to the lowest rungs of society. The colonial economic system that had put women and people of color at a disadvantage intensified during the Revolutionary era. The Revolution did not improve the lot of the poor; rather, it cemented them as an integral part of American society. And yet, even as poverty grew more visible and widespread during the early nineteenth century, the Revolution left an ideological legacy of individual rights and social equality that would fuel labor, civil rights, women's rights, and antipoverty activism for generations to come.

Much work remains to be done to uncover the experience of the poor in early America. We know more about poverty in the largest towns than in the rural areas, especially in the southern colonies. Further, despite the concerted efforts of recent scholarship to tell the story of the "inarticulate," we still know more about poor-relief administrators and caretakers than we do about those who lived in poverty. This is largely a problem of sources. The well-to-do and the powerful were the most literate colonists and had the greatest opportunity to leave a written record. The poor and the powerless, far less literate, had little opportunity to tell their side of the story. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible to reconstruct the lives of the poor by carefully piecing together public and private records, and such research promises exciting results. It will give us a much needed "underside" perspective on the relationship between established communities and the poor and help us find the answers to some elusive questions. Who were the poor in different communities? Did women dominate relief lists in the countryside? Were the poor treated differently from one town to another? Could they expect greater humanity in one place and greater brutality in another? Were relief officials motivated primarily by economic concerns? Overall, was poor relief in early America a relatively benign or a relatively pernicious system? The stories of individual poor people will help us gain a more balanced perspective on these important questions.

Ruth Wallis Herndon

See also: Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Indentured Servitude; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Relief;

Slavery; Vagrancy Laws/Settlement Laws/Residency Requirements

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An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith

Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of society, which he has in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally, or rather necessarily leads him to prefer that employment which is most advantageous to the society.

Every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. . . . He intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention.

Source: Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Book 4, Chapter 2.

Nineteenth Century

The history of poverty and inequality in the United States during the nineteenth century can be approached through thinking contextually of four key writings—both emblematic and consequential—that flanked the century like conceptual bookends. At the start, reaching back to the era of the American Revolution, are Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776). At the end, providing traction both on what had gone before and on what lay ahead, are the Omaha Platform of the People's Party (1892) and a volume of economic theory called *The Distribution of Wealth*, written by a Columbia University economics professor, John Bates Clark, in 1899.

The Declaration of Independence announced political commitments that inspired protests against poverty and inequality throughout the nineteenth century: the "self-evident" truths that all humans are created equal, that they are endowed with "inalienable" rights to liberty and property. In republicanism, the dominant political language of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the link between liberty and property was a core value. Drawing as well on a

Omaha Platform of the People's Party of America, July 4, 1892

In addition to the following ringing declaration, the Omaha Platform of the National People's Party endorsed a series of reforms, including the progressive income tax, direct election of senators, the secret ballot, and the eight-hour workday—all eventually legislated, albeit after years of political organizing and struggle.

Assembled upon the 116th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the People's Party of America, in their first national convention, invoking upon their action the blessing of Almighty God, puts forth in the name and on behalf of the people of this country, the following preamble and declaration of principles:—

The conditions which surround us best justify our co-operation; we meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the Legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The people are demoralized; most of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places to prevent universal intimidation and bribery. The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of the capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right to organize for self-protection, imported pauperized labor beats down their wages, a hireling standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down, and they are rapidly degenerating into European conditions. The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up the fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind. . . . From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires.

Assembled on the anniversary of the birthday of the nation, and filled with the spirit of the grand general and chief who established our independence, we seek to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of "the plain people," with which class it originated. We assert our purposes to be identical with the purposes of the National Constitution, "to form a more perfect union and establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity." We declare that this Republic can only endure as a free government while built upon the love of the whole people for each other and for the nation; that it cannot be pinned together by bayonets; that the civil war is over, and that every passion and resentment which grew out of it must die with it, and that we must be in fact, as we are in name, one united brotherhood of free men.

Source: As reprinted on the Web site History Matters.

liberal principle most clearly outlined by John Locke, that humans were entitled to mingle their labor with nature and take possession of its fruits, this linkage of liberty and property expressed a broad consensus among nineteenth-century Americans that labor created all value and that the preservation of political liberty would depend, if not upon a precise distributive equality, then at least upon a very wide dispersal of small holdings of property in the form of shops and farms and upon the rejection of monopoly and privilege (Huston 1998).

Just as the Declaration of Independence attacked monarchical society and the corruption it fostered, so Smith's *Wealth of Nations* attacked mercantilism (policies that limited what colonies could trade and produce, aimed at maintaining a favorable balance of trade for the mother country) for stifling initiative. Smith offered economic liberty—including what today would be referred to as "free trade"—as a far better route to individual and national wealth. This founding text of modern liberalism drew together Scottish Enlightenment strands of reasoning that endowed men with acquisitive instincts and imagined a modern world in which competition would remain the norm. The government it described would be restrained by laissez-faire, but through improvements such as roads and harbors and institutions such as the rule of law and widely accessible education, it would nevertheless provide the wherewithal for those lower down the social order to participate in accumulation. There was an undeniable and politically fruitful tension between Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and the Declaration of Independence and between their visions of a good society. Over time, the Declaration of Independence was imitated by disenfranchised women, indebted or landless farmers, exploited workers, and oppressed people of color in countless petitions against the denial of their liberty, whereas Smith's *Wealth of Nations* became (with some injustice) the bible of nineteenth-century antistatist individualists. Yet the two documents together captured the promise of the Enlightenment in America for the downtrodden poor.

Inequality and poverty persisted throughout the entire colonial period, most acutely for the earliest settlers and for those in various categories of unfree labor (indentured servants and slaves, who made up about one-fourth of the non-Native population, and married white women), who were legally barred from claiming the fruits of their toil. Though poverty was increasing in the major seaboard cities immediately prior to the Revolution, most white immigrants to the American colonies almost certainly escaped worse privation and significantly greater inequality in Europe (Williamson and Lindert 1980). During the framing of the Constitution, the Founding Fathers were pressed by the "people out of doors" to remember not only the "ladies" but urban wage workers in places such as Boston and Philadelphia. Victorious in the early political debates, Jeffersonians and Madisonians overcame both foreign and domestic opposition to implement policies intended to provide the material basis for liberty and for their distinctive version of a republic: a youthful society in which industrious white males could become proprietors, whereas the "dark satanic mills" would remain in old Europe. Success for this republican vision would preclude the most pernicious European forms of lifelong poverty, but for whites only and excluding "servants" and women, groups who—not coincidentally—were also excluded from politics. Sustaining a virtuous citizenry required opportunity, the rationale for buying Louisiana in 1803. And in the early decades of the nineteenth century, Jeffersonian Republicans such as Albert Gallatin, National Republicans such as John Quincy Adams, and Whigs such as Henry Clay did not hesitate to recommend lavish government programs to build up the infrastructure for (white, male) liberty (McCoy 1980).

We lack an adequate statistical basis for hard generalizations about the precise extent of poverty in the nineteenth century. Only late in the century did public and private social investigators begin to produce reliable studies of household budgets and to estimate how much income a family needed to rise above poverty—about $800 a year at the turn of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, historians have been able to locate major ideological shifts and key turning points in political economy that altered the character, extent, and cultural construction of poverty. Of the ideological shifts, the most important were (1) a powerful tendency in the early decades of the century to picture poverty as a product of individual moral failings, and (2) as part of the emergence of the "social question" late in the century, a multilayered reframing of the poverty problem in historical, environmental, and structural terms.

Rooted in Puritan moralism, the Protestant work ethic in the early and mid-nineteenth century defined earthly success as evidence of

God's favor—the product of industry, good character, and thrift—and poverty, by contrast, as the result of laziness and sin. Help for the poor, provided largely by churches or by community-based private charities, thus concentrated largely on minimally meeting paupers' most immediate needs for food and shelter, while "friendly visitors" saw to their moral improvement. Although this view of poverty was an improvement on the centuries-old view that "the poor would always be with us," it typically framed the poor as "other" and often invoked moral language to justify enormous wealth. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Andrew Carnegie still preached a "Gospel of Wealth" that claimed the biblical role of "good stewards" for wealthy philanthropists, whom he insisted would make better use of the profits of industry than average Americans could do for themselves (Ward 1989; Cawelti 1965).

The success myth did not go unchallenged. A populist countercurrent criticizing the moneyed class as predatory monopolizers was always present, nourished by a sturdy republican distrust of concentrated wealth that culminated in the populist movement of the 1890s (McMath 1993; Kazin 1998). In the final decades of the century, the Social Gospel movement and the new social sciences redefined the worsening urban poverty of the Gilded Age as the product of environmental factors. They cited as causes of urban poverty overcrowding, poor sanitation, bad housing, filthy streets, unhealthy and dangerous workplaces, and a consequent loss of adult workers' wages to sickness and disability, which also blighted childhood by sending thousands of children into factories. These evils could be remedied not mainly through moral reform, they argued—though that would help—but through market regulation and through a new social contract based on a heightened sense of social solidarity. A major catalyst for this new view came with the building up of a "New Liberalism" by social investigators and social scientists in the 1880s and 1890s to replace key principles of classical, laissez-faire, Smithian liberalism. Exploitation of labor, rising class conflict, and devastating business depressions made it difficult to defend classical teachings about the beneficence of competition, a natural harmony of interests between capital and labor, and a natural equilibrium between supply and demand. Rather than blaming poverty on failings of the poor, these social theorists cited several structural problems of capitalism, particularly the cyclical economy, chronic unemployment, low wages, and barriers to effective working-class organization, as the most persistent causes of poverty, more significant even than the selfishness condoned in Social Darwinism (Furner 1993; O'Connor 2001).

In the nineteenth-century American political economy, three critical turning points dramatically affected the character, numbers, and status of the poor: (1) the Market Revolution of the 1820s–1850s, (2) a major episode of "capital deepening" (that is, vastly more investment capital was accumulated and applied to production) following the Civil War, and (3) a series of cyclical depressions—1873–1877, 1884–1886, 1893–1897—that threw as much as 40 percent of workers in numerous industries and cities out of work, all within a long deflationary period in the U.S. economy during the Gilded Age.

The Market Revolution

The first of these turning points was the Market Revolution, which arrived along with political democracy in America. Not an instantaneous thing, this "revolution" was, rather, an elongated process of eliminating older cultural and economic strategies that had privileged family and community subsistence over production of goods for sale, and of pulling ever-greater numbers of Americans into producing for the market—a process that continued both before and after the Civil War as the "Transportation Revolution" reached ever-remoter regions, annihilating the barriers of time and distance. Improvements in transportation and communication, technological advances, and wider availability of credit all accelerated the rise of manufacturing known as the Industrial Revolution. Trends in U.S. wealth accumulation and poverty rates during this period appear to coincide with what is predicted by the famous Kuznets hypothesis: There will be less inequality in the early stages of industrialization, rising inequality in the middle segment of a modernization process, and declining inequality during later stages of growth. Yet neither the Market Revolution nor the Industrial Revolution, whose early stages in the United States came in the early nineteenth century, should be taken as components of an *inevitable* modernization process (Sellers 1991; Kuznets 1989).

Rather, both these "movements"—and the decades-long increases in poverty and inequality they engendered—should be seen largely as complex outcomes of deliberately chosen policies and of laws and institutions designed to implement these policies. By eliminating imprisonment for debt, easing bankruptcy, lifting common-law tests for intrinsic fairness in contracts, and shifting many of the costs of development from entrepreneurs to the quiet members of the community, the legal system in the early republic encouraged speculation and protected wealth accumulation. Although the social and ideological sources of Jacksonian political economy were more democratic, its consequences tended to reinforce this entrepreneurial bias in the law. Jacksonian Democrats, holding slim majorities through most of the late antebellum years, organized a political reaction against more-interventionist and more communally oriented approaches to achieving the public good represented by National Republicanism and Whiggery, which were thought by their plebeian critics to favor elites and to promote monopoly. Reacting as well to a depression in the 1830s that forced several state governments to default on bonds they had sold to invest in canals and railroads, the states withdrew from investing in "internal improvements." A number of policy innovations—most important among them, President Andrew Jackson's veto of a major national road project, general incorporation, tariff reduction, elimination of the Second Bank of the United States, and removal of Native Americans remaining east of the Mississippi—inaugurated what became the closest thing to a laissez-faire era the United States had yet known (Horwitz 1977).

Though the Declaration of Independence had pronounced the right to life, liberty, and property *inalienable*, the realities of the Market Revolution were otherwise. By definition, a market society is one in which all the factors of production—capital, land, and labor—are for sale. The one glaring exception—recognized by the Constitution and protected by major sectional compromises—was slavery, which was rapidly disappearing in the North but was thriving in the South even after the slave trade ended in 1808. In slavery, it was the laborer as chattel who was for sale. In the case of wage workers, it was their labor time that was for sale to the highest bidder: Beyond the small protection provided by journeymen's associations and the few antebellum labor unions, the price of labor was determined by supply and demand. To the extent that yeoman culture survived in rural America, it retained the labor of farm women and children within a system of rural patriarchy. Otherwise, every factor of production, including most particularly the labor of the working poor, was in fact alienable.

Although the Jacksonian "era of the common man" provided new opportunities for young men on the make, it was not an easy time for the poor. Industrialists seeking to control the moral environment of factory towns and a massive religious revival shifted attitudes toward poverty, as we have seen, blaming individual failings and stigmatizing the poor. Americans paid close attention to the English poor law debates of the 1830s that led to repeal of the Speenhamland system, in which local governments gave relief to their own local poor to supplement low wages. Critics had charged that this poor law was holding workers in the countryside where they were no longer needed and keeping wages low. Changes in U.S. poor laws also weakened social provision, forcing more of those on public relief either to obtain aid in county poorhouses rather than "out of doors" or to depart for the cities. These changes in attitude and policy ushered in what historians have called "the era of the poorhouse." Those most likely to be poor were children, women alone, and those of either sex too old or ill to work. A cult of domesticity that prescribed a separate sphere of home and family for respectable women did not apply to the growing numbers of single and married women who worked outside the home, in factories or as domestic servants. As craftsmen's workplaces shifted away from the home to factories and shops, the unpaid household labor of women was devalued. Many immigrants, including more than 2 million of the Irish poor, arrived in the United States between 1815 and 1850, in time to build the canals and railroads that fed the Market Revolution (Johnson 1978; Boydston 1990).

For white males, including these immigrants, "free labor" ideology expressed the republican ideal of propertied independence as the basis of political liberty from the American Revolution through the antebellum era. Abraham Lincoln, speaking in 1858 to the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society on the eve of the Civil War, rejected what he called the "mudsill theory" that most men were doomed to labor for others all their lives as either hirelings or slaves. In America, Lincoln insisted,

> the prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another beginner to help him. This, say its advocates, is *free* labor—the just and generous and prosperous system which opens the way for all, gives hope to all, and energy and progress and improvement of condition to all. (Lincoln [1858] 1953, 478–479)

Lincoln's moving expression captured the social and cultural aspirations of northerners before the Civil War, and the democratization of American free society did indeed give (healthy, white) males a larger measure of control over their economic, political, and social lives than similarly situated men anywhere else.

Yet this reality was complicated by a growing concentration of income and wealth and by barriers to opportunity and mobility based on gender, ethnicity, race, and class. In large northeastern cities, for example, the top 1 percent of the population owned one-fourth of the wealth in 1820, and by 1850 that same top 1 percent held more than half the total wealth. Inequality varied by region, and adult males had a better chance to acquire in rural America than in the cities. Women were denied not only the vote but equal access to education and the professions. Married women lost their legal identities under a legal principle known as coverture, which awarded their property (including wages they earned) and full control of children to husbands, conditions protested in the Seneca Falls Declaration of 1848 (which recognized as self-evident "that all men *and women* are created equal"). Women working in northeastern textile factories became strikers against wage cuts. Only one-fourth of southern whites owned slaves, but the mudsill formed by slavery had economic and psychological value for many whites. Slaves were whipped, penned, sexually exploited, and sold at auction like animals, protected somewhat from even worse treatment by their growing market value. Historians have debated the political economy of slavery without agreeing on how much slaves received of what their labor produced. But although some were allowed to keep their own gardens or to hire out for wages, it seems quite certain that most lived only a little above subsistence level. With the hardening of slavery between the 1830s and 1850s, conditions worsened for the vast majority of African Americans, not only slaves but free Blacks. Expansion of slavery, especially in the prosperous 1850s, produced a massive forced internal migration of Blacks torn from their families, away from the seaboard states, into the Deep South and Texas. Conditions for slaves in rice and sugar culture and in the breaking of new lands for cotton were exceptionally hard (Pessen 1990; Roediger 1999).

Ironically, as antislavery hardened into abolitionism in the 1830s–1850s, it narrowed the meaning of freedom for working-class whites as well by defining the difference between liberty and slavery as the right to sell one's labor. This reframing of true freedom as freedom of contract, which carried over into the Reconstruction after the Civil War for Blacks as well as whites, represented quite a different vision from the ideal of free laborer as independent proprietor held by Jefferson and Lincoln. Indeed, it offered some superficial credence to an antebellum southern critique of the northern capitalist labor system by slavery apologists such as George Fitzhugh: that wage labor was in fact a pernicious form of "wage slavery," in which there was no security in illness or old age.

Capital Deepening and Industrial Transformation in Post–Civil War America

The second major turning point in the nineteenth-century history of poverty was the Civil War, which had vast implications for the future not only of freed Blacks but of white wage workers and farmers and which spurred changes in the political economy that led to a period of rapid industrialization in the war's aftermath. In political power at last after years of minority status, a Whig, nationalist, development-oriented component of the Republican Party implemented policies that significantly advanced the mechanization of production for a national mass consumer market. These measures included funding the war through bonds and greenbacks, creating a national bank that drew savings away from the countryside and into major money centers, returning to a policy of high tariff protection that prevailed until the end of the century, and granting massive subsidies for transcontinental railroad construction that—along with a liberal land distribution policy through the Homestead Act—encouraged (mostly white) settlement of the trans-Mississippi West and the final removal of the Plains Indians. Crucially, shortly after the war, the Treasury redeemed war bonds at full face value, in gold, including large numbers of bonds that the original owners had resold at depreciated prices to wealthy investors. This windfall profit to the investor class sparked an extraordinary twenty-year period of capital deepening that drastically altered power relations in the United States. Outstripping all competitors, U.S. capital formation as a percentage of gross national product (GNP) doubled between the 1850s and the 1880s—a onetime event in U.S. history, bringing the United States from fourth to first place in industrial production by the turn of the century (Williamson and Lindert 1980).

The victory achieved by the Republican Party and the growth that followed put two crucial elements of the economy, southern plantation agriculture and northern manufacturing, into play. Power and poverty are always related, as was certainly true in the South following the war. Newly freed African Americans sought land of their own, as a fulfillment of the promise of emancipation, and wanted to work as "free labor," whereas planters, who retained almost all of their landholdings, wanted to return Blacks to the land in gangs, now as wage labor. Black resistance and determination to work as family units, the devotion of the Radical Republicans to a fuller meaning of "liberty," and intervention by the Freedmen's Bureau provided some assistance in resettling Blacks and forcing planters to sign labor contracts. Indeed, the Freedmen's Bureau, which also helped displaced whites, can be seen as an early U.S. experiment in social provision, and as such it was attacked by both southern and northern conservatives and was soon terminated. As long as southern state legislatures—some with numerous Black members—were in Republican hands, they shifted taxation in ways that aided poor white farmers and spent more on education and infrastructure, raising the social wage a bit. Radicals in Congress such as Thaddeus Stevens clearly intended a major social and political reconstituting of the South that would make each southern state a genuine republic. But Stevens's plan—which envisioned confiscating and redistributing the largest rebel-owned plantations as a way of breaking planter power and empowering a biracial class of poor and middling southern yeomen—was not enacted. When the Republican Party finally abandoned Reconstruction in the 1870s, Blacks were left to wonder what kind of freedom they had achieved. For most, it was not freedom but peonage, a status little better than slavery in which Black sharecroppers and tenant farmers were tied to the land by debt. Most southerners were poorer for decades after the Civil War. Cotton production did not return to prewar levels until the turn of the century. For white and Black farmers generally, rates of tenancy rose well into the twentieth century, whereas diets deteriorated and diseases such as hookworm and pellagra became common among the rural poor (Foner 1990).

Conditions in the South well illustrate the extent to which poverty and dependency were created by law and politics. The same was true for other groups in postbellum American society. Politics and policy had a good deal to do with turning four other groups of Americans into poor people in the Gilded Age. Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner coined this term for the period running from the 1870s through 1900, when great fortunes were made in the expanding urban-industrial economy. During these years, law and policy coincided to turn Indians, immigrants, unskilled male and female workers, and many children into poor people. Western Indians, largely nomadic, were herded onto reservations where they were expected to take up farming—alien to their culture—without adequate supplies of fertile land, seed, machinery, tools, and education. The goal of even their friends among whites was to convert them from tribalism to liberal individualism. The 1887 Dawes Severalty Act aimed to accomplish this by dividing tribal lands into individual allotments, most of which in short order passed into the hands of white settlers. Lacking skills (and, like Blacks in schools such as Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute, taught skills that were increasingly irrelevant to the machine age), most Indians ended up in poverty.

The poverty of a large fraction of European immigrants, virtually the entire immigrant class after adoption of policies that excluded nearly all Asians, was also in significant part the result of policy. The era's trade unions typically called for immigration restriction. Gilded Age capitalists, engaged in recruiting and disciplining an industrial workforce, favored and obtained virtually unrestricted immigration. To be sure, unrestricted immigration was modulated by the business cycle, but it was generally productive of a surplus pool of unskilled labor willing to begin work for wages at close to subsistence level. For whites who were not labeled in some way as demonstrably criminal or "defective," the United States had essentially open borders until the 1920s. Though the American standard of wages was higher than what comparable work earned in urban-industrial Europe, for most of the "new immigrants" from southern and eastern European peasant backgrounds, this was hardly a relevant comparison. Unions in some cases succeeded in artificially restricting the labor supply by using work rules or job actions to control hiring. Against such efforts at "worker control," capitalists implemented, if not the entire package of scientific management outlined in the 1890s by Frederick Taylor, at least the part that involved relentless de-skilling. In the Chicago meatpacking industry, for example, the labor of a skilled butcher was subdivided into seventy separate tasks, easily taught to raw immigrants standing each day outside the factory gates. Courts and police assisted an aggressive policy of union busting that drastically weakened worker power between the 1880s and the turn of the century. Strikes and class violence in those years were typically about wage cuts (for example, the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and the Pullman Strike of 1894), working hours (for example, the eight-hour movement that provided the context for the bombing in Haymarket Square in Chicago and the subsequent execution of four anarchists), or abrogation of a wage contract (for example, Carnegie Steel's contract abrogation leading up to the Homestead Lockout of 1892), or they were called in sympathy with other strikers (for example, the Pullman Strike led by Eugene V. Debs). Judges used a new version of the equity injunction to stop 4,300 strikes between 1880 and the passage of the Norris–LaGuardia Act in 1932. Little wonder that the most powerful union, the American Federation of Labor, saw little hope in government regulation. Gilded Age courts struck down sixty labor laws, including laws regulating sweatshops, in which women, children, and entire families labored in the most dangerous and unsanitary conditions in an effort to produce a "family wage." By this time, the frontier, officially closed in 1890, no longer provided a safety valve (Montgomery 1979; Barrett 1987).

Law, policy, and culture divided the rural poor and the urban working classes, preventing them from forming a united, class-based "poor people's party" in the Gilded Age. At a time when farmers were pummeled by falling prices for staple crops, high-cost credit, and monopoly prices for shipping and machinery, consistently deflationary Republican monetary policies produced an unexpected gain in real wages for steadily employed skilled workers. (Wages tend to be "sticky," falling or rising more slowly than prices.) In the 1880s, organized skilled workers were able to deprive capitalists of profits they had expected to reap from capital deepening—thus the escalation of union busting, and particularly the capitalist assault in the 1890s against industrial unions.

Capitalist Crisis and the Making of the "Social Question"

Capitalists were also periodically caught in overproduction crises, the root cause of the recurrent depressions, and they turned for relief toward various forms of combination into ever-bigger firms in the core industries, culminating with the Great Merger Movement of 1898–1902. For students of poverty in the nineteenth century, overproduction is also a major part of the explanation of a very high incidence of desperate poverty despite rising real wages, middle-class affluence, and a burgeoning consumer culture. Industrial workers were constantly victims of unemployment and underemployment. With little public social provision for unemployment or injury, loss of wages threw many families into poverty. Social provision remained insufficient, a matter largely for private charities organized along religious and ethnic lines, which attempted in the scientific charity movement to apply means and morals testing as a condition of relief but which also tried to improve the administration of relief and to provide a better knowledge base for it (Katz 1983; Ward 1989).

For most Americans, the most striking and frightening social patterns of the Gilded Age were the rise of monopoly, the worsening of conditions in urban slums, and the increasing frequency and violence of clashes between workers and capital. The existing two-party system seemed unable to cope with these issues, calling forth efforts on the part of groups outside the system of courts and parties to understand and resolve them. Conceiving it broadly, Social Gospelers, social workers, social investigators, social theorists, academic social scientists, critical journalists, realist writers, settlement house workers, female reformers, and eventually progressive political leaders began to address what—lumping all these issues together—was called the "social question." Social Gospelers such as Walter Rauschenbusch led a movement that accused the churches of being too soft on capitalists and doing too little to help the poor, who should not be blamed as individuals for their poverty. Henry George turned the American gaze toward the way speculators skimmed off socially created wealth, and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* charted the route to a utopian cooperative commonwealth. By the final decades of the century, intellectual, social, and political movements had begun to address this social question, with consequences that remind us of the cultural strains reflected in the tensions between the Declaration of Independence and Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

Beginning in the 1880s, reformist new liberals aggressively took on the task of charting the nature of the new economy. A platform text (one that sets the terms for subsequent discussions) of the 1880s, Henry Carter Adams's "Relation of the State to Industrial Action," zeroed in on ways the classical liberal reliance on competition could no longer be trusted as a sure guide to policy. First, Adams pointed to the appearance of a new kind of monopoly, the product not of favoritism and fraud, as had been the case in the era of the American Revolution, but, rather, of efficiencies—economies of scale—that could be gained by very large business firms in so-called natural monopolies. More important for the study of poverty, Adams also pointed to the tendency for increased competition to push wages and working conditions—what he called the "moral plane of competition"—down to the lowest level. In this sense, Adams was in touch with the moral emphasis of the Social Gospel, which shifted the onus of immorality from the worker to the capitalist. Along with the mounting evidence of blameless poverty conveyed by other means, this text provided a mandate for regulation to enforce a standard of protection for workers in accord with the evolving moral sense of the community.

Work by another brilliant political economist, Thorstein Veblen, helped explain the increasingly severe and frequent depressions in business and employment that impoverished millions. Veblen's analysis traced this structural pattern of advanced capitalism to the increased use of credit in the form of loans that could not be serviced or shares that plummeted in value during periods of slack demand. In this analysis, overproduction was intrinsic to unregulated capitalism. Capitalism does not merely have cycles, Veblen contended; it *is* cycles.

Rejecting these rationales for increased government regulation, another group of thinkers preferred to seek stabilization of business and improved relations between bosses and workers through self-regulation by business, amendments to the Sherman Anti-Trust Act permitting combination into even larger enterprises to reduce competition, and recognition of the conservative goals of organized labor. Historians refer to these people as "corporate liberals." Progressive reformers campaigned for limitations on women's working hours and child labor, for protections for unions, and for comprehensive social insurance. Yet, then as now, regulation remained controversial, particularly for Americans who placed their faith in "the market" (Furner 1993).

The market was always, of course, a social and political creation, and its meaning—indeed, the reality of it in any recognizable Smithian sense—was highly contested. For the poor farmers and workers and for men and women in the middle classes who heard their message, the Omaha Platform of the People's Party expressed the hard-won conclusion, learned in a decade of efforts to climb out of poverty by mobilizing producers' cooperatives and politics, that the free market was an illusion. Populism targeted monopoly capitalism as a new economic formation that organized the industrial, financial, and transportation core of the economy and that was able to extract value above a subsistence level from workers and from farmers, who labored in the economy's competitive periphery along with small-time capitalists. What were the People's Party's solutions to this failure of the market—this failure of competition—whose outcome had been monopoly? The People's Party program was a republican one of regulation, government credit and currency, public ownership of financial and infrastructural industries (railroads, grain elevators, and the like) that denied fair-market access to many small producers, and protection for workers and unions.

Almost simultaneously and under heavy pressure from mounting criticisms of existing theories, neoclassical economists were closing in on a major revision of Smithian economics that mounted a vigorous defense of an altered conception of what was going on in the capitalist market. The clearest statement of the new paradigm appeared in John Bates Clark's *Distribution of Wealth.* This work, and the international movement toward neoclassical economics generally, offered a crucial reframing in value theory. As we have seen, the labor theory of value had been central to both republican and traditional liberal philosophies throughout the nineteenth century, providing a potent moral basis for indicting a system that left in poverty people who worked and played by the rules. In Clark's economics and subsequently in neoclassicism, the value (or the price) of things was the result of their "utility," or their capacity to satisfy wants. This is a demand-side rather than a supply-side judgment made by consumers. The way Clark figured it, every factor of production—every individual unit of labor, land, and capital—would get exactly the value it produced, so long as there was full and effective competition. Apparently unmoved by the Great Merger Movement going on around him at the turn of the century and by heavy criticism from Veblen, among others, Clark claimed that the forces suppressing competition—monopoly, problems in the money supply, excess immigration—were only temporary; like waves made by blowing on the surface of a tub of water, they would disappear.

Juxtaposing these emblematic texts suggests a good deal for the subsequent history of poverty and social provision. Americans have oscillated between the visions captured by the Omaha Platform and by Clark's *Distribution of Wealth,* unable to make a lasting commitment to either. These tensions were evident in the limited though significant reforms achieved during the Progressive Era. In the United States, between the turn of the twentieth century and its final decades, welfare economics and a potent social democratic tradition that accounted for poverty in institutional and structural terms heavily contested the neoclassical endorsement of the market. In the most recent period, since the 1970s, neoclassical economics has largely triumphed, giving increased authority to a hedonistic view of the human person as rational maximizer, to "rational choice" as a politics and economics that can be applied to nearly every situation, and to supply-side, tax-cutting, budget-cutting policies that have impoverished the public sector, dramatically reducing the capacity of national, state, and city governments to provide for health, education, and infrastructure and to maintain incomes. Meanwhile, complicated now by the shift of massive numbers of manufacturing jobs offshore and by the rapid growth of a low-wage service sector, poverty is still more than anything else lack of sufficient work opportunities and low wages.

Mary O. Furner

See also: Agrarian Movements; Capitalism; Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Coxey's Army; Economic Depression; Freedmen's Aid; "Gospel of Wealth"; Immigrants and Immigration; Industrialization; Liberalism; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Poverty Research; *Progress and Poverty;* Relief; Republicanism; Slavery; Speenhamland; Sweatshop; Work Ethic

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Progressive Era and 1920s

The period from the turn of the twentieth century through the 1920s marked an important turning point in the way Americans thought about and responded to poverty and related problems. Known as the Progressive Era for the great number of progressive reforms implemented at the time, the years from roughly 1900 to 1920 introduced new ideas, institutions, and knowledge into public debate, which became the basis for more-modest expansions in social protection during the 1920s. Although a great deal of conflict and frequent setbacks accompanied these debates, on the whole this was a period of intellectual and political ferment about the role and obligations of government and about the relationship between capitalism and democracy. New approaches to poverty broke away from the nineteenth century's emphasis on the failure of individuals and began to examine poverty in terms of the political economy and social environment. The idea that charity should reform the individual was challenged by the idea that public social welfare should mitigate the effects of industrial capitalism, especially the conditions of labor and living in the rapidly growing, increasingly immigrant industrial city.

Poverty and charity had developed along with the nation. U.S. ideas about the causes of and cures for poverty initially came from England during the colonial period. The new nation embedded colonial poor laws into U.S. legal codes and into the national culture. The tenets of voluntary (private) charity, limited government, and laissez-faire economics shaped the social welfare infrastructure throughout the nineteenth century. Just as important, these tenets were entwined with such cultural values of good citizenship as personal responsibility, independence, and self-support. To receive assistance meant to accept willingly the designation of "dependent," a status reserved for those outside the economic mainstream: the very young, the very old, women, slaves, the chronically ill, and the disabled.

Private charities dominated the infrastructure of social welfare until the Progressive Era, but they usually provided assistance selectively to their own constituents. A survey of private groups in the 1890s would have revealed listings such as the Catholic Charities, Norwegian Lutheran Home and Hospital, Associated Jewish Charities, and the Bohemian Charitable Association. Maintaining a distinct group of beneficiaries retained national, cultural, or religious ties. However, this privatized method of distributing aid produced an inequitable system of assistance based not on the need of individuals or families but on the ability of a particular group to raise funds and deliver services. Small groups on the margins of economic prosperity could not take care of their own people as well as better-situated groups could.

During the nineteenth century, public resources for the poor were local and limited. Counties provided "indoor relief" through their poorhouses and "outdoor relief" through in-kind aid to families. Individual states funded institutions for the aged, mentally ill, orphans, and tuberculosis victims. The sole example of federally funded assistance in this era was pensions for military service. Although military pensions helped alleviate poverty for the aged or injured veteran and his wife, it was considered less a charity than an entitlement for service, a view that retained the status of independence for the former soldier. In fact, the fear of fostering dependence, pauperism, or irresponsibility found its way into most arguments against expanding aid to the poor.

At the end of the nineteenth century, when the wealth and power of some corporations surpassed that of state governments, Americans began to view poverty as a by-product of social and economic processes. This change in perspective laid the groundwork for a greater public role in social provision during the 1920s. Massive immigration, unregulated industrial expansion, and the rapid growth of urban areas made the breadth and depth of poverty more visible. These trends also revealed the inadequacy of arguments that blamed individual behaviors for the cause of poverty. Some feared that the economic and social changes threatened democracy itself. Others called for businesses to take greater responsibility for the social problems they created.

Reformers proposed solutions to poverty and market insecurity that imagined a role for government in attenuating the effects of industrial capitalism. Advocates of publicly funded social welfare made modest advances at the local level. New programs for workers and widowed mothers joined older relief programs for the aged and ill. These initial forays into social provision created a rudimentary welfare state, albeit one that was fragmented and local.

The social policy debates and innovations of the first two decades of the twentieth century departed from older traditions of more-individualized and more-privatized prescriptions for poverty. Yet the new ideas, which helped earn this period its name, also reflected social struggles and visions already in play. Among the many recent European immigrants that made up the industrial working class, for example, several were familiar with Karl Marx's ideas about class relations and the value of labor. They chose new strategies—socialism and unionism, for example—to rebalance worker-manager power relations. Progressive reformers supported many of the workers' demands for improved working conditions and for unions. They also argued that government needed to mediate between individuals and businesses to preserve democracy and the health and welfare of its citizens. Progressives further worked to deepen understanding of the causes and cures for poverty. In the tradition of progressivism—investigate, educate, and legislate—reformers placed their trust in empirical research and social policy.

The expanding administration of private charity organization societies and public poor-relief offices also sought better information. In the early stages of professionalization, public and private charities needed to train and educate their practitioners. Professional conferences like the National Conference of Charities and Corrections (later the National Conference of Social Work) offered state and national venues in which to share research and debate new policies.

Several major empirical studies that explored the extent of poverty were published between 1890 and 1910. Inspired by British social survey methods and by new analyses incorporating social science data, Americans embarked on a fact-finding era in hopes of understanding how the poor became poor. Congress commissioned the first comparative study of poverty in several large cities. The resulting book, *The Slums of Baltimore, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia*, produced by Carroll D. Wright, the commissioner of labor, provided the single greatest accumulation of data available until then when it was published in 1894. Robert Hunter's *Poverty* (1904) was less empirical but was perhaps more widely read as a treatise on the subject of poverty in the United States. The nineteen-volume *Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage-Earners in the United States*, published by the Department of Commerce and Labor between 1910 and 1913, provided extensive documentation of the correlation between sex and job segregation, low wages, and job crowding, all of which contributed to poverty for female wage earners. Studies by W. E. B. Du Bois examined the impact of industrialization, migration, and race on the high rates of poverty among African Americans. These few examples represent a fraction of the book-length studies on poverty, yet they defined the populations most likely to be poor.

Research showed that unemployment, illness, and injury of the male head of the family could bring an otherwise self-sustaining family to the brink of poverty. Without savings, family resources, or other private aid, such a family would become desperately poor until the job market improved or until other family members found jobs. In addition, people who were structurally and ascriptively marginal to the workforce were also vulnerable to poverty: the elderly, the very young, and mother-only families. People of color, whose wages were low because of job segregation and discrimination, experienced a double exposure to poverty. Consequently, families of color (as well as recent immigrant families) sent wives and children into the workforce to supplement the family income.

Among the dozens of innovations designed to address the problems of poverty and urban life, two deserve special mention: settlement houses and the National Urban League. Settlement houses were largely an urban phenomenon, although a few existed in rural communities. Their novelty came from the premise that providers of social services needed to live as neighbors among those they served so they could thereby better understand the circumstances of the poor. Inspired by London's Toynbee Hall, predominately native-born, middle-class, white Protestants volunteered. Educated women found settlement house work to be an excellent opportunity to move into semiprofessional work. Indeed, within the country's most progressive settlements, women such as Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Edith Abbott, and Lillian D. Wald learned vital lessons about politics and poverty that they would use in policy work. Furthermore, the applied research conducted by settlements contributed to the newly emerging field of social work.

Hull House, a settlement located on Chicago's West Side, led in innovative social programs. Founded in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, Hull House played an important role in the creation of the nation's first juvenile court in Chicago, maternal and infant health clinics, day nurseries, and mothers' pensions. Residents participated in the 1893 survey of slums in large cities (noted above), conducted studies on nationalities and housing, and provided recreation and meeting spaces for neighbors. Several of the Hull House residents who began their research as advocates of private initiative discovered the limits of that approach. Increasingly, they recognized the need to mix private and public responsibility. A few settlements served African American neighborhoods, but the Black community created its own distinctive service organization.

The National Urban League, founded in 1911, had chapters in major cities outside the South. It incorporated numerous small self-help organizations into one coordinated effort to provide services to African Americans. Rather than providing charity, the National Urban League saw its mission as assisting African Americans to be self-supporting. Men and women made use of the League's employment services. But hiring practices that discriminated on the basis of race created additional hurdles for Black workers that employment services alone could not overcome.

Although employment was perceived as the primary weapon against poverty, the vast changes in the workplace wrought by industrial capitalism left workers vulnerable to poverty in new ways. Furthermore, new workers in the industrial workforce—children, women, immigrants, and people of color—faced occupational segregation and lower wages. Even the efforts of workers to organize for leverage against employers became stratified and marked by sex and race when male trade unionists linked their rights to earn a "family wage" to their self-definition as white "American" men, citizens, and breadwinners. All of these issues became part of the debates surrounding labor laws during the era.

Industrialism exposed the legal fiction inherent in the presumed equality of worker and employer that underpinned the vaunted "liberty of contract" for individual workers. Two court cases raised this issue but answered it differently for male and female workers. In *Lochner v. New York* (198 U.S. 45 [1905]) the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated a state law that limited the number of hours bakers could work. Yet a few years later, in *Muller v. Oregon* (208 U.S. 412 [1908]), the maximum hours of labor was set at ten hours, but only for women workers. The Brandeis Brief used extensive evidence from medical studies and factory reports to argue that long work hours damaged women's reproductive system and consequently threatened the best interests of the nation.

Once employed, workers still could have difficulty maintaining a basic standard of living. Trade unionists could negotiate wages in contracts with employers, but only a minority of workers had unions to represent them. The Women's Trade Union League not only helped women workers organize but also conducted research on the issues of wages and standards of living. Employed women generally were paid too little to earn a living wage, leading some reformers to call for a minimum wage to help eliminate poverty among this group of workers. Several industrial states discussed minimum-wage legislation, reviewed the evidence, and heard the testimony of workers. Massachusetts passed the first minimum-wage law for women and children in 1912. Unlike legislation setting maximum hours, a minimum wage for women proved far more difficult to achieve. In 1923, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a minimum-wage policy for women in *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* (261 U.S. 525). Legislation on hours and wages would wait for passage until the 1930s, when it received support for both men and women workers.

Although the above-mentioned legislation were officially color-blind, several factors combined to deny people of color the benefits of new policies. African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos worked predominately in agriculture and domestic service during this period. Neither of these job sectors was covered by hours laws. In addition, racial prejudice applied different cultural assumptions to African American, Asian American, and Latina women than to white women. They and their children were perceived by whites to be *more able to work* than similarly situated white women and children. Consequently, these families remained underserved by Progressive-Era social welfare measures.

The most extensive developments in public social welfare during the Progressive Era were in the field of child welfare. The incarceration of young people with adults inspired the juvenile court movement and different treatments for people of different ages. The presence of children in the poorhouses of the late nineteenth century led to advocacy for aid to dependent children and measures to keep families in their own homes. The number of young children (under age fourteen) found in factories, fields, and mills created a groundswell of support for child labor laws. Each measure required a greater role for government. At the federal level, leadership emerged in a limited capacity. In 1909, the White House sponsored the first of several decennial conferences on the health and welfare of the youngest citizens in the United States. The establishment of the U.S. Children's Bureau in 1912 and the Women's Bureau in 1920 extended federal responsibility to conduct research, provide educational materials, and contribute to nonpartisan policymaking regarding children.

The line between child welfare and family welfare was often blurred, as in the case of the first so-called maternalist legislation: mothers' pensions. Illinois passed the first statewide legislation enabling mothers' pensions in 1911, which allowed counties to set aside revenue to support families with young children in their own homes. The idea spread rapidly across the states. The U.S. Children's Bureau took a major role coordinating information about state mothers' pension laws and providing information to other states that wanted to explore similar legislation. They also conducted numerous studies on the impact of the laws upon the health and welfare of children in mother-only families. Mothers' pensions set the prototype at the state level for a social policy that aimed to support women so they could stay home and care for their children. But from its earliest days, approximately half the mothers receiving pensions had to supplement their stipends with earnings. When the New Deal established a safety net for mother-only families, it adapted state-level mothers' pension laws to create Aid to Dependent Children (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children, AFDC) as Title IV of the Social Security Act (1935).

Workmen's compensation, another state-level program, sought to provide some measure of insurance for workers' families to protect them from poverty in the event of a disabling accident or death on the job. Initially, organized labor resisted the intrusion of government into benefits they believed should be negotiated between unions and management. Nevertheless, unions supported the state-level plans for workers' compensation laws. Between 1910 and 1917, all of the industrial states passed some form of workmen's compensation law to provide for workers who were either killed or terribly injured at work and for their survivors.

The experimentation in social welfare stalled during and after World War I. All suggestions for reform that relied on centralization or that enhanced state authority or taxpayer revenues were compared to socialism. The existing programs in child welfare, old-age pensions, workmen's compensation, and mothers' pensions continued to be state-level programs, implemented, if at all, at the county level. Looking broadly across the nation during the 1920s, one would find state laws on the books and perhaps even a state infrastructure to operate a program, but inadequate resources within the counties to adequately serve the program's mission. Similarly, retaining local authority over eligibility prolonged discriminatory operations of programs. For example, agricultural counties in the South and West that depended upon the labor of fieldworkers found ways to remove children and mothers from public relief when laborers were needed in the fields. In areas where fieldworkers were largely Hispanic or African American, the results were race based.

Maternalist legislation received a boost with the Sheppard-Towner Act (1921) for maternal and infant health. Riding high on a wave of support following passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, a coalition of women's organizations lobbied Congress for this public health measure. The act intended to reduce the high rates of mortality in childbirth and in infancy through federal funding of health care for mothers and infants. Although it was not specifically designed for the poor, it certainly had a great impact upon them because they were the least able to afford health care. Supporters hailed the law as visionary while detractors tagged it a socialist invention. Every two years, the act came before Congress for refunding authorization. By 1925, its opponents had gathered significant support. By 1927, its budget was cut, and by 1929, its funding was ended. Maternal and infant care lost support during the 1920s, as did the minimum-wage campaign and the child labor amendment.

The real area of growth in social welfare during the 1920s could be found in the infrastructure of social provision: training schools, professional organizations, and new government agencies. Schools of social work formalized their curriculum of accepted practices, taught the history of social welfare, and shepherded the research of graduate students. The profession developed established standards, procedures, and ethical guidelines and then attempted to get agencies to hire their trained graduates. Over the next two decades, graduates of social work schools were hired across the country as administrators of bureaus of public welfare as well as of private charities. A further transformation came in the state coordination of welfare practices. Though still small relative to contemporary bureaucracies, the state departments of welfare would become the coordinating body for aid programs. Yet the public sector did not take over social provision. Rather, it merged its responsibilities with that of the private sector.

The relationship between citizens and their government began to change during the first thirty years of the twentieth century. State and federal governing bodies assumed responsibilities that had once belonged only to families and communities, and the size of public administration grew to accommodate those changes. Americans did not embrace big government, nor did the concept of pauperism lose any of its stigma, but the principles of laissez-faire economics found vigorous competition from the principles of social democracy. These ideas and the experiments they fostered provided a blueprint for the social welfare policies initiated during the New Deal. Further, they began a process in which U.S. citizens came to expect their government to take some responsibility for their economic security.

Joanne L. Goodwin

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Charity Organization Societies; Child Welfare; Citizenship; Dependency; Family Structure; Maternalist Policy; National Urban League; Settlement Houses; Trade/Industrial Unions; U.S. Children's Bureau; Welfare State

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Great Depression and New Deal

"We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land," Herbert Hoover boasted in accepting the 1928 Republican presidential nomination (Singer 1976, 33). A little over a year later, the deepest economic crisis in U.S. history, the Great Depression, mocked his confidence. The hunger, homelessness, and poverty that long had preoccupied at least a third of the nation in slums and on farms now became a specter haunting the lives of the more prosperous. The Wall Street crash of October 1929 wiped out three-quarters of the stock market's worth. Without adequate government spending to inhibit the downward spiral in 1930 and 1931, construction halted, automobile sales plummeted, and machine tool orders stopped. With rapid economic and social disintegration discrediting empty reassurances that recovery was just around the corner and with Hoover's reliance on voluntary action to jump-start the economy failing, the nation in 1932 elected Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt as its next president. Through innovative government programs, Roosevelt's New Deal sought to alleviate distress, promote recovery, and reform the structural conditions that had precipitated the collapse.

The New Deal first attempted to shore up the nation's financial system and its productive and distributional capabilities in both industry and agriculture. It also concentrated on the immediate needs of the unemployed through a variety of work-relief programs. Only then did it initiate more structural approaches to poverty and social welfare. It established mechanisms to protect collective bargaining and labor standards that were key to its work-centered agenda. The limited welfare state that emerged relied on concepts of social insurance that privileged full-time employment in the core sectors of the economy over those who labored, often without a wage, in homes, on farms, or for the family. The white male industrial worker and his dependents gained a modicum of security, but men and women of color and white women found themselves inadequately covered by the law and subject to discrimination.

The crash exposed the human consequences of poverty. Resulting inadequate diets meant more cases of dysentery, pellagra, and chronic illness. Starving children picked over garbage. Homelessness soared, while those fortunate enough to have shelter shivered through the winter, unable to purchase fuel. Shantytowns, nicknamed "Hoovervilles," skirted the perimeters of cities. At the Depression's nadir in 1933, unemployment reached nearly 25 percent and double that for African Americans and other racial minorities. Anglos now displaced Mexicans and African Americans from low-wage agricultural and service jobs that they had previously rejected as beneath them. Millions worked reduced hours. Real income dropped 30 percent below its 1929 peak, while the gross national product was cut in half. With net receipts rapidly falling, foreclosures on farms numbered in the hundreds of thousands; everywhere, families defaulted on their mortgages. When 5,000 banks collapsed, 9 million Americans lost savings. Couples postponed marriage and pregnancy; no longer the breadwinners, more men deserted their families. Searching for work, a quarter of a million teenagers left home. The labor force participation of married women jumped by 50 percent, leading to complaints that they had no right to take jobs away from single persons or married men. Governments dismissed married female employees, leading some to divorce their husbands in order to keep jobs. By 1932, families seemed to be disintegrating.

Income inequalities, along with an unstable banking system and questionable investment practices, precipitated the Depression; the resulting lack of demand, or underconsumption, assured its depth and length. The 1920s had "roared" only for some Americans; 60 percent of families actually had only enough income for basic necessities (Badger 1989, 23). Northern textile workers, midwestern farmers, southern sharecroppers, and minority racial and ethnic groups throughout the nation already faced economic hardship. Only 2 percent of Native Americans, for example, earned over $500 a year (Badger 1989, 28). Natural disasters—the boll weevil, the 1927 Mississippi flood, and then drought—exacerbated the instability of cotton farmers reeling from a crisis of overproduction. Facing debt as well, about a quarter of all farmers lived in depressed conditions during the 1920s (Lichtenstein, Strasser, and Rosenzweig 2000, 344). So too did workers in ailing industries, some of whom faced technological displacement; those in the coal, shoe, and textile industries saw wages drop and jobs disappear or move to lower-paid regions, such as the South or Puerto Rico. Unskilled laborers in most sectors experienced wage declines and irregular employment. Although the overall standard of living grew during the 1920s, the gap between rich and poor widened. In 1929, the income of the 36,000 wealthiest households equaled that of the 12 million poorest, while only 200 companies received half of all corporate wealth (Lichtenstein, Strasser, and Rosenzweig 2000, 326).

Monetary and trade policy only intensified the economic crisis. The Federal Reserve Board's low interest rates had encouraged speculation during the 1920s. When stocks declined, investors who had bought on margin lost all, intensifying the drop in value. Instead of slashing rates, the Fed raised them, destabilizing the banking system when customers of rural banks and ethnic savings and loans could no longer receive credit or repay loans. Many uninsured and undercapitalized financial institutions collapsed. The 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff stymied international commerce, while the Federal Reserve Board raised interest rates in response to European abandonment of the gold standard in 1931. Further depressing the economy was the German default on reparations to Britain and France, which resulted in European bank collapses. Foreign trade nearly stopped; the worth of U.S. goods exported abroad plunged from $5 billion to $1 billion between 1929 and 1932.

A combination of declining tax revenues and the rising cost of public assistance bankrupted state and city governments. Out of desperation, Chicago and Detroit issued IOUs instead of paying teachers, firemen, and other employees. Spending $1 million a month in 1931, Philadelphia coordinated a model program with private groups, like the United Way. But the distress was so great that even though Philadelphia offered amounts of relief below the sustenance level, it ran out of funds within eighteen months, leaving 57,000 families without resources. Local relief agencies elsewhere looked for reasons not to aid individuals, whose very need for assistance marked them as unworthy. Instead of cash, agencies distributed food orders or organized soup kitchens, and, even then, three-quarters of the unemployed received no aid during the early 1930s. In Chicago and Detroit, relief bureaus also instigated repatriation campaigns that pushed Mexican American steel and automobile workers across the Mexican border. Around 500,000 migrants returned to Mexico, mostly before 1933, taking their U.S.-born citizen children with them.

At least 2 million unemployed persons marched for relief and jobs, meeting resistance from public authorities and private security guards. Street violence erupted on March 6, 1930, at the Communist-organized International Unemployment Day in New York. Two years later, during a hunger march on Ford's River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Michigan, four people died and over sixty sustained wounds after the police fired into the retreating crowd. Although some people bartered goods and services and others looted surplus commodities, Communist and Socialist Unemployment Councils defended the right to relief in confrontations with welfare officials in Chicago, Detroit, New York, Saint Louis, and elsewhere. They blocked evictions on Chicago's Southside, moving families' possessions back into apartments. These "eviction riots" forced the city to issue cash so the unemployed could pay rent. Similarly, in Iowa and South Dakota, farmers disrupted auctions, leading legislators to prohibit the sale of farms to cover taxes or other debt.

Police retaliation in the South was worse. Landlords attempted to reduce costs by kicking tenants off the land; some even refused to advance food or other supplies. In July 1931, the sheriff of Tallapoosa County, Alabama, violently broke up a meeting of the Black Sharecroppers' Union, one of many Communist-led groups that protested landlord actions. When 20,000 veterans, some joined by their families, marched on Washington, D.C., a year later demanding immediate payment of cash bonuses, the U.S. Army, under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, brutally destroyed their encampment.

Hoover sought to coordinate state, local, and private responses. He encouraged voluntary cooperation among businessmen, but despite attempts to maintain employment, firms were unable to sustain spending or production. Many followed U.S. Steel's lead in cutting wages 10 percent in 1931. When Hoover advocated billions of dollars for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to aid failing businesses and banks, funds went to the healthiest among them. Under his philosophy of self-help and fiscal caution, public works projects were to pay for themselves, while farm relief fed livestock rather than the families of farmers. Relief, Hoover argued, was a local rather than a national responsibility, even though only eight states had legislated unemployment benefits.

Pledging to put the nation back to work, Roosevelt entered office at the lowest point of the Depression, facing bank closures in forty states. A more effective politician than Hoover, he gained success for fiscal measures that did not radically depart from those of his predecessor. Immediately declaring a national "bank holiday," Roosevelt had Congress pass legislation to restore confidence in the financial system by loaning funds, reorganizing troubled institutions, and certifying solvency. The Glass-Steagall Banking Act of 1933 established the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which protected savings accounts. In April, Roosevelt removed the country from the gold standard. Securities acts in 1933 and 1934 created the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In an initial attempt to raise production, end unemployment, and stabilize industry, the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) legalized employer cartels. Under the resulting National Recovery Administration (NRA), industries drew up codes of fair competition to regulate themselves through tripartite governing boards representing business, labor, and government. Section 7(a) of the act mandated that the codes include labor standards (minimum wages and maximum hours) and collective bargaining. Consumers were to do their part by purchasing only from companies displaying the "Blue Eagle," an emblem that business earned for complying with the NRA. Before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional in 1935 as undue federal regulation of intrastate commerce, the NRA had approved over 1,000 codes. But many of these contained wage differentials that either directly (as with women) or indirectly (as with Blacks and other racial minorities, the young, and the homebound) discriminated against certain categories of workers by allowing lower rates in the South and for trainees and homeworkers.

Though employers dominated the code authorities and hampered enforcement in unorganized industries, such as southern textiles, trade unionists—notably John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers (UMW)—regarded the NRA as their emancipation proclamation. Black leaders were more dubious, referring to the NRA as "Negroes Ruined Again" because it did nothing to stop racial exclusions. Numerous groups of white men—Toledo autoworkers, Minneapolis truckers, and West Coast longshoremen and seamen—sought to enforce 7(a) through massive picketing and strike action during 1934. Some unions, such as the UMW, recovered membership lost to Depression layoffs, while collective bargaining flourished in highly competitive sectors, such as the garment industry. But organizing drives hit mass-production industries with mixed results. Automobile companies resisted weak unions, which were unable to win concessions during the code-making process.

Unaware that the NRA excluded agriculture, unionizing Pennsylvania farmworkers, Massachusetts cranberry harvesters, California cotton growers, and Florida citrus pickers also found inspiration in the NRA. But rather than aiding farmworker organization, government actually stymied it by excluding agriculture from all labor legislation. Instead, agriculture came under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), which the Supreme Court in 1936 also struck down as an overextension of federal powers. In an attempt to raise the price of basic commodities and to improve rural purchasing power, AAA paid farmers to reduce crop acreage; food processors were taxed to finance the program, and they in turn passed on the cost to consumers. Within three years, gross farm income had grown by 50 percent, though by 1939 farm income still fell 20 percent short of "parity," the ratio of farm to industrial prices set during World War I (Lichtenstein, Strasser, and Rosenzweig 2000, 399; Badger 1989, 168). Meanwhile, to enhance productivity and improve daily life, the Rural Electrification Administration brought power to farms.

Some farmers plowed up crops and slaughtered livestock to receive cash subsidies. Others evicted tenants rather than share government checks with Black, Mexican, and poor Anglo families. Landlords also replaced Anglo tenants with African Americans and Mexicans, whom they forced to sign away payments as a condition of tenancy. Such labor practices not only intensified the racialization of farm labor and lowered standards of living but also further increased the anti-immigration and anti-Black sentiments of whites in the South and Southwest. The Southern Tenant Farmers Union organized the displaced into roadside encampments but failed to reverse evictions. After purging radical staff, the Department of Agriculture responded to the mounting crisis by creating the poorly funded Farm Resettlement Agency (FRA) in 1935.

This represented a halfhearted attempt to provide loans for those displaced by agribusiness. The Farm Security Administration (FSA), which coordinated rural programs beginning in 1937, established over ninety "permanent" camps that provided welfare services, like health care and work relief, to migrants until World War II shifted its purpose to raising farm output.

At his second inauguration, Roosevelt pledged to eradicate the plight of "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished" (Kennedy 1999, 287). The South, he judged, was "the Nation's No. 1 economic problem" (Carlton and Coclanis 1996, 42). The 1938 *Report on Economic Conditions of the South* called for increasing the purchasing power of a region underdeveloped by culture and cultivation. While the progressive Southern Conference for Human Welfare sought federal aid to eliminate poverty, Roosevelt remained hampered by entrenched southern Democrats in Congress, whom he failed to dislodge during the 1938 midterm elections. The New Deal lacked the political will to challenge the poll tax, lynching, and the South's entire Jim Crow system, despite the advocacy of first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Still, it did open federal programs elsewhere to African Americans. This inclusion began the shift of African Americans into the Democratic Party.

Relief for the dispossessed expanded during the New Deal. Early in 1933, Congress appropriated $500 million for direct relief. By 1936, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) had distributed roughly $1 billion a year, about 2 percent of the national income. But by requiring matching funds from the states, FERA exacerbated inequality. The national average relief payment was around fifteen dollars a month, but Mississippi paid less than four dollars, and some states refused to supplement federal monies with their own. Even when southern African Americans managed to obtain aid, they received less than did white recipients. Localism encouraged favoritism and politicization, leading relief czar Harry Hopkins to federalize operations in six states. He also sent journalist Lorena Hickok to tour the nation and report back on the conditions of ordinary people.

Congress approved a number of innovative programs in which the unemployed received cash for labor, maintaining an ideological link between individual self-worth and the work ethic that Roosevelt himself feared would be undermined by the dole. Administered by the army, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) engaged some 3,000 young men in conservation and recreation construction projects. Though its 2,000 forest camps were segregated, with most serving whites, the CCC nonetheless paid Black men equal wages. A similar program for women was smaller (housing only 5,000 in ninety camps), lasted for less time, and offered some education, healthy food, and medical care but no wages. The National Youth Administration (NYA), funded in 1935, gave employment to 4.5 million young people, mostly students; it had a separate Office of Negro Affairs, run by the unofficial leader of Roosevelt's Black cabinet, Mary McLeod Bethune.

Hopkins established the Civil Works Administration (CWA) for the winter of 1933–1934, which reached 4.2 million people and pegged wages to jobs performed rather than to assets or personal characteristics of the worker. Although 95 percent of projects—such as road construction and building repair—required manual labor, 10 percent of employees were white-collar and professional men and women, who taught literacy, surveyed buildings, and painted murals. Southern employers, in particular, complained that CWA rates, which were higher than wages in textiles or agriculture, caused a labor shortage, undermining their racial caste system. However, the actual number of African Americans employed under CWA was small.

Considered too costly, the CWA was short-lived; nonetheless, it foreshadowed the creative arts projects that were a controversial component of the Works Progress Administration (later

Work Projects Administration) (WPA), launched in 1935. A means-tested program, the WPA focused on the able-bodied unemployed. It represented a massive shift in policy to temporary work relief made concurrently with the establishment of Social Security for those defined as unable to labor. Receiving for their labors double what emergency relief programs had provided, the unemployed under WPA viewed themselves as workers rather than as welfare recipients. They formed unions, demanded higher wages, went on strike, and lobbied Congress for continued funding under the leadership of the Communist-influenced Workers' Alliance, which claimed 600,000 members in forty-three states in 1936 (Badger 1989, 202). By the WPA's end in 1943, 8 million men and women, a fifth of the workforce, had improved the nation's infrastructure, beautified cities, and spread the arts. They built 2,500 hospitals, 5,900 schools, 1,000 airports, and 13,000 playgrounds (Lichtenstein, Strasser, and Rosenzweig 2000, 426; Badger 1989, 203). The Women's and Professional Division employed teachers, nurses, and librarians, though more than half of all women, especially in rural areas, worked on sewing projects. Between 300,000 and 400,000 women labored in WPA jobs, less than 20 percent of the total but more than in any previous work-relief program (Badger 1989, 205).

Under the Federal Art Project, 6,000 painters, muralists, and sculptors, 90 percent of whom qualified for relief, decorated public buildings. Thousands of white-collar unemployed joined the Federal Writers' Project to document the nation's past and its people through state guidebooks, collections of folk songs, and interviews with former slaves. Music and theater projects brought symphony orchestras and live performances to remote areas. Actors performed in Yiddish and Spanish, while all-Black ensembles gave new meaning to Shakespeare. With works of social commentary like the *Living Newspaper,* the Federal Theatre Project generated heated criticism from conservative politicians, such as New Deal opponent Martin Dies and his House Un-American Activities Committee in 1939.

The 1935 Social Security Act further protected against unemployment by offering benefits to those who had worked and assistance to those unable to labor due to age, disability, or motherhood. Workers in the industrial sectors of the economy participated in contributory social insurance—Old Age Insurance (OAI) and Unemployment Insurance (UI). By basing security on the employment relation, the act relegated those with irregular work histories, part-time hours, or jobs in marginal sectors (like service and agriculture)—disproportionately women of all races and men of color—to means-tested assistance programs such as Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC). These programs subjected nonworkers to personal scrutiny, stigmatizing them as less deserving than those who qualified for benefits through paycheck deductions, touted as worker contributions, or through employer contributions paid in the form of taxes on payrolls.

Social Security emerged in response to more-radical calls for a social wage, such as Louisiana governor Huey Long's "Share Our Wealth" plan. Its old-age provisions sought to deflect the popular Townsend movement, which demanded a generous monthly pension of $200 for all persons over age sixty without criminal records who were not employed, provided that they spent the money within thirty days. Social Security also offered a moderate alternative to the more universal unemployment, old age, and social insurance sections of the unsuccessful Workers' or Lundeen Bill of 1934 and 1935, which covered farm, domestic, and professional workers as well as industrial labor and included maternity disability payments.

Despite centralized administration through a quasi-independent board with appointed experts, Social Security consisted of programs that were hardly uniform in their rules or structure. The percentage of federal financing varied. The states could establish their own benefit levels and eligibility criteria for OAA and ADC. Only OAI had national standards and existed as a right of all qualified wage earners. But it based benefits on earnings, rewarding those who had gained higher wages rather than those with lesser resources.

UI also helped regulate the economy and maintain a skilled workforce. Funded by a combination of state monies and payroll taxes, UI left implementation to the states, which led to variations dependent on local conditions. It rewarded large firms who could maintain employment levels by reducing their taxes. Because it covered only those businesses with eight or more employees, it excluded the most vulnerable workers: 98 percent of those on farms and 90 percent of those in households, as well as 46 percent of those in trade and wholesale. Workers laid off from qualified jobs had to meet a threshold of earnings and hours, had to be actively searching for new work, and had to have lost their job due to employer action. The vagueness of criteria allowed arbitrary personalism, as well as race and sex discrimination, to creep into eligibility evaluations.

Social Security reinforced gender inequalities. Among those laborers unable to qualify for UI were housewives and women temporarily out of work due to maternity. Amendments enacted in 1939 to Social Security responded to the problem of female dependency by providing for the wives of socially insured men. The housewife gained her own old-age insurance, equal to half of her husband's. During a time when a majority of wives lacked sustained labor force participation, this amendment both subsidized female domesticity and provided real gains for some women. Under Survivors' Insurance, widows with children under eighteen received three-fourths of their late husband's pension (unless they remarried or entered the workforce); the divorced or never married remained in the more arbitrary ADC program. This system doubly disadvantaged the vast majority of African American, Mexican American, and immigrant women (especially Asians restricted from citizenship), whose husbands were not included in the social insurance system and whose own labor histories were outside the system as well.

ADC superseded state-level mothers' pensions. It promised security to mothers without other means, requiring states to offer the program in all jurisdictions as a condition for receiving federal funds. But lack of federal oversight meant that states could impose residency and citizenship requirements, limit benefits by marital status, link eligibility to morals tests, and force work outside the home. Despite sentimentalized paeans to mother care of children, lawmakers provided no caregiver's grant, and thus mothers had to obtain additional funds to make ends meet. From the start, southern states assumed that Black women would go out to service or into the fields. Beginning with Louisiana in 1943, states adopted "employable mother" rules to compel would-be recipients into the labor market without the rights others had gained as workers.

The 1935 Wagner Act had enhanced worker freedoms, increased their purchasing power, and alleviated industrial unrest by establishing for wage earners the right to collective bargaining through representatives of their own choosing. This labor law system nourished and was made possible by the rise of industrial unionism and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), marked by victories at General Motors and U.S. Steel in 1937. Decisions by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), however, created a maze of bureaucratic rules that contained workplace activism. These procedural requirements, while advancing the rights of those in mass-production industries, did nothing for workers outside of NLRB jurisdiction who labored in fields, offices, schools, and homes. The 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) federalized wage and hour laws in a race- and gender-neutral manner. But it also excluded from coverage most jobs dominated by women, especially those

"An Economic Bill of Rights," President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Campaign Speech, October 28, 1944

In his January 1944 State of the Union address, Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of "economic truths [that] have become accepted as self-evident" and challenged Congress to implement them on the home front in anticipation of victory in World War II. FDR's "Economic Bill of Rights" soon became a stock feature in his final campaign for the presidency in 1944, where he used it to attack those who would dismantle his New Deal reform program and to assert an expanded role for government in assuring social well-being.

. . . The American people are prepared to meet the problems of peace in the same bold way that they have met the problems of war.

For the American people are resolved that when our men and women return home from this war, they shall come back to the best possible place on the face of this earth—to a place where all persons, regardless of race, color, creed or place of birth, can live in peace, honor and human dignity—free to speak, and pray as they wish—free from want—and free from fear.

Last January, in my Message to the Congress on the state of the Union, I outlined an Economic Bill of Rights on which "a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race or creed":

I repeat them now:

"The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries, or shops or farms or mines of the nation;

"The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;

"The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living;

"The right of every business man, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad;

"The right of every family to a decent home;

"The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health;

"The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment;

"The right to a good education.

"All of these rights spell security. And after this war is won we must be prepared to move forward, in the implementation of these rights, to new goals of human happiness and well-being."

Some people have sneered at these ideals as well as the ideals of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms—saying they were the dreams of starry-eyed New Dealers—that it's silly to talk of them because we cannot attain these ideals tomorrow or the next day.

The American people have greater faith than that. I know that they agree with those objectives—that they demand them—that they are determined to get them—and that they are going to get them.

The American people have a habit of going right ahead and accomplishing the impossible. . . .

This Economic Bill of Rights is the recognition of the simple fact that, in America, the future of the worker and farmer lies in the well-being of private enterprise; and that the future of private enterprise lies in the well-being of the worker and farmer.

The well-being of the Nation as a whole is synonymous with the well-being of each and every one of its citizens.

held by African Americans, as well as jobs that employed most men of color. For covered workers, the act set minimum wages and required time-and-a-half overtime after the forty-hour week; it also ended child labor under age sixteen. Treading on terrain similar to that covered by the NRA, which had been struck down by the Supreme Court, the FLSA limited its reach to those workers engaged in interstate commerce. This overcame previous Supreme Court objections to federal regulation of the labor contract, and following an abortive attempt to pack the Supreme Court after Roosevelt's 1936 landslide reelection, the justices upheld the FLSA and other New Deal measures.

The 1937 "Roosevelt Recession" revealed that the New Deal had mitigated rather than ended the Depression. Only the massive deficit spending of World War II revamped the economy. But the New Deal stabilized the banking, agricultural, and industrial relations systems. Its labor law and welfare regime promised a caring state. Poverty again became an item for national action. Nonetheless, Roosevelt recognized before his death in 1944 that the nation required a "Second Bill of Rights" to guarantee its citizens "economic security, social security, moral security" (Lichtenstein 2002, 30).

Eileen Boris

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC); Deserving/Undeserving Poor; End Poverty in California (EPIC); Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Public Works Administration; Share Our Wealth; Social Security; Social Security Act of 1935; Townsend Movement; Wagner Act; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare State; Works Progress Administration (WPA)

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1940s to Present

In 1940, no one knew how many poor people there were in America. Public officials lacked both the technical capacity and the will to count them. In fact, it would be two decades before the nation acquired an official poverty line. Few, however, would have denied that poverty was widespread, not only among the old, widows, and single parents but among working families as well. Public programs did little to reduce this pervasive poverty. Indeed, insofar as they addressed the condition of the poor, government focused more on their survival—their immediate need for food, shelter, and medical care—than on their potential prosperity.

All this changed in the decades that followed. The prevalence of poverty dropped dramatically, if unevenly, among all groups, and for the first time, in the 1960s, its eradication became a stated goal of public policy. However, the 1970s and 1980s brought the end of the liberal politics, economic growth, and expansive social policies that had sustained the nation's assault on poverty since the New Deal. As public priorities changed and the energy of antipoverty initiatives dissipated, income inequality grew and poverty actually increased. At the end of the twentieth century, it was not poverty but so-called dependency on public assistance that policymakers targeted as the main enemy. More and more, poverty was accepted as a "normal" condition for millions of Americans.

Defining Poverty

In the United States, there was no official definition of poverty until the 1960s, when the necessity of measuring the impact of antipoverty programs forced the issue. The ambiguities surrounding poverty were papered over by an official measure, known as the poverty line, which rested on the assumption that food consumed about a third of a family's income. Government statisticians determined the cost of a thrifty food budget for families of various sizes and multiplied that by three. Households with incomes below that amount were officially in poverty (Orshansky 1977). With modifications, this definition has persisted, largely because any definition that is more adequate will raise the number of people in poverty, a result no government wants.

Despite its widely recognized flaws as an assessment of how much families actually need to get by, the official poverty line provides a useful if crude standard against which to measure trends in poverty over time, and it is the measure used here. Because official poverty statistics are not available before 1960, this entry uses cost-of-living studies to determine a poverty line for 1940 and 1950 roughly comparable to the government's official one for later years. It also follows the convention of basing poverty rates on post-transfer income, that is, income that takes account of government cash benefits. But it will disaggregate the sources of income as well, comparing the extent to which families have been able to surmount poverty on their own to their ability to do so with the contribution of public programs.

Trends in Poverty

The massive reduction in post-transfer poverty among all groups since 1940 is the first major story in the modern history of poverty. In 1939, the year whose experience was captured by the 1940 census, poverty was widespread because wages were low, unemployment was high, and the economy was stuck in the Depression. Men, excluding the self-employed, averaged an annual income of $1,006, and women averaged $592. Manufacturing operatives earned $824 and laborers $571, at a time when the poverty threshold was $925 for a nonfarm family of four composed of two children and a household head under sixty-five years of age. Although only service workers (largely women) and laborers had average earnings less than the poverty line, other blue-collar incomes remained uncomfortably close, frequently falling below it. Overall, 40 percent of households whose wage earners were under the age of sixty-five made poverty wages—a figure that rises to 53 percent with the inclusion of households with adults over sixty-five and those not working in the paid labor force. Nor were nonmanual workers immune from poverty: The incomes of 18 percent of male professionals, 12 percent of male managers, 18 percent of male clerical workers, and 21 percent of male sales workers put them below the poverty line. Within the manual working

Table 1

Percent of working household heads under the age of 65 with earnings lower than their family's poverty threshold, by occupation and gender, United States, 1939

	Male	*Female*	*Total*
Professionals	18.2	10.4	16.8
Farmers	83.8	100.0	84.3
Managers	12.2	34.8	12.8
Clerical workers	18.0	24.3	19.1
Sales workers	20.8	44.8	22.5
Construction workers	53.0	100.0	53.1
Other craft workers	21.7	40.0	21.8
Manufacturing operatives	35.9	70.8	39.4
Other operators	41.9	72.0	42.8
Service workers	46.7	81.3	58.6
Laborers	73.4	70.0	73.3
Government white collar	15.9	15.8	15.9
Government blue collar	30.9	72.8	32.0
No occupation	42.7	100.0	50.0
Working householders under 65	39.1	54.9	40.3
All householders	46.5	84.0	53.0

Source: U.S. Census, 1940. Author's calculations from Ruggles and Sobek (2003).

class, aside from skilled workers in industries other than construction, the proportion of householders with earnings below the poverty threshold ranged from 22 percent among craftworkers to 73 percent among laborers. (See Table 1.)

The rates for female householders—who earned lower wages than men within the same occupations and clustered in low-wage work—were 40 percent higher than the rates for men.

Poverty also related closely to age. Although working-class men's earnings rose during their twenties and thirties, these increases were outstripped by the consumption needs of large families. Thus, in 1940, 65 percent of working men in their early thirties could support their family on their wages alone, and this proportion declined for older age groups. Thanks to the contributions of other family members, however, poverty rates fell among families whose adults were in their thirties or forties before rising among those in their fifties and sixties.

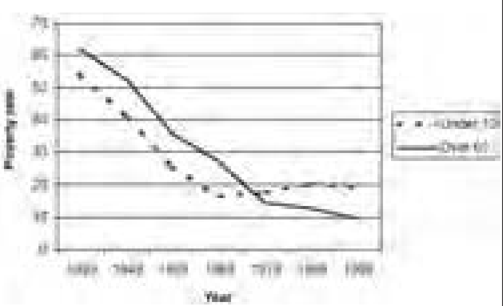
The period of economic growth, expanding workforce participation, and social change that accompanied and followed World War II rearranged these long-standing contours of poverty. Nevertheless, the benefits of postwar prosperity were not universally shared. Although the 1950s may have seemed prosperous compared to previous decades, in that year one-quarter of factory operatives, 37 percent of those in service occupations, and 18 percent of craftworkers lived in poverty. In 1950, two-thirds of farmers lived in poverty, at a time when the highest rate among urban occupations was for laborers, at 41 percent. Poverty, clearly, remained the lot of a very large share of Americans.

During the next thirty years, the decline in poverty was extraordinary. At the end of the 1930s, nearly half the households in America had incomes below the poverty line; by the end of the twentieth century, that number had been reduced by nearly three-quarters. Farmers' poverty rate had fallen to 16 percent, still high compared to other occupations but a dramatic improvement from fifty years earlier, and only service workers and laborers had poverty rates higher than 10 percent. Among all those in the labor force, poverty had fallen from 27 percent in 1950 to 7 percent five decades later. Among all households, poverty declined from 44 percent in 1939 to 12 percent in 1999 (Danziger and Weinberg 1995, 18–50).

This impressive achievement, however, did not happen evenly across the decades. The poverty rate dropped 27 percent in the 1940s, 36 percent in the 1950s, 29 percent in the 1960s, 20 percent in the 1970s, and not at all in the 1980s. Although poverty has always varied with age, its relation to life's stages reversed during the late twentieth century. Earlier, it appeared among families under the greatest economic strain—when parents were in their thirties and their children were too young to work—but it was most pervasive among the elderly, a majority of whom lived in poverty. By late in the century, this pattern had turned 180 degrees: The elderly were the least likely of any age group to be poor, and children—nearly one of five of whom were poor—were the most likely to find themselves below the poverty line. The numbers are stunning: In 1940, 54 percent of children under the age of ten and 62 percent of adults age sixty-five and over were poor. By 1999, child poverty had dropped to 19 percent and poverty among the elderly to 10 percent (see Figure 1). Despite this decline, at the start of the twenty-first century, America had the highest rate of child poverty among industrial democracies.

Figure 1

Poverty rate, persons under 10 years of age and over 65 years of age, United States, 1939–1999



Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

Another way to think about the relation of age to poverty is to examine the age composition of the poor. Here we use an indicator—an index of representativeness—that shows whether a group was over- or underrepresented among the poverty population. A score of 100 means that the number in poverty was proportional to the group's share of the total population. The change is striking: The overrepresentation of children under the age of ten among the poor decreased from 127 in 1939 to 120 in 1969 and then rose to 150 in 1999. (The scores for young people between ten and nineteen followed a similar trajectory.) The scores for those over sixty-five moved in the opposite direction: In 1939 and 1959, they were the most overrepresented group among the poor, with index scores of 146 and 167. Thereafter, their relative position improved until, by 1999, with a score of 80, they were underrepresented. (See Table 2.)

Trends in Poverty by Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Region

Although absolute poverty rates plummeted for all groups, the disparities—the degrees of difference—among races and among men and women remained strikingly durable, testimony to enduring inequities. Among African Americans, poverty rates have been much higher than among whites, even though after World War II poverty among them fell with the Great Migration from the South to northern and midwestern cities. Although African American poverty decreased dramatically between 1939 and 1999—from 71 percent to 24 percent—its distance from the white rate widened. In 1939, the ratio of African American to white poverty was 195; in 1999 it was 274. In 1999, African Americans made up 13 percent of the population but 25 percent of the poor, for an index score of 199 compared to 177 sixty years earlier. The 1999 score, however, did register a decline from the peak year, 1969, when it had climbed to 262. (See Table 3.)

Poverty among Latinos followed a different trajectory, reflecting the increased immigration of recent decades. In 1949, Latino poverty—58 percent—was 14 percent lower than the figure for African Americans. By 1999, following the arrival of millions of poor Mexicans and others of Hispanic origin, it was 5 percent lower than Blacks'. In the same years, poverty among Asians also reflected the rhythms of immigration. The 37 percent poverty rate among the small Asian and Pacific Islander population in 1939 plummeted to 12 percent in 1969 and then, after

Table 2

Poverty rate and index of representativeness, by age, United States, 1939–1999

Year	Under 10	10–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60–64	Over 65	Total
Poverty rate									
1939	54.2	49.8	34.4	33.3	32.7	36.9	46.5	61.9	42.5
1949	40.4	43.4	29.0	27.2	27.1	28.2	35.9	52.2	34.9
1959	25.6	24.2	17.9	14.5	13.9	16.4	22.6	35.6	21.3
1969	16.3	15.0	10.3	9.4	8.1	8.9	14.5	27.0	13.6
1979	17.7	15.0	12.0	8.8	7.3	7.6	10.8	14.4	12.2
1989	20.4	17.7	15.0	10.1	7.5	8.2	9.2	12.6	13.3
1999	19.7	16.9	17.5	10.7	8.5	7.9	10.1	10.5	13.1
Index of representativeness									
1939	127	117	81	78	77	87	109	146	100
1949	116	124	83	78	78	81	103	149	100
1959	120	114	84	68	65	77	106	167	100
1969	120	110	76	69	59	65	106	198	100
1979	145	123	99	72	60	63	88	118	100
1989	154	134	113	76	57	62	69	95	100
1999	150	130	134	82	65	60	78	80	100

Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

Table 3

Poverty rate and index of representativeness, by ethnicity, 1939–1999

Census year	Nonhispanic white	Nonhispanic Black	Latino	Asian, Pacific Islander	Other	Total	Black/white ratio
Poverty rates							
1939	38.6	75.4	69.6	36.8	88.8	42.5	195
1949	30.3	72.0	58.1	40.3	85.0	34.9	238
1959	16.5	54.9	43.2	14.3	47.4	21.3	334
1969	10.3	35.7	25.9	12.0	32.9	13.6	345
1979	8.7	29.2	23.1	13.2	27.2	12.2	337
1989	9.1	31.3	24.0	14.8	30.7	13.3	344
1999	9.5	26.0	21.1	13.1	24.3	13.1	274
Index of representativeness (total population =100)							
1939	91	177	164	86	209	100	
1949	87	206	167	115	243	100	
1959	77	258	203	67	223	100	
1969	76	262	190	88	241	100	
1979	71	239	189	108	223	100	
1989	69	236	181	111	231	100	
1999	72	199	162	100	186	100	

Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

Asian immigration resumed and the United States accepted many refugees, began to increase, reaching 15 percent in 1989 and falling to 13 percent in 1999. (See Table 3.)

Until the late twentieth century, the combination of limited job opportunities, low wages, labor market discrimination, and household responsibilities kept most women from earning their way out of poverty. For much the same reason, families headed by women have historically been poor more often than families headed by men. Compounding these labor market disparities is the fact that women heading households are far more likely to be single parents and reliant on the earnings of only one breadwinner or on inadequate public assistance. Thus, the combination of lower earning power, scant welfare benefits, and changing family patterns are reflected in a demographic reality that underlines what some writers have labeled the "feminization of poverty" (Pearce 1978, 28–36). Although poverty among women declined over the post–World War II period, the male/female disparities widened. As a result, women made up a much greater proportion of the poverty population. The index score for adult women (age twenty-one and over) was 108 in 1939 and 137 in 1999 (a slight decline from their peak, 153, in 1969). (See Table 4.)

Table 4

Poverty rate, by gender, persons over the age of 21, United States, 1939–1999

Census year	*Male*	*Female*	*Female/ Male ratio*
1939	36.3	38.9	108
1949	29.9	32.5	109
1959	16.6	20.8	125
1969	9.6	14.7	153
1979	8.1	11.9	147
1989	8.5	12.6	148
1999	9.0	12.3	137

Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

Similarly, the steep decline in poverty among female-headed households—from 62 percent to 21 percent—between 1939 and 1999, a decline of 66 percent, was much less than the drop in poverty in households headed by men, bringing the poverty ratio of female- to male-headed households from 169 to 263. As a result, the proportion of all poor people who lived in female-headed households increased from 18 percent in 1950 to 55 percent in 1999.

Comparisons among ethnic groups reveal the degree to which gender disparities are compounded by race: Households headed by Black and Latina women have historically been poor more often than those headed by white women, and they remain so today. In 1999, 33 percent of Black and 32 percent of Latina female-headed households remained in poverty—compared to 17 percent of whites.

Poverty rates have varied geographically as well as by race, ethnicity, gender, age, and occupation. Indeed, they have traced the shifting economic fortunes of the nation's regions and the changing balance between city, suburb, and countryside. Early in the twentieth century, the South was the most impoverished region, and the cities were the engines of prosperity, with poverty rates lower than those of the countryside. In fact, it was Appalachian poverty, not the poverty of cities, that first inspired the War on Poverty of the 1960s (Patterson 1981, 134). In 1939, central-city poverty was 30 percent, compared to 29 percent in the suburbs and 59 percent in rural America. By the last decade of the century, with city economies decimated and economic growth transferred to suburbs, the central-city poverty rate had dropped by less than half whereas the suburban poverty rate had plunged by more than two-thirds and the rural rate had fallen below that for the central cities. The 1990s saw some small relative improvement for central cities and rural areas. The poverty rate of central cities fell from 19 to 17 percent during the decade while the rate in nonmetropolitan areas fell from 18 to 14 percent. The shifting central city–suburban balance in poverty rates appears even more vividly in the case of individual metropolitan regions. For instance, in 1939 the poverty rate in the city of Saint Louis, Missouri, was 29 percent; that of its suburbs was 31 percent. By 1980, however, city and suburbs had become two nations. Twenty-two percent of Saint Louis's urban residents were poor, compared to only 7 percent of those in the suburbs. In the same years, economic growth in the Sun Belt erased much of the distinction in prosperity between North and South. And yet everywhere, race, gender, and low wages trumped geography. No longer highly concentrated by region, poverty had been nationalized.

Wages, Inequality, and Deindustrialization

A very large number of families have always had to find ways to close the distance between the inadequate wages of their principal earners and the incomes needed to lift them out of poverty. In 1940, families still survived, or found their way out of poverty, through strategies that had been practiced within the working class for a very long time. These were of four types: help from other family members, household extensions, informal social relations, and public benefits. Children often contributed significantly to family incomes. In all, child labor lifted 7 percent of families out of poverty. But this help was skewed toward older families with working-age children. By contrast, household heads in their thirties, whose children were young, often found themselves in acute distress (National Center for Children in Poverty 1999). The increase in work among married women also helped some families escape poverty. Although only 6 percent of families left poverty as a result of women's work, in instances where women were employed, 40 percent of otherwise-poor families added enough income to move above the line. Wives helped, too, by looking after boarders and relatives who added to the family income by paying rent. The practice of taking in household extensions remained common: 19 percent of households contained a relative and 10 percent had at least one boarder. These additional household members most often lived with economically vulnerable families (Sobek 1997, 162–168).

Poor families in 1940 also survived with the help of informal social relations, which are impossible to quantify. They turned to kin and friends for donations of food, clothes, small amounts of money, and temporary housing. They were sustained by credit from landlords and local grocers. They found help when sick in free dispensaries and hospitals. And they turned to the network of private charities and mutual aid societies. None of these sources of aid lifted families out of poverty. That was not their purpose; their mission, instead, was to assure survival (Katz 1995, 144–172). The same can be said of the work programs of the New Deal, especially the Works Progress Administration, and of Aid to Dependent Children, Old Age Assistance, and Unemployment Insurance, all introduced as part of the Economic Security Act (later to be called the Social Security Act) in 1935. (Social Security had not yet started to pay benefits; although workers first paid Social Security payroll taxes in 1937, no retirees collected benefits until 1940.) Aid to Dependent Children paid benefits to about 1.2 million Americans in 1940, but the average benefit was $32 a month, or $384 a year at a time when the poverty threshold for a family of three was $1,000. Old Age Assistance helped about 2 million people with an average individual grant of $240 a year, which meant that it moved a couple about half the distance toward the poverty line of $840. Unemployment insurance paid benefits to about 1 million workers each week, or about 5 million at some point during the year. Its average benefit was $10.56 a week. A worker who exhausted his twenty-six weeks of benefits (unemployment insurance was skewed toward employed males) would have collected $275, or about one-sixth of the amount necessary to keep a family of five above the

Table 5

Percent of population whose household head earned more than the poverty threshold and the percent of population that escaped poverty because of the earnings of other family members, primary families whose head is under 65 years of age, United States, 1939–1999

	Householder under 65 years of age		*All primary families*	
Year	*Householder with earnings above poverty threshold*	*Escaped poverty through earnings of other family members*	*Householder with earnings above poverty threshold*	*Escaped poverty through earnings of other family members*
1939	47.4	11.3	43.7	12.8
1949	57.6	7.2	53.6	8.1
1959	70.0	8.0	64.5	9.3
1969	79.1	6.3	72.1	7.5
1979	75.5	8.3	67.3	9.3
1989	72.6	10.8	63.5	11.7
1999	71.0	11.3	62.3	12.1

Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

poverty line (Katz 2001). Unemployment insurance did make a notable difference for relatively well-paid workers—such as those in the automobile industry—periodically out of work for short periods. There was, however, one other strategy frequently used by working-class families who anticipated the poverty accompanying old age: buying a house. Poor families, interestingly, did not own property at an appreciably lower rate than others. But ownership was sharply skewed by age: As families aged and lost earning capacity, their rate of ownership increased. Clearly, they used income from working-age children to assure they would have a place to call home when their earning capacity declined with advancing years (Byington [1910] 1974, 126).

With time, poor families exchanged the paid labor of children for that of wives, shed household extensions, and began to rely on transfer payments from government. Thus, since 1940, the sources of poverty reduction have been divided roughly into three sources: increased earnings of household heads, earnings of secondary workers (mainly wives), and government transfer payments.

These strategies proved necessary because a shifting but substantial fraction of household heads earned too little to keep their families out of poverty. In 1939, only a little more than four of ten household heads earned enough to boost their families over the poverty threshold—a number that increased by about 10 percentage points during the next decade. In 1969, 72 percent of the population—the highest proportion recorded—lived in households whose heads earned more than poverty wages. Between 1969 and 1989, this proportion fell to 63 percent (see Table 5). The expansion of women's work, however, compensated for this trend. In each decade between 1940 and 1990, the labor force participation of adult women increased by about 10 percentage points, with the rate for white married women soaring (Goldin 2000, 577). Thus, in 1969, the earnings of other family members pulled 7 percent of the population out of poverty; in 1999, the proportion had increased to 12 percent. Earnings from spouses did not just compensate for the low wages of household heads; they also replaced some of the income once derived from boarders and lodgers, whose share among households declined from 4.6 percent in 1950 to 1.5 percent in 1990. Even with most married women working, between 1993 and 2000, the proportion of poor families with at least one full-time worker increased 20 percent—from 45 percent to 54 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). At the century's end, the term "working poor" was not an oxymoron but a troubling reminder of stalled progress in wage growth and equality.

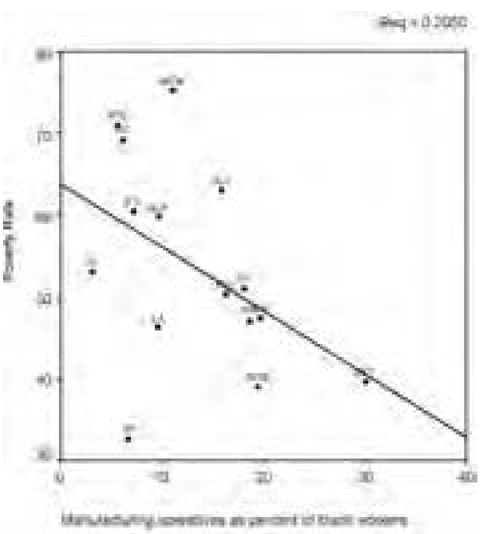
The shifting earning capacity of household heads tracked macroeconomic changes. Indeed, after World War II, the federal government, which viewed poverty as a consequence of unemployment, focused on full employment rather than on antipoverty policies, expecting that economic expansion would increase jobs and income. At first, experience seemed to support these assumptions. Real wages of manufacturing workers, which had increased on the average by 1.43 percent between 1900 and 1929, declined slightly during the Great Depression of the 1930s and spiked during the labor shortages of World War II. Then, between 1948 and 1973, they grew at a stunning annual average of 2.35 percent, supplemented by increasing employee benefits, which rose from 0.01 percent of compensation in 1929 to 0.17 percent in 1980. In the same years, poverty declined.

The 1973 oil embargo fueled inflation and recession, abruptly ending the postwar expansion and halting the decline in poverty rates. After 1973, manufacturing wages stagnated, growing only 0.46 percent annually (Goldin 2000, 565, 570), while unemployment increased and inequality widened. Between 1949 and 1969, real median family income rose by 99.3 percent; between 1973 and 1991, growth was just 3.4 percent (Danziger and Gottschalk 1995, 46). When recession ended in the early 1980s, the seven-year expansion that followed benefited only a minority of the population. In the 1980s and 1990s, income grew rapidly among the wealthiest Americans but remained stagnant among the middle and working classes and declined among the most disadvantaged groups: less-educated workers, single-parent families, Blacks, and Hispanics (Danziger and Gottschalk 1995, 3–5). Even though unemployment fell, millions of families failed to gain income, and poverty rates did not go down. Official unemployment rates for Black men remained more than double those for whites, and Hispanics fared only slightly better (Blank 1995, 171). Labor force participation rates were even worse: A great many young Black men remained chronically out of the regular labor market. In the 1980s and 1990s, soaring incarceration rates as well as chronic unemployment removed African American men from the labor force.

Despite the increasingly widespread experience of declining wages and unstable employment, the problems of an unemployed "underclass" of African American men drew a great deal of attention in the media and among policy analysts in the 1980s and 1990s. Social scientists frequently trace the chronic unemployment of Black men, as well as the overall decline in wages, to the deindustrialization of American cities. The model on which this argument rests, however, fits only a minority of cities, notably Chicago and Detroit. Elsewhere, Blacks did not find extensive employment in manufacturing; indeed, they were denied the best jobs in the industrial economy. Even in cities where Black industrial work was common, service jobs remained the core of Black urban employment. In 1949, in Saint Louis, to take one city, 26 percent of whites and 4 percent of Blacks held skilled and semiskilled jobs. In 1949, the largest category of work among African Americans—30 percent—was service (barbers, caterers, cooks, maids) rather than industrial jobs, and a decade later, more African Americans still worked in service jobs than in industrial jobs. Nor did Black industrial workers fare better than African Americans who worked in other kinds of jobs; they neither earned higher wages nor worked more steadily. In 1949 in Detroit, for example, 43 percent of African Americans employed in industrial jobs, compared to 67 percent of whites, earned a living wage and had steady employment. In a sample of fifteen representative cities, Buffalo, New York, had the highest share of Black industrial workers after Detroit. But Buffalo's Black poverty rate was among the highest. Atlanta, Boston, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., by contrast, had the lowest Black poverty rates, and relatively few African Americans in those cities worked in industrial jobs. (See Figure 2.) Among those cities, there was, in fact, no statistically significant relationship between poverty rates and the share of the African American population in industrial work (Stern 1999).

Figure 2

Correlation of African American poverty rate with manufacturing operatives as percent of African American labor force, selected metropolitan areas, 1950



Key: ATL: Atlanta, BOS: Boston, BLT: Baltimore, BUF: Buffalo, CHI: Chicago, DC: Washington, DC, DET: Detroit, MEM: Memphis, LA: Los Angeles, NO: New Orleans, NY: New York City, PHL: Philadelphia, PIT: Pittsburgh, SF: San Francisco, STL: St. Louis

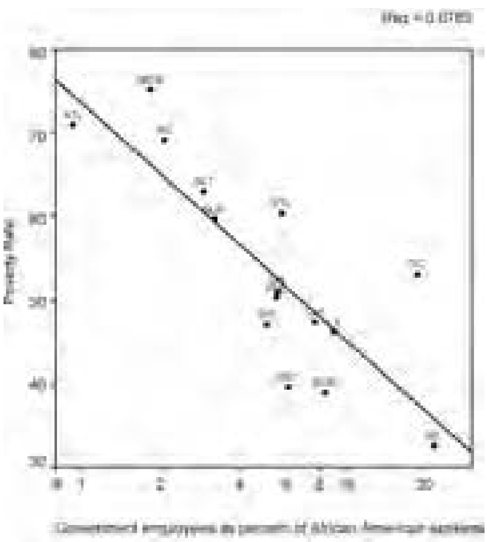
Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

What correlated most directly with different rates of urban Black poverty was the incorporation of African Americans into local political structures, a process that translated into government jobs and expanded welfare benefits. Politics and public service held the key to lower Black poverty rates. After World War II, the Great Migration of Blacks to northern and midwestern cities registered in increased political power and public jobs. This was the work that proved steadiest and paid best. In 1949, when only 32 percent of African Americans held steady jobs that paid a living wage, 75 percent of African American white-collar government employees earned more than poverty wages. Blue-collar government jobs did not pay as well, but at least they were steady. Government employment proved the best predictor of Black poverty rates. In four cities with more than 10 percent of Black household heads in government work in 1949 (Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.), Black poverty rates were below 50 percent; cities with the lowest numbers of Blacks in public employment (Atlanta, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Saint Louis) had the highest rates of Black poverty. (See Figure 3.) In all, public employment explained more than 60 percent of the variance in Black poverty rates across the fifteen cities.

At the same time, county boards administered the public transfer programs that served Blacks directly—the categorical programs in the Social Security Act (Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children, Aid to the Blind) and state general assistance. Where Blacks had some standing in local bureaucracies that determined eligibility and administered aid, they eased the access of poor African Americans to these programs (Kleppner 1985; Grimshaw 1992). This is why the effectiveness of transfer programs in helping Blacks to escape poverty correlated highly with Black public employment. In 1949, it was in cities with the highest levels of public employment that the most African Americans

Figure 3

Relationship of African American poverty to government employees as percent of African American labor force, selected U.S. metropolitan areas, 1950



Key: ATL: Atlanta, BOS: Boston, BLT: Baltimore, BUF: Buffalo, CHI: Chicago, DC: Washington, DC, DET: Detroit, MEM: Memphis, LA: Los Angeles, NO: New Orleans, NY: New York City, PHL: Philadelphia, PIT: Pittsburgh, SF: San Francisco, STL: St. Louis

Source: author's calculations from IPUMS

escaped poverty because of public transfers (Sterner 1973; Lieberman 1998). The size of Black public employment explained 33 percent of the effectiveness of a city's public assistance payments.

In the 1970s and 1980s, attacks on transfer programs led to cuts in public assistance, unemployment insurance, and disability payments, and these cuts reduced Black family incomes. In addition, a number of cities responded to the fiscal crises of these decades by cutting their workforces—actions that affected African Americans severely and disproportionately. Together, reduced public benefits and public-sector layoffs pushed up the Black poverty rate. By the late 1980s, Black public employment had fallen from its high of 9 percent to 7 percent. The decline registered in the economic health of Black communities, where incomes from government jobs were dispersed widely, sustaining many families and businesses. Indeed, the correlation between the African American poverty rate and African American government employment was –0.7 (Stern 1999).

Family, Race, and Public Policy

Conservative writers on social policy have argued that most of the reduction in poverty predated the expansion of government transfer programs and that social welfare programs, in fact, unwittingly made poverty worse by reducing incentives to work (Murray 1984). This argument misreads the history of poverty and badly underestimates the importance of government. Indeed, it masks the relatively constant rate of pretransfer poverty. Ever since income has been measured, the national economy has generated about the same amount of poverty, although poverty has been distributed differently. In 1967, for instance, the pretransfer poverty rate for "nonelderly male-headed families" was 11.5 percent; although it declined between 1969 and 1979, in 1990 it was 11.4 percent. For "nonelderly female-headed households," the 1967 and 1990 rates were 58.8 percent and 54.5 percent; for the elderly, they were 58.3 percent and 51.0 percent (Danziger and Weinberg 1995, 46). The story of poverty's uneven decline, therefore, is much more than a tale of economic growth and rising real wages. It is, even more, a narrative about the effects of public policy.

The conservative narrative also misses the erosion of the iron link that had joined poverty to work. Before the 1950s, poverty remained largely a market phenomenon; in the 1950s, expanded government programs began to partially insulate select groups from the market. As a result, among the more fortunate, low wages—or the absence of earned income—no longer automatically meant poverty. Nor is there credible evidence that the generosity of welfare payments intensified poverty by dampening incentives for work. In the years when welfare rolls grew most rapidly, the real value of public assistance benefits dropped steeply (Schwarz 1983; Stern 1993).

In the 1950s, unemployment insurance, expanded Social Security coverage and increased benefits, and the introduction of disability insurance began to reduce poverty. However, they proved more effective among whites than among Blacks, Latinos, and other minorities, who at the time were heavily employed in occupations that had been deliberately excluded from benefits that most workers had come to take for granted. For similar reasons, these programs also benefited men more than women. Indeed, the reference point for early U.S. social insurance programs was the two-parent family supported by a husband/father employed in the regular labor market.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, for the first time, government mounted programs aimed directly at reducing poverty. The War on Poverty and Great Society rejected the ancient assumption that widespread poverty was normal and inevitable. Instead, they rested on the radical assumption that public programs combined with economic growth could erase poverty from the nation. Unfortunately, public spending and program design proved unequal to the objective. Nonetheless, the era could count a number of major accomplishments. Indeed, the liberalization of public assistance, the expansion of food stamps, the introduction of Supplemental Security Income, and the further expansion of Social Security finally helped minority as well as white families raise their incomes and began to push the benefits of the welfare state beyond the male-breadwinner model. In 1979, for instance, public transfer programs reduced poverty among the partially employed from 24 percent to 17 percent and among those who did not work from 65 percent to 30 percent.

The most effective public antipoverty program has been Social Security. Increased in size and indexed for inflation, Social Security benefits in the 1970s reduced the poverty rate among elderly householders from 26 percent to 17 percent in one decade. Of the elderly at risk in 1979, two-thirds avoided poverty because of government transfer payments. Today, because of public benefits, the poverty rate among the elderly is the lowest for any age group.

The question, then, is why public programs proved so successful at reducing poverty among some groups and not others. Many whites escaped or avoided poverty through the accumulation of assets—notably, real estate—as well as through income. In this, they received preferential help from government. Federal mortgage programs underwrote home ownership in suburbs, from which Blacks and other minorities were excluded, and refused to lend in the inner city and other heavily minority neighborhoods. In various other ways, public programs subsidized the acquisition of appreciating property assets by whites; the result is that, today, vast differences separate the wealth of Blacks and whites of similar incomes (Oliver and Shapiro 1995; Conley 1999). As a practical matter, this means that African Americans and other minorities often cannot turn to a home equity loan to tide them over temporary economic trouble or to finance a comfortable old age. Lacking an economic cushion, they remain more vulnerable than whites, more prone to fall into poverty in moments of crisis.

At the same time, old distinctions between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor launched policies along different trajectories. Social insurance programs, the most effective public antipoverty measures, serve groups considered to be the "deserving" poor, notably the elderly and workers who have lost jobs in the regular labor market. Indexed for inflation since the 1970s, Social Security spending increased while spending on public assistance (income-based programs directed at the "undeserving" poor) stagnated. Indeed, while Social Security benefits grew in real dollars, the value of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payments fell by about half between 1973 and the 1990s (Blank 1995, 179–180). By 1995, Social Security alone cost five times as much as AFDC, food stamps, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) combined (Katz 2001, 11). General assistance programs, that is, state-level public assistance, also were eliminated or slashed in the 1980s along with other public programs that served the poor.

"Dependency"—defined in political debates as the inability to support oneself through work on account of moral or personal failings—has always been the official hallmark of the "undeserving" poor. But in the 1990s, this definition ran up against a troubling fact: For millions of Americans, work in the regular labor market no longer guaranteed escape from poverty. To resolve this contradiction between work and reward—to "make work pay"—Congress relied on the third branch of the public welfare state, taxation, and, prodded by the administration of President Bill Clinton, expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit. This tax benefit lifted many family incomes close to or over the poverty line. It did almost nothing, however, for those not employed in the regular labor force (Katz 2001, 293–298; Howard 1997, 69, 74).

Indeed, public policy aggressively attacked the "dependency" of the presumably "nonworking" poor, particularly single mothers who relied on public benefits. This attack culminated in the 1996 welfare reform bill, which replaced AFDC with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF ended the entitlement to public assistance, put time limits on welfare, mandated work for welfare recipients, and turned the administration and design of welfare programs over to the states in the form of block grants. It also withdrew benefits from many immigrants. In the latter half of the 1990s, a combination of factors—the boom economy, tax changes, and the new legislation—resulted in a massive reduction in the welfare rolls, which dropped by about half within five years. At any one time, roughly six of ten former welfare recipients were employed. But they worked mainly at low-wage jobs with few benefits. Most of them, in fact, remained in poverty (Cancian, Kaplan, and Meyer 1999). The fates of those who were not employed remained unclear, but reports of increased hunger and homelessness surfaced around the country.

Women newly excluded from welfare benefits were disproportionately African American and Puerto Rican and had not graduated from high school. Eighty-three percent of them worked, mostly full-time. But less than half earned enough to lift their families out of poverty. Like the poor of the past, they looked outside the labor market for help: 7 percent escaped poverty because of other family members' earnings; another 4 percent because of private unearned income (private charity and gifts); and a slim 3 percent because of other government aid. For them, as for the poor of a half century earlier, poverty was the rule, not the exception. During the great economic expansion of the late 1990s, 39 percent of families that once would have received welfare lived below the poverty line.

In effect, welfare reform had moved many former welfare recipients into the ranks of the working poor. That consequence troubled remarkably few commentators or legislators, who hailed welfare reform as a great success. Poverty once again had become an accepted feature of the national landscape, regrettable but normal, not, as it had been for a brief time in the 1960s and early 1970s, an anomalous and unnecessary disgrace.

Michael B. Katz and Mark J. Stern

See also: Child Welfare; Crime Policy; Dependency;

Feminization of Poverty; Globalization and Deindustrialization; New Right; Old Age; Poverty, Statistical Measurement of; Poverty Line; Privatization; "Underclass"; War on Poverty; Wealth; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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A

Abbott, Edith

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Maternalist Policy; Social Security Act of 1935

Abbott, Grace

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Maternalist Policy; Social Security Act of 1935; *Social Service Review*

Addams, Jane

See Hull House; Progressive Era and 1920s; Settlement Houses; *Twenty Years at Hull-House*

Adolescent Pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy as a symbol for why poor Americans tend to have poor children became common in public debate during the early 1970s. At the end of the 1980s public opinion polls and governmental action alike demonstrated that many Americans believed that teenagers having babies was a serious and troubling social problem, one that created what was referred to as a "cycle of poverty."

This was not the first time that Americans had worried about young people and their babies. Over the course of the nineteenth century, as informal family and community control over marriage and childbearing began to weaken, public policy and legal doctrine stepped in to fill the gap. In the Progressive Era, the growing acceptance of eugenic thought among both liberals and conservatives alike led to more regulation of the entry into marriage than had been the case previously and more-draconian policies aimed at those individuals thought too young or too poor to have children and at those who produced "illegitimate" births. Such measures as age-of-consent laws, marriage licenses, the institutionalization of the "unfit," and eventually compulsory sterilization were implemented during this period as measures to improve the "fitness" of the American population.

By the 1950s, however, teenage childbearing had become both common and accepted; American teenagers had more babies and were marrying at younger ages than in any other industrialized country. Although some commentators bewailed youthful marriage and motherhood (and fatherhood), the nation as a whole was experiencing a postwar return to what Betty Friedan would later call the "feminine mystique," and few worried about "teenage pregnancy," although there were more pregnant teenagers than there had ever been (or would be again).

Ironically, teenage birth rates were declining from the high rates of the baby boom as American policymakers came to be concerned with the new problem of adolescent pregnancy in the 1970s. Several factors crystallized concern in the face of an actual drop in teenage births. First, the legalization of abortion in 1973 and ensuing political controversy over it made preventing pregnancy and hence abortion an attractive policy option across the political spectrum. Young women just entering their reproductive years, like older women just leaving them, have a disproportionate number of abortions. Because of their youth, they became a focus of public concern and were targeted for education and other interventions.

At the same time, American women (like women in all of the industrialized nations) were beginning to bear children while unmarried. This trend was first visible among young women, particularly African Americans, but became increasingly common among women of all ages, races, and ethnicities, creating growing concerns about the future of marriage.

Finally, national surveys showed that young Americans were increasing their rates of premarital sexual activity. During the 1970s and subsequently, the rates of premarital sexual activity began to converge among young men and young women, among members of minority and majority populations, and among the affluent and the less well-to-do.

As sexual activity increased among all groups, so did pregnancy rates, but birthrates did not. What was obscured in much of the debate was that although increasing numbers of affluent, white, and female teenagers were becoming sexually active, they were more likely than their minority and poor peers to use birth control and substantially more likely to use abortion in order to prevent an adolescent pregnancy from becoming an adolescent birth.

The differences in class and ethnicity between affluent and poor teens was noticed; an extremely influential report published by the Alan Guttmacher Institute in 1976 argued that public policy should acknowledge the class and racial differences between teen mothers and nonmothers (young men virtually disappear from the debate) and move affirmatively to redress the imbalance. In the service of pursuing more reproductive autonomy on the part of poor and minority teens, the Alan Guttmacher Institute in effect proclaimed a causal connection between teen motherhood and poverty, suggesting that teen motherhood makes young women poorer than they would otherwise be.

A growing body of data suggests that the correlation between giving birth at a young age and subsequent poverty of mother or child is, to say the least, overstated. Sexual activity at young ages, failure to use contraception, the decision not to have an abortion, and the decision not to marry all serve as filters, sorting in such a way that a young person who started sex at an early age, did not use contraception at all or effectively, did not seek an abortion, and did not get married is probably *already* poorer, having more trouble in school, and more discouraged than the larger pool of sexually active teens, or even the pool of teens who become pregnant.

In the 1990s, a discourse of "predatory" older males emerged, serving to legitimate even more paternalistic and ultimately punitive policies toward pregnant teenagers. (Since most teen mothers are in their late teens, and since most women have relationships with men on average two years older, it is not terribly surprising that eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds are likely to have partners in their early twenties.) Growing alarm about "illegitimacy" and about "babies having babies" also fueled support for policies that singled out teenagers for discipline and regulation. Culminating these policies was the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, popularly known as "welfare reform," which severely limits welfare participation by unmarried teenagers (on the grounds that the availability of welfare contributed to teen out-of-wedlock birthrates), calls for criminalizing consenting sexual behavior among adolescents, promotes abstinence before marriage or economic "self-sufficiency," and encourages marriage as the normatively expected behavior for poor women (this in a context in which virtually all first world nations are seeing a dramatic decrease in marriage itself and a dramatic increase in childbearing outside of marriage).

The idea that young women can rescue themselves from poverty by using welfare only as a last resort and even then only under adult supervision, by being sexually abstinent until marriage and "self-sufficiency," and by becoming and remaining married is an attractive idea to many Americans—especially those who are troubled by changes in gender roles since the mid-1970s. But none of these strategies address the preexisting poverty that constrain poor teenagers' choices; nor do they cure the economic deprivation and inequality that keep teenage mothers poor.

Kristin Luker

See also: Adoption; Birth Control; Child Care; Child-Saving; Foster Care; Orphanages; Reproductive Rights; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Adoption

In the United States, adoption has always been associated with transferring children born to resourceless women into families with resources. Before the late 1940s, adoption was not a common practice in this country. In the nineteenth century, urban, church-related child welfare organizations, such as the Children's Aid Society in New York, transported small groups of "orphans"—usually immigrant children defined by "child rescue" workers as insufficiently and improperly supervised by their impoverished immigrant mothers—to farm families in the West. These children were sometimes formally adopted and often provided their new households with much-needed farm labor.

Generally, however, poor women, even unwed mothers, kept and raised their own children, often within supportive, if shamed, kin networks. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, eugenicists and other mainstream social commentators associated both white and African American unwed mothers with biological inferiority. These females, the experts said, were products of depraved upbringings, alcoholic parents, and slum living and had subnormal intelligence. Such women were unlikely to produce babies desirable to better-off families.

After World War II, meanings associated with nonconforming childbearing became thoroughly racialized in the United States. Experts now defined white girls and women (but not females of other races) who had babies outside of marriage as psychologically disturbed rather than as biologically inferior. Child welfare professionals and others announced in this era that the babies of these women were born untainted and should be removed from unwed women who proved, by having a child but no husband, that they were not fit mothers.

Between approximately 1945 and 1973, in part drawing on this theory of white illegitimate pregnancy, social workers, psychologists and teachers, clergy, and other community authorities oversaw the construction and functioning of an adoption mandate as the solution to unmarried sex and pregnancy of hundreds of thousands of deeply shamed white young women in the United States. The white babies of these women became super-valuable commodities for the new, burgeoning adoption market. The biological mothers of these babies were generally not from resourceless families, though often, in the context of the adoption mandate, parents threatened to withhold all support from a daughter who refused to surrender her illegitimate child for adoption. Also in this era, white, unwed mothers, like other young women, had few opportunities to earn a living wage, and they often had no knowledge of the welfare system, whose benefits might have helped them keep their children if they so chose. Decades after the adoption mandate collapsed, adoptees, unaware of the coercive context of relinquishment, typically believe that they were abandoned by selfish, unloving women unwilling to be mothers.

It is notable that in this era, as white babies became valuable commodities, social commentators and policymakers continued to construe African American and other babies of color born outside marriage as tainted products of biologically inferior mothers and as valueless, not marketable.

The national legalization of abortion in 1973 yielded a startling and unexpected consequence regarding adoption. Thousands of young women began to resist the adoption mandate after the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* (410 U.S. 113 [1973]), insisting to parents, social workers, and community experts that if they could decide whether or not to stay pregnant, surely they could decide whether or not to be mothers to the child they gave birth to. Also by the 1970s, young women had access to a larger number of jobs and careers that paid living wages. These factors, coupled with the legalization of abortion, caused the number of white babies available for adoption to fall precipitously and the number of never-married single-mother-headed households to rise rapidly.

Persons seeking babies to adopt now largely had to rely on agencies and direct marketing strategies targeting the poorest, most vulnerable and resourceless young women in the United States and on agencies developing baby-transfer networks in the poorest countries in the world. Many potential adopters have looked abroad for babies before or instead of adopting homeless children of color in the United States.

For the most part, families of color (for decades formally and informally shut out of adoption agency services as both suppliers and seekers of babies) moved children around within kin networks when parents were unable to provide care. In the second half of the twentieth century, as the kin networks of very poor women and of the working poor became attenuated, the state placed many poor and minority children whose mothers were variously incapacitated into foster care. This child rescue system was devised to provide temporary care for children who could in time return home or who would eventually be adopted. Social workers' lack of confidence in family preservation has combined with a lack of resources to undermine permanent placement of children in families, however. This, along with the persistence of poverty in many minority communities and the relatively small number of persons willing or able to adopt children of color—especially those who are no longer infants or who are disabled—has caused a long-term crisis in the foster care system. In 1972, an organization of Black social workers issued a manifesto calling for an end to the practice, inspired by the civil rights era, of white families' adopting children of color. Government officials have since repudiated this call and mandated, instead, "color-blind" and "culturally blind" adoption in the United States.

In the last decades of the twentieth century and continuing in the twenty-first century, conservative public policy experts have defined adoption as the solution to the abortion problem and as a solution to illegitimate motherhood among poor women. In both cases, adoption is promoted as a child rescue operation, though one that thoroughly discounts the status and the experiences of pregnant women and mothers.

Some feminist scholars define adoption as a feminist issue not on the basis of "essentialist" claims that all women want to have children or that all women want to mother the children they give birth to. Rather, these feminists argue that the recognition that almost all babies available for adoption were born to poor and otherwise resourceless women raises important questions about which women in the United States and around the world get to be the mothers of their own children and which do not. Traditionally, considerations of adoption have focused on the child's "best interests" and on "child rescue" while effacing the mother entirely. Understanding the circumstances that push particular women to surrender their children illuminates the centrality of women's poverty and vulnerability to both the enterprise of adoption and to definitions of legitimate motherhood.

Rickie Solinger

See also: Child Welfare; Child-Saving; Foster Care; Maternalism; Orphanages; Reproductive Rights

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Affirmative Action

"Affirmative action" is an umbrella term for an assortment of measures designed to break down segregation in employment and education and ensure equal access for members of groups historically excluded from full citizenship. A key demand of the Black civil rights movement since the early 1960s, affirmative action has since been embraced as a strategy for inclusion by other groups, most prominently women and Chicanos. It was first applied to jobs and later broadened to education. Plans may be voluntary, adopted in conciliation with government agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), or imposed by the courts; some have been promoted by labor unions in collective bargaining agreements. The programs vary. Most contain "soft" affirmative action measures: wider and more-active recruitment of minorities and women, for example, or training provisions for those who have the ability but not the specific skills needed. Some programs include "hard" measures, such as numerical goals and timetables for hiring or admitting the underrepresented, or more rarely—in cases of well-documented discrimination—specific quotas. The phrase "affirmative action" comes from the 1935 Wagner Act. It was first used in association with racial justice by President John F. Kennedy in a 1961 executive order and was then extended by the presidencies of Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon in later executive orders broadening the mandate of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) for oversight of hiring practices on federal contracts. Most important, the employment section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, empowered courts to order such "affirmative action as may be appropriate" to remedy discrimination. In doing so, the courts have built up an important body of case law defining discrimination and equal access.

These policies arose from the recognition that simply announcing equal opportunity would not dislodge deep-rooted patterns of institutional discrimination based on race, gender, and national origin. Some reformers also argued for affirmative action as a form of compensation for the cumulative damage of past as well as ongoing discrimination and as reparations for slavery and Jim Crow. Martin Luther King Jr., in his 1963 *Why We Can't Wait,* himself made the case for "some compensatory consideration for the handicaps" Blacks had "inherited from the past." The burden of that history and ongoing discrimination placed Blacks at a disadvantage. "It is impossible to create a formula for the future which does not take into account that our society has been doing something special *against* the Negro for hundreds of years," reasoned King. "How then can he be absorbed into the mainstream of American life if we do not do something *for* him now, in order to balance the equation and equip him to compete on a just and equal basis?" Fairness demanded "more" than formal equality (King 1963, 134).

Affirmative action became widely embraced in the mid-1960s because it addressed ongoing problems of employment discrimination, poverty, and growing unrest fed by chronic unemployment and underemployment among African Americans. Job segregation by race was as old as slavery in the United States. It was upheld by law in much of the South until 1964 and by entrenched practice throughout the country. Even unions perpetuated segregation through nepotism in the crafts and separate seniority lines for whites and Blacks in industry. The new affirmative action policy offered a way to break down the racial division of labor at a time when protests against employment discrimination were sweeping the nation's urban centers, particularly at government-funded city construction projects but also at private businesses large and small. At the same time, affirmative action promised to reduce Black poverty rates just as the mechanization of southern cotton farming and the move of much northern industry to the suburbs were concentrating poverty in urban ghettos. Politically, the policy appealed to middle-class African Americans expecting the better jobs for which their training had prepared them, to working-class Blacks shut out of higher-paying blue-collar and white-collar jobs, to white policymakers juggling many urgent problems tied to low incomes, and even to large employers seeking protection from costly lawsuits for discrimination.

Affirmative action was also a political response to several decades of struggle mounted by civil rights groups against workplace discrimination: the "Don't buy where you can't work" boycotts of the Depression years, the March on Washington movement during World War II that prompted the creation of the short-lived federal Fair Employment Practices Commission, and Left-led trade union efforts in the 1940s and 1950s to combat racial injustice on the job that fell victim to McCarthyism. By the early 1960s, the goal of full economic inclusion for Black Americans had gained stronger backing through such organizing as the 1963 March on Washington *for Jobs* and Freedom, the National Urban League's campaign for a domestic Marshall Plan, a decade of struggles for employment access waged by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the movement for a Freedom Budget, which proposed a $100 billion plan to achieve "freedom from want" in ten years.

Affirmative action plans had barely come into effect for Blacks before members of other long-excluded groups demanded coverage. The largest and most vocal group was women. The National Organization for Women (NOW), soon the nation's best-known feminist group, came into being out of anger over the EEOC's early refusal to take sex discrimination seriously even though two in every five complaints came from women. Mexican Americans also mobilized at the outset. They filed the lion's share of "national origin" complaints under Title VII and remained in the forefront of Hispanic organizing for affirmative action thereafter. Since

A young boy demonstrating for affirmative action holds a sign reading "Equal Opportunity is a BIRTH RIGHT!" at the University of California, Berkeley. Students and families are protesting to keep affirmative action during a demonstration outside a Board of Regents meeting. (David Butow/Corbis SABA)

the late 1970s, some Asian American organizations have pressed for inclusion in affirmative action programs. In recent years, however, some conservative Asian Americans have opposed such programs, particularly in California, arguing that special efforts to include Blacks in the state's flagship universities in effect exclude accomplished students of Asian descent, an argument the nation's leading Jewish organizations began making in the early 1970s when affirmative action came to colleges, universities, and professional schools.

Since it was first developed, affirmative action has been used in countless institutions with varying levels of commitment. Social scientists have found measuring its distinctive impact a challenge when so many other variables are in play. In general, however, the consensus among economists (who have analyzed the issue with the most methodological rigor) is that the policies had a limited but significant impact in improving employment and reducing poverty in the heyday of their application in the 1970s, and especially in government employment. For various reasons, Blacks made great headway with these policies in some industries, such as textiles, while other industries, including construction and the uniform trades, proved much harder to change. Three things have subsequently undercut progress, however. First, economic restructuring produced job loss in the industries where working-class Blacks had scored the greatest gains after 1965, textiles, steel, and auto among them. Second, affirmative action's efficacy declined markedly in the Reagan era due to much-reduced federal enforcement. Third, antidiscrimination efforts have also been weakened by the chronic underfunding of the EEOC by Congress and by the unwillingness of the OFCC to cancel large contracts under its jurisdiction even for egregious discrimination.

As such halfhearted enforcement might suggest, the struggle to open employment and education has been contentious in the United States, in part because exclusion runs so deep in the nation's history. Affirmative action has also been subject to fierce opposition and backlash from several quarters. Most conservatives fought affirmative action from the beginning. Yet they had also opposed the Civil Rights Act and *any* government action that treated discrimination as a social problem worthy of public energy. Millions of whites felt the same way: In the late 1950s and early 1960s, they rejected measures to ensure fair treatment for Blacks in hiring and defended employers' "right" to discriminate if they so chose. Many whites—pluralities in some opinion polls—saw even simple equal opportunity as "special treatment" for minorities and a threat to their own customary privileges. Conservative political groups, playing upon this sentiment, labored in print, speech, and litigation to change the terms of debate, depicting whites and men as the victims of so-called reverse discrimination and men of color and women as grasping, illegitimate claimants of unfair advantage.

Ironically, though, the group that may have most turned the tide on affirmative action was a vocal subset of liberals, most of them white male academics and writers who mobilized when higher education faculties came into the policy's catchment after 1970 due to pressure from white women. Although some continued to support "soft" affirmative action, their arguments provided conservatives with a winning language they had hitherto lacked. Denouncing affirmative action as "quotas" and "discrimination" that violated "equal rights for all," they charged that the policy violated the spirit of the civil rights movement and the principle of colorblind opportunity. The troubled economy of the mid-1970s and early 1980s then enhanced the appeal of zero-sum politics that treated any gain for Blacks or women as a loss for whites or men. The presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush aggressively reoriented the Justice Department and the EEOC toward narrow interpretations of discrimination (focused on conscious intent and individual cases rather than on patterns resulting from unintentional institutional practices) and more-formalistic standards of equal opportunity. The Clinton era slowed but did not reverse this shift in practice. It is doubtful that affirmative action programs will again be as ambitious as in the 1970s, and it is likely that they will be scaled back further in court challenges now pending.

Affirmative action's standing today is paradoxical. On the one hand, it has become a veritable epithet among many white Americans, who interpret it as "quotas" that grant undeserved rewards to the less qualified, violate fair play, and deprive whites, especially white men, of opportunities that would otherwise be theirs. (Some social scientists report that mere mention of the phrase evokes hostility that brings rancor to subsequent topics.) On the other hand, partly through affirmative action, "diversity" has become an ideal in American public life as never before; it influences even conservative Republicans in their staffing choices.

Nancy MacLean

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Civil Rights Movement; Racism

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The Affluent Society, *John Kenneth Galbraith*

John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–) has been America's best-known economist since the 1950s, and throughout his career he was deeply involved in issues of poverty and development.

His prominence in America's poverty debates dates from *The Affluent Society* (1958), in which he critiqued fellow economists and fellow liberals for their preoccupation with economic growth. Arguing that by midcentury, America had moved to a new level of affluence, he decried the country's excessive worship of materialism and its systematic underfunding of public goods and services, leaving well-fed and well-dressed citizens to drive their immense, chrome-plated and gas-guzzling cars through blighted cities and polluted countrysides. In making his central case, however, he remarked that poverty was "more nearly an afterthought," a phrase he came to regret (he meant a comparison to the Great Depression); the book's actual discussion of poverty made clear that extensive antipoverty funding was a high priority. In a widely read debate with economist Leon Keyserling in the *New Republic* and in subsequent editions of *The Affluent Society,* he made his views much clearer.

Galbraith in fact was acutely familiar with American and global poverty. Born into a progressive, politically active farm family in Ontario, Canada, he graduated from Ontario Agricultural College (B.S., 1931) and in agricultural economics from the University of California, Berkeley (M.S., 1933; Ph.D., 1934). He worked as a Harvard economics instructor and a New Deal adviser on agricultural policy (specializing in land use policy, agricultural credit, and price support systems) to relieve rural poverty during the 1930s, and he coauthored a quite liberal book on economic planning. During World War II, as deputy head of the Office of Price Administration, he became intimately familiar with both consumer prices and issues of household income and wealth distribution, and he advocated wartime economic policies that favored the poor, working, and middle classes. Then, as a director of the Strategic Bombing Survey, he meticulously examined the wartime German economy, knowledge he put to important use immediately after the war as the State Department's director of economic recovery planning for both Germany and Japan. Back at Harvard by the late 1940s (after several years spent introducing Keynesianism to corporate CEOs as economics editor at *Fortune*), he pioneered the university's first courses in economic development. In the 1950s, he also served as an economic consultant to the governments of Puerto Rico and India.

Galbraith had become a Keynesian in the late 1930s, shortly after the appearance of *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936) by British political economist John Maynard Keynes. By the 1950s, he had developed his own powerful critiques of both orthodox neoclassical economics and the newly emerging "mainstream" Keynesian synthesis that viewed permanent full-employment growth as its macroeconomic summum bonum. In the case of American poverty, he was a roughly a "structuralist" who believed that aggregate growth per se was doing—and would do—too little to address the "special" conditions of the poor, especially in geographic "pockets of poverty" such as Appalachia and the inner cities or when men and women were poor in part because of racial discrimination, age and gender, health, or addiction.

Appointed ambassador to India by President John F. Kennedy, he managed to remain involved in the administration's domestic policy debates as a powerful advocate for increased public spending, with a particular emphasis on antipoverty programs, as an alternative to the tax-cut strategy favored by Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisors. Abroad, he was a vocal advocate of increased economic development aid, and in particular of investment in education and public infrastructures designed to relieve poverty. After Kennedy's death, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed him to the planning board that created the Office of Economic Opportunity, where he was actively involved in shaping several of its early programs (and where he criticized attempts to apply Policy-Planning-Budgeting methods borrowed from the Defense Department as "too narrow and insensitive"). After breaking with Johnson over the Vietnam War and becoming a prominent antiwar figure, he continued campaigning for major increases in antipoverty spending, especially in his work with the presidential campaigns of Eugene McCarthy (1968) and George McGovern (1972). Elected president of the American Economic Association in 1971, he focused the group's annual convention on poverty and tied the issue to overarching problems of income maldistribution, arms spending, and racial and sexual discrimination. The author of nearly four dozen books and hundreds of articles, he has always insisted on linking economic theory and policy to democratic politics, arguing that the elimination of poverty (as part of the broader and conscious design of a good society) is a matter of political choice that electoral majorities must make, despite the opposition of the well-to-do and vested economic interests.

Richard Parker

See also: Economic Theories; Labor Markets; War on Poverty

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African American Migration

The migration of African Americans from the South to the northern, midwestern, and western parts of the country was one of the most significant developments of the twentieth-century United States, with major implications for the history of poverty and social welfare. Although there had been some out-migration before then, African Americans remained overwhelmingly concentrated in the southern states, primarily in rural areas, at the start of the twentieth century. By the 1970s, after decades of continuous migration interrupted only by the Great Depression of the 1930s, African Americans were a highly urbanized, increasingly visible presence throughout the country, and especially in the large industrial cities of the North and Midwest. Known as the Great Migration because of its transformative influence on American society and culture, this massive population shift reshaped the economic prospects for African Americans, bringing considerable opportunity and upward mobility but also establishing new patterns of poverty in racially segregated urban ghettos. It also left an indelible mark on popular perceptions of poverty, which became more and more distorted by racial fears and stereotypes as Black poverty became more urbanized and visible. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, a variety of scholars, policy experts, and journalists had adopted the notion of "underclass" to describe and explain increases in Black urban poverty. According to these analysts, the urban underclass—defined as those families and individuals who existed outside the mainstream of the American occupational structure—was a new phenomenon that signaled a shift from relatively low levels of unemployment and social disorder before the 1960s to a new era of widespread joblessness, crime, and welfare dependency thereafter. What "underclass" theorists failed to acknowledge, however, was that such urban problems were not entirely new. They had characterized earlier Black life and were rooted in the older dynamics of class, racial, and geographic inequality that African Americans encountered under the impact of mass urbanization, shifts in industrial capitalism, and enduring racism outside as well as within the South.

During World War I, an estimated 700,000 to 1 million Blacks left the South. Another 800,000 to 1 million left during the 1920s. Whereas the pre–World War I migrants had moved to southern cities, including Atlanta, Birmingham, Louisville, and Norfolk, and to a few northern cities, such as Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia, Blacks after the war moved throughout the urban North and West. Moreover, whereas upper South and border states had been the chief sources of out-migration before World War I, Deep South states dominated the migration stream to northern and western cities. Blacks born in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina, for example, made up over 60 percent of the Black population increase in all of Illinois as well as in the city of Chicago between 1910 and 1920. At the same time, whereas Black women migrants had outnumbered men before the war, men migrants now outnumbered women. In the rapidly industrializing cities of Cleveland, Detroit, and Milwaukee, for example, the sex ratio ranged between 120 and 140 men to every 100 women during the war years.

A variety of factors underlay Black population movement. African Americans sought an alternative to sharecropping, disenfranchisement, and racial injustice in the South. In 1917, the *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* articulated the forces that propelled Blacks outward from the South. "Neither character, the accumulation of property, the fostering of the Church, the schools and a better and higher standard of the home" had made a difference in the status of Black southerners. "Confidence in the sense of justice, humanity and fair play of the white South is gone," the paper concluded (quoted in Grossman 1989, 34). One migrant articulated the same mood in verse:

> "An' let one race have all de South
> Where color lines are drawn
> For "Hagar's child" done [stem] de tide
> Farewell
> we're good and gone."
> (Marks 1989, v)

African Americans were also attracted by the pull of opportunities in the North. The labor demands of northern industries, legislation restricting immigration, and greater access to their rights as citizens (including the franchise) all encouraged the movement of Blacks into northern cities. Wages in northern industries usually ranged from $3.00 to $5.00 per eight-hour day, compared to as little as 75 cents to $1.00 per day in southern agriculture and no more than $2.50 for a nine-hour day in southern industries. Moreover, between 1915 and 1925, the average wages of domestics in some northern cities doubled. Northern cities also promised access to better health care, schools, and the vote.

African Americans often viewed the Great Migration to northern cities in glowing terms: "The Promised Land," the "Flight out of Egypt," and "Going into Canaan." One Black man wrote back to his southern home, "The (Col.) men are making good. [The job] never pays less than $3.00 per day for (10) hours." In her letter home, a Black female related, "I am well and thankful to say I am doing well. . . . I work in Swifts Packing Company." "Up here," another migrant said, "our people are in a different light." Over and over again, African Americans confirmed that up here, a man can "feel more like a man" (Drake and Cayton [1945] 1993, 99). As one southern Black man wrote home from the North, "I should have been here twenty years ago. . . .

I just begin to feel like a man. . . . My children are going to the same school with the whites and I don't have to humble to no one. I have registered. Will vote in the next election and there isn't any yes Sir or no Sir. It's all yes and no, Sam and Bill" (Grossman 1989, 90).

The Great Migration was by no means a simple move from southern agriculture to northern cities. It had specific regional and subregional components. More Blacks migrated to southern cities between 1900 and 1920 than to northern ones. Moreover, African Americans frequently made up from 25 to 50 percent of the total number of migrants in southern cities, compared to little more than 10 percent in northern cities. Before moving to northern cities like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, for example, rural migrants first moved to southern cities like Birmingham, Charleston, Jacksonville, Memphis, New Orleans, and Savannah. The Jefferson County cities of Birmingham and Bessemer, with extensive rail connections, served as the major distribution points for Blacks going north from Alabama. The Southern, Louisville, and Nashville railroad, the Saint Louis and San Francisco railroad, and the Illinois Central railroads all traveled northward from Birmingham and Bessemer. In Georgia, cities like Albany, Americus, and Columbus served as distribution points for Blacks leaving from west Georgia and east Alabama, while Brunswick, Savannah, Valdosta, and Waycross served as distribution centers for Blacks leaving the depressed agricultural counties of southern and southeastern Georgia. To Blacks moving up from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, Chicago was the logical destination, whereas cities in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and the New England states attracted Blacks from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia. Upon arrival in northern cities, Black population movement usually developed secondary streams. As one contemporary observer noted, "All of the arrivals here [Chicago] did not stay. . . . They were only temporary guests awaiting the opportunity to proceed further and settle in surrounding cities and towns" (Scott 1920, 106, 134).

Southern Blacks helped organize their own movement into the urban North. They developed an extensive communications network, which included railroad employees who traveled back and forth between northern and southern cities, northern Black weeklies like the *Chicago Defender* and the *Pittsburgh Courier,* and an expanding chain of kin and friends. Using their networks of families and friends, African Americans learned about transportation, jobs, and housing before moving. In a variety of settings—including barber shops and grocery stores—their conversations soon established a litany of reasons for leaving. Also fueling the migration process were the letters, money, and testimonies of migrants who returned to visit. As one South Carolina migrant to Pittsburgh recalled,

> I was plowing in the field and it was real hot. And I stayed with some of the boys who would leave home and [come] back . . . and would have money, and they had clothes. I didn't have that. We all grew up together. And I said, "Well, as long as I stay here I'm going to get nowhere." And I tied that mule to a tree and caught a train. (Gottlieb 1987, 43)

Other migrants formed migration clubs, pooled their resources, and moved in groups. Deeply enmeshed in Black kin and friendship networks, Black women played a conspicuous role in helping organize the Black migration. As recent scholarship suggests, women were the "primary kinkeepers" (quoted in Trotter 1991, 33). Moreover, they often had their own gender-specific reasons for leaving the rural South. African American women resented stereotyped images of the Black mammy, who presumably placed loyalty to white families above loyalty to her own. Black women's migration reinforced the notion that lifting the race and improving the image of Black women were compatible goals.

As Blacks moved into northern cities in

growing numbers, a Black industrial working class emerged. Southern Black sharecroppers, farm laborers, sawmill hands, dockworkers, and railroad hands all moved into new positions in the urban economy. In Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Pittsburgh, the percentage of Black men employed in industrial jobs increased from an estimated 10–20 percent of the Black labor force in 1910 to about 60–70 percent in 1920 and 1930. Black women also entered industrial jobs, although their gains were far less than those of Black men. In Chicago, the number of Black women in manufacturing trades increased from less than 1,000 in 1910 to over 3,000 in 1920. Industrial jobs now made up 15 percent of the jobs held by Black women, compared to less than 7 percent in 1910 (Spear 1967, 32–33, 152–153).

Although labor agents initially helped recruit Black workers for jobs in meatpacking, auto, steel, and other mass-production industries, these agents were soon supplanted by the expansion of Black familial and communal networks. Employers testified that, "'After the initial group movement by agents, Negroes kept going by twos and threes. These were drawn by letters, and by actual advances of money, from Negroes who had already settled in the North.' . . . 'every Negro that makes good in the North and writes back to his friends starts off a new group'" (Trotter 1996, 1783).

African Americans improved their lot by taking jobs in urban industries. Nonetheless, they entered the industrial economy on the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder. Racial barriers blocked their ascent up the job ladder, leaving them more vulnerable to poverty than were whites. Moreover, as their numbers increased in northern and western cities, they faced growing restrictions on where they could stay, educate their children, and gain access to much-needed social services and public accommodations. Racially motivated riots erupted in Chicago, East Saint Louis, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh during the era of the Great Migration and especially during the years immediately after the end of World War I, when fears of economic downturn and residential overcrowding exacerbated the racist attitudes and beliefs with which many white residents—including some immigrants who themselves had suffered discrimination—greeted the urban "newcomers." Such riots not only helped reinforce residential segregation in northern cities but also highlighted the spread of African American poverty from rural to urban America.

Although the incidence of poverty depended on a variety of factors (including up- and downswings in the business cycle), African Americans experienced greater levels of poverty than did their white counterparts. In the 1920s, for example, the average Harlem family earned $1,300, compared to $1,570 for a typical white family. According to an intensive health study of the area, the Black death rate from all causes was 42 percent higher than the city's rate; infant mortality was 111 per 1,000 births, compared to 64.5 for the city as a whole; and tuberculosis deaths were two and a half times the city rate. Although Blacks had fewer young children than the city average (17.5 percent for Blacks, compared to 24.5 percent for the city in 1930), their cases before the juvenile authorities rose from 2.8 percent of all cases in 1914 to 11.7 percent of all cases in 1930 (Trotter 1993, 74).

Not only was urban Black poverty disproportionate to that of whites, but it became more spatially concentrated within the urban environment. Under the impact of World War I and the 1920s, the size and number of racially segregated neighborhoods increased, and the relationship between ghettoization, proletarianization, and poverty intensified. Between 1920 and 1930, residential segregation increased in all major cities. The "index of dissimilarity"—a standard measure of segregation—rose from 66.8 to 85.2 percent in Chicago; 60.6 to 85.0 percent in Cleveland; 64.1 to 77.9 percent in Boston; and 46.0 to 63.0 percent in Philadelphia (Taeuber and Taeuber 1965, 54).

Poverty increased not only within the Black community but also within certain neighborhoods. In his studies of Chicago and New York City, sociologist E. Franklin Frazier demonstrated the division of the Black urban community along socioeconomic lines. Each city contained significant areas of interclass mixing, but poverty increasingly characterized specific sections of the ghetto. In Chicago, based on the records of the city's United Charities, Frazier found "under normal conditions" between 8 and 9 percent of the families in the poorer areas "dependent upon charity." Rates of dependency declined "in the successive zones," so that only 1 percent of Black families depended on charity in the highest socioeconomic zone. Spousal desertion and nonsupport, crime, and educational and skill levels also varied from zone to zone.

African Americans responded to the impact of poverty and class and racial restrictions on their lives by intensifying their institution-building, cultural, political, economic, and civil rights activities. They built churches, mutual aid societies, fraternal orders, and social clubs; established a range of new business and professional services; and launched diverse labor, civil rights, and political organizations. These activities culminated in the rise of the "New Negro" movement during World War I and its florescence during the 1920s, a decade that saw the rise of the Black nationalist movement led by Marcus Garvey, the cultural renaissance in Harlem and other African American enclaves, the growing militance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the spread of the National Urban League (NUL) movement, and the emergence of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP). While voicing the demands and sensibilities of increasingly urban working- and middle-class migrants, such organizations developed programs designed to counteract the impact of urban poverty on the lives of African Americans.

The African American struggle against poverty also included the unique contributions and strategies of the poor themselves. Although some of these strategies had analogues among whites, others, like the use of blues songs to articulate reactions to poverty, reflected the unique culture of African Americans. One song, for example, begins, "Ain't yer heard of my po' story? / Den listen to me." The blues singer William Lee "Big Bill" Conley recorded many of these songs from the mid-1920s through the 1940s. In one song, "Looking Up at Down," he said, "Yeah, I'm down so low, baby. . . . lord, I declare I'm looking up to down." In 1938, another bluesman, John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson, recorded "Moonshine." The song captured the debilitating impact of alcohol and efforts to overcome it:

> Now and it's moon shine
> Moon shine have harmed many men
> Now moon shine will make you shoot dice
> Make you want to fight . . .
> Now that is the reason why
> I believe I'll make a change.
> (Sackheim 1969, 416; Dixon and Goodrich, 1982, 74–82, 846–847)

Another song captured the pain of tuberculosis, often called the "scourge of the Negro race" during the period:

> T.B. is all right to have
> But your friends treat you so low down: you will ask them for a favor
> And they will even stop coming 'round.
> (Sackheim 1969, 416; Dixon and Goodrich 1982, 74–82, 846–847)

Describing his movement from city to city, one migrant stated, "We sing songs as we ride [on railroad boxcars] and when we stopped we sing them" (this and the remaining quotations in Trotter 1993, 79). Songs not only enabled the Black poor to articulate their reactions to poverty; they helped them endure.

Unable to earn enough to buy food and pay rent, some Blacks participated in the illegal underground economy. Numerous poor Blacks played what was known as the policy game: They placed small bets amounting to as little as one cent and received relatively good returns if they "hit" the lucky number. Policy became a major business and employer of the unemployed. During the Depression, one South Side Chicago Black tried to visualize the city without policy: "7,000 people would be unemployed and business in general would be crippled, especially taverns and even groceries, shoe stores, and many other business enterprises who depend on the buying power of the South side." At the same time, a Harlem resident called numbers the Black man's "stock market." Moreover, gambling establishments often represented a source of direct aid to the poor. As one interviewee stated, "Well, the Christians would always give me good advice but that was all, so I just got so I wouldn't bother with them and whenever I wanted anything I used to make it to the gamblers."

Others turned to prostitution. As one New York City woman stated,

> I don't play the street—I mean I don't lay every pair of pants that comes along. I look 'em over first, I'm strictly a Packard broad. I only grab a drunk that looks like his pockets are loaded. If they get rough my man [pimp] kick 'em out. When they're drunk they shoot the works. I've gotten over two hundred dollars, and so help me, the bastard didn't even touch me. He got happy just lookin at me.

Still others turned to theft and wound up in the penitentiary or jail, but even incarceration sometimes helped: "I have stole small things. I don't reckon I would care if I was turned over to officers, because I would have a place to stay. You see I don't have any particular place to go and stay, so I could stay there. I'd just have a place to stay."

As the nation entered the Depression and then World War II, the Great Migration continued to transform both Black and white America. After diminishing during the economic downturn of the 1930s, migration out of the rural South resumed at an even faster pace, bringing more than 3 million African Americans to the cities of the North, Midwest, and, increasingly, the West, where the booming wartime and postwar economy once again offered the promise of better-paying industrial jobs, educational opportunities, and hoped-for improvements in race relations. The technological revolution in southern agriculture, the emergence of the New Deal welfare state, and the militant modern civil rights and Black power movements of the 1950s and 1960s all helped complete the long-term transformation of Blacks from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban people. By the 1970s, African Americans, once the most rural of Americans, had become the most urbanized segment of the U.S. population.

Like their predecessors in the Great Migration, however, the postwar migrants experienced varied and changing economic fortunes along with enduring barriers of racial and class exclusion. Although many were able to establish a foothold in the blue-collar or professional workforce, Blacks still faced discrimination in hiring and promotion that kept them underrepresented in better-paying jobs. Equally significant, even as African Americans (and other people of color) were arriving in record numbers, two related developments were transforming the large industrial cities they had looked to as the land of hope. One was the vast migration of white middle- and working-class residents to rapidly expanding, racially exclusive suburbs—with substantial assistance from federal government subsidies denied to nonwhite urban dwellers. Second, and related, was the migration of industrial jobs to the suburbs, to low-paying southern states, and, increasingly, to other parts of the globe. Meanwhile, while work opportunities were diminishing in the cities, persistent residential segregation was helping assure that Blacks would remain a heavily urbanized group—a pattern that has only recently and gradually begun to change. As the nation increasingly shifted from a goods-producing to a service-producing economy during the 1980s and 1990s, African Americans also faced new forms of urban poverty, characterized by long-term unemployment and rapid disinvestments in urban neighborhoods amid middle-class flight. By then, poverty had been widely identified as a "Black" problem, with consequences reflected in the diminishing support for antipoverty and welfare programs. In this and other ways, although the idea of an urban "underclass" camouflaged past forms of urban poverty, its focus on a highly stigmatized form of poverty did underscore the reconfigurations of urban, and African American, poverty over time.

Joe William Trotter Jr.

See also: Housing Policy; Racial Segregation; Racism; "Underclass"; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal

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African Americans

African Americans' relationship to social welfare policy has been shaped by slavery and its lasting impacts. African Americans are disproportionately represented among the poor, the less educated, the more imprisoned, and the medically underserved. These experiences and circumstances arise from the distinctive poverty of a people whose legal status as property under slavery gave rise to a host of legal, political, and economic disabilities even after Emancipation. Any exploration of African Americans and social welfare must consider the political regime of segregation, discrimination, and inequality that succeeded the institution of slavery in the late nineteenth century. Supported by state and national laws until the mid-twentieth century, this regime governed African Americans' relationship to the education system, the labor market, housing, and health care. Although officially repudiated by federal judicial and legislative action, the regime of discrimination and inequality continues to animate important social policies, especially welfare.

Overwhelmingly, African Americans are residentially segregated in urban areas. This pattern of segregation followed African Americans even as millions moved out of the South during the first half of the twentieth century. Segregation resulted from deliberately discriminatory housing policies, such as restrictive covenants. Even as formal segregation measures were repealed, informal practices such as mortgage discrimination continued to hinder African Americans' residential mobility. Notwithstanding the achievement of legal equality, individual and government-sponsored discriminatory practices have led to a situation in which African Americans find themselves poorer, dying younger, more unemployed, less protected by health insurance, and less educated in comparison to their white counterparts.

In 2002, African Americans experienced a poverty rate of 24.1 percent overall (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). For children under the age of eighteen, the poverty rate for African Americans was 30 percent in 2001, compared with a rate of 10 percent for whites (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). There is also a disparity in income levels between African American and white adults. In 2001, the median earnings of African Americans was 64 percent that of comparable non-Hispanic whites, or $29,470 annual earnings for African Americans compared to $46,305 for non-Hispanic whites (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). Earnings disparities reflect both wage discrimination and occupational segregation: African Americans tend to be concentrated in service jobs and are less likely to work in managerial or professional specialties. In addition, the Black unemployment rate is often double that of whites. In 2002, the unemployment rate of African Americans was 11 percent, more than double the 5 percent experienced among whites (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). Concentration of poor African Americans in urban America has culminated in the image of the urban "underclass." The image of the urban "underclass" is often employed to epitomize poverty in American society.

Despite their disproportionate poverty, African Americans have at times been systematically excluded from the social welfare system. State-level mothers' pension programs, among the earliest forms of social welfare policy, systematically excluded African American women and their children from receiving assistance. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program, like earlier mothers' pension programs, was not racially inclusive. By excluding agricultural and domestic workers from social insurance coverage, the Social Security Act of 1935 created and enforced a bifurcated system, relegating disproportionate numbers of African Americans to public assistance, or welfare, while male-headed white families enjoyed pensions from the Social Security system. The modern civil rights movement of the 1960s, along with the welfare rights movement, challenged the treatment of public assistance recipients and called for more-reliable and more-adequate benefits in a system that recognized recipients' rights.

The federal government responded to the civil rights movement with a War on Poverty and various new civil rights laws and initiatives. Targeting urban America, the War on Poverty took direct aim at the problem of racial segregation and its consequences for educational and employment opportunity. The legislative program included (1) the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965, (2) the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, (3) the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and (4) the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan

Development Act of 1966, better known as the Model Cities program. Combined, these various acts were designed to eliminate racial discrimination in employment and to equalize economic opportunity.

Since the passage of the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, African Americans have made some gains. One such gain was the growth of the Black middle class, signaling improved economic opportunities for some African Americans. However, racial backlash has undermined many of these gains, feeding opposition to programs that have aided African Americans. Some opponents have called for dismantling antipoverty programs altogether. This has been especially true for welfare policy, the public assistance program that provides income primarily to single mothers and their children. Stigmatizing African Americans for the structural poverty they experience, the media, policymakers, and many in the public often attribute the use of welfare to a kind of racial misbehavior. This racialized backlash against welfare drove the welfare reform efforts of the 1990s, which led to the replacement of Aid to Families with Dependent Children with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

Although antiwelfare forces have declared an end to welfare, the need for income support, for job creation, and for other effective antipoverty programs remains undiminished in many African American communities. Cities and the urban poor continue to suffer from a decline in manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs; inadequate, segregated, and inequitable public schools; various public health crises, including AIDS; an inadequate tax base and diminishing resources; homelessness; and an increasingly impoverished population.

Racial backlash against the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, especially against attempts to make welfare policies racially inclusive, have not abated in the early twenty-first century. Whether inflamed by the media or by antiwelfare politicians, the association of poverty with African Americans still stokes popular hostility toward programs to mitigate poverty. As a result, disparities in the economic opportunity and well-being of Black and white America persist.

Julia S. Jordan-Zachery

See also: Affirmative Action; African American Migration; Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Civil Rights Movement; Racial Segregation; Racism; Slavery; Social Security Act of 1935; "Underclass"; Urban Poverty; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Agee, James

See Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

Ageism

Ageism—prejudice or discrimination against people on the basis of age—has been a contributing factor of old-age unemployment, underemployment, and poverty in the United States. Negative stereotypes of old age take many forms, including assumptions that older individuals suffer from poor health, physical disabilities, and mental decline. These assumptions have led employers to discriminate against older job applicants and to judge their senior employees by their age rather than by their ability to perform their work, resulting in unfair treatment such as restricted duties, missed raises, denied promotions, forced early retirement, and termination. Employers have also fired senior workers to reduce costs or to avoid paying pensions. Older women have faced workplace discrimination due to attitudes favoring the appearance of younger women for public roles such as flight attendants, secretaries, and sales clerks.

Although negative attitudes toward the aged have been present since the nation's founding, employment discrimination against older workers became more prevalent with the rise of industrialization and the premium that mechanized industries placed on younger workers' speed and endurance. Twentieth-century popular culture reinforced the prejudices against old age by celebrating the vigor and freedom of youth while often denigrating old people's appearance and values. The economic and cultural stigma of old age found expression in corporate policies that often explicitly banned the hiring of older workers, limited them to certain jobs, or required their mandatory retirement. Though such policies remained legal and widespread into the 1960s, such discriminatory practices varied in their severity depending on the labor needs of the economy.

Pressure from such senior citizen organizations as the Gray Panthers, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the National Council of Senior Citizens helped win passage of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) in 1967. The law offered protection to workers over the age of forty employed by state and local governments, employment agencies, labor organizations, and private businesses with more than twenty employees (a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2000 removed state employees from coverage). Between 1992 and 2000, an average of 17,000 workers per year filed ADEA discrimination charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2001). Another federal law, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, extended protection to all participants in programs receiving federal funding. Although these laws, combined with state and local initiatives, have provided some legal recourse, ageism continues to hinder the ability of many older Americans to find and retain suitable employment.

Steven B. Burg

See also: Old Age; Social Security; Social Security Act of 1935; Townsend Movement

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Agrarian Movements

From the mid-nineteenth through the first three decades of the twentieth century, social movements of farmers were a major force for democratization and the development of government institutions to deal with problems associated with a nationalizing, industrializing economy. A sequence of agrarian movements—the Grange, antimonopoly, and greenback movements, the Farmers' Alliance, Wheel, Populists, and Farmers' Union—brought democratic demands onto the agenda of national politics.

These movements radicalized the economic program of the Democratic Party and saw many of their demands incorporated into law in the period from the mid-1880s to World War I. Their legacy was also evident in farm, labor, monetary, and regulatory legislation of the New Deal era. Farmers in the United States played the role taken by industrial workers in other Western societies, providing the bulk of early support for public control of corporations and a national government more responsive to the needs of the working population (or "producers," in agrarian rhetoric, a term often contrasted with "plutocrats").

Why farmers? For one thing, there were so many farmers, and they were always committed to politics. The country had vast fertile lands, and public policy strongly encouraged settlement by yeoman farmers who owned the land they worked. And in a nation where universal male suffrage was achieved very early (before rapid industrialization began in the 1840s), farmers voted in large numbers. Farmers were always a major force in both parties and were the largest interest group in the post–Civil War Democratic Party.

Farmer movements repeatedly reached out to workers (their putative "producer" allies) but found them unreliable coalition partners. Industrial workers and miners tilted toward the Republican high-tariff platform when they voted. But a system with opposing national parties controlled by farmers on the one hand and capitalists on the other provided an unsatisfactory set of political choices for labor. Some turned to socialist parties, but the poor prospects of third parties, the recent immigrant status of many workers, and the determined nonpartisan and anti-Populist stances of most labor leaders weakened labor's commitment to the proffered alliance with farmers.

Just after the Civil War, farmers went on an organizing binge. Oliver H. Kelley, a Minnesota farmer who later worked in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, received a grant from the department to travel through the southern states in 1866, surveying the state of agriculture in the war-devastated region. A few years later, with the help of friends and relatives, he organized the Patrons of Husbandry, a fraternal order of (white) men and women devoted to education, self-help, and the promotion of agriculture generally. Its local organizations were known then, as they are now, as "granges." By the mid-1870s, the Grange movement had achieved unprecedented penetration into the farm sector, with more than 11 percent of the male and female agricultural population over ten years old claimed as members. At its peak in 1875, the Patrons of Husbandry had about 760,000 members in nearly 19,000 granges, most in the north-central and south-central states.

Originally nonpartisan, the Patrons of Husbandry ("Grange") always encouraged its members to be politically active. Grangers flocked to the mass meetings triggered by the 1873 financial panic and clamored for government regulation of the railroads and of their exploitative and discriminatory rate structures. Without the official endorsement of the Grange, farmers mounted widespread protests against conservative state governments in the North and South and joined independent and "antimonopoly" parties (whose main targets were railroads, warehouses, and grain elevators). They have been credited with the passage of "granger laws" establishing railroad and warehouse regulation by state governments in the Midwest in the 1870s and with the agitation that led to passage of the national Interstate Commerce Act in 1887.

The Grange was the first large-scale, nationally organized reform organization in the United States, and it strongly influenced later farm and labor movements (both in their fondness for fraternal society rituals and in their reformist political passions). Its legacy also endured in enthusiasm for producer and consumer cooperatives, perceived by grangers and other farmer and worker organizations as key mechanisms for gaining some independence from the snares of monopolists and middlemen in the new industrial economy. But the Grange itself came to be seen as too timid for late-nineteenth-century conditions. It was overtaken by a more dynamic farm organization, the Farmers' Alliance, and by the greenback movement.

The federal government's post–Civil War deflation policy brought sharply lower commodity prices and higher debt loads for farmers. Labor organizations and small manufacturers were the first groups to endorse the notion that a contraction in the volume of circulating currency produced business failures and unemployment. By the late 1870s, farmers too—mainly wheat, corn, cotton, and tobacco farmers in the Midwest and South—joined the chorus of inflationists. In 1877–1878, small farmers in the cash-starved South, many of them grangers, joined independent political movements that favored repudiating state debts contracted by corrupt or incompetent conservative governments. They also demanded railroad regulation (and an end to land grants to railroads), better public schools, and laws easing the financial burdens of sharecroppers and workers.

The greenback movement of 1876–1880 emerged in a period of deflation, wage cutting, and agricultural depression. Its central demand, quite radical for the times, was that the national government, not private banks, should control money creation and should supply sufficient currency to accommodate a growing population and economy. Having taken the position that the national government should assume an active role in the economy, the greenbackers inevitably moved on to other political demands on behalf of farmers and workers.

With a platform drawing on principles of the Grange, antimonopoly parties, and labor organizations, the National Greenback Party ran strongly (for a third party) in both farm and labor districts in 1878 and elected fifteen congressmen. In 1880, the Greenback platform called for a host of radical reforms in labor law and in the conditions of industrial workers, as well as an expanding, government-controlled money supply, regulation of railroads, a national income tax, and universal suffrage. It also expressed its opposition to standing armies and militia laws that threatened labor. The party's candidate, James B. Weaver of Iowa, conducted the nation's first popular presidential campaign. However, despite its broad reform platform, Greenback Party support was predominantly agrarian, concentrated in the Midwest and Southwest.

As the Greenback Party waned, the Southern Farmers' Alliance emerged in an area of north-central Texas that was a hotbed of greenback agitation. An organization of small farmers drawing on the social bonds of rural churches, granges, and reform politics, the Alliance recruited farmers and farmworkers and accepted local professionals like ministers, teachers, and physicians (the dynamic Texas State Alliance leader Charles Macune was both a Methodist minister and a self-educated doctor). Bankers, lawyers, and merchants were excluded from membership.

The Alliance, like the Grange before it, organized both men and women. It did not, however, accept Blacks, though a few of its leaders helped to organize a Colored Farmers' Alliance, and Black farmers were permitted (encouraged in some states) to participate in Alliance cooperatives. The organization grew rapidly in the mid-1880s, thanks to its ambitious cooperative program and its system of itinerant education through "lecturers." The lecturers were farmers and rural professionals who, though often possessing little formal education, carried the Alliance message of cooperative economy and political action to dusty farms, schoolhouse meetings, and open-air gatherings where speeches, singing, eating, and political discussion drew large crowds.

In 1886, after bitter debate, the organization began to put more emphasis on politics and to collaborate with the Knights of Labor (KOL), the ascendant labor organization of the period. The "Cleburne Demands" issued by the 1886 state convention incorporated previous Grange, antimonopoly, greenback, and KOL principles and presaged the later platforms of the Populist Party.

In 1887–1888, the Alliance merged with another fast-growing and even more militant farmers' organization, the Arkansas Wheel, which had established branches in eight other southern states. The amalgamated movement called itself the Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America (FLUA), another announcement of its outreach to workers. In 1889, the FLUA held a joint convention in Saint Louis, Missouri, with the smaller, somewhat more conservative Northwestern Farmers' Alliance, but was unable to effect a merger of the two movements. However, the more radical South Dakota and Kansas chapters of the northern Alliance broke away from their parent organization to join the southerners.

The new biregional organization, with a membership of 1 million–1.5 million persons, was renamed the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union (NFA&IU). Representatives of the Knights of Labor, whose organization was now on the decline, added their endorsement to a platform calling for monetary and land reforms and for nationalization of communication and transportation services. The two organizations also agreed to work together in their Washington, D.C., congressional lobbying efforts.

The main obstacles to a broader merger of midwestern and southern farm organizations at Saint Louis were partisan and product-based policy differences, as well as the southern organization's secrecy and rituals (which were typical of fraternal organizations of the times but which were viewed with great skepticism by religious leaders), its exclusion of Blacks, and its championing of Charles Macune's radical "subtreasury" plan.

Macune's plan, which would later inspire New Deal agricultural policy, proposed the creation of government-owned warehouses where farmers could store their crops and secure government loans for 80 percent of crop value. This would enable farmers to escape the snares of crooked private warehouses and the crop-lien system through which so many had lost their farms and become tenants or sharecroppers to the merchants and landlords who controlled scarce agricultural credit.

Macune promoted the subtreasury plan through the Alliance newspaper, the *National Economist,* which he founded and edited (he also started a National Reform Press Association to link the Farmers' Alliance to other reformers). The network of Alliance lecturers carried Macune's explanation of the plan to all the local sub-Alliances, and Alliance members pressed congressional and other candidates to endorse the subtreasury in return for their votes. But disappointment with the performance of Alliance-endorsed candidates and a cascade of failures among financially pressed Alliance stores ("exchanges") and crop-bulking cooperatives seemed to call for a new political strategy.

The People's Party was tentatively launched at an 1891 convention of Alliance members, greenbackers, prohibitionists, advocates of women's suffrage, and hundreds of other diverse reformers. In February 1892, the NFA&IU convened about 800 delegates in a "conference of industrial organizations" in Saint Louis. After lively debate and much agonizing about a third-party strategy, the delegates adopted a reform manifesto based on Alliance principles but postponed final action until the summer. Macune and many other southern Alliance leaders were particularly reluctant to break definitively with the Democratic Party. But third-party advocates in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas worked to rally white and Black farmers and industrial workers to the People's Party. Though backers of the independent political party hoped to preserve the Farmers' Alliance, the all-out political strategy inevitably sapped the energies of the farmers' organization.

In July 1892, advocates of the new party met in Omaha to nominate former Greenbacker James Weaver for president and to condemn the "vast conspiracy against mankind" by economic and political elites. The People's (Populist) Party platform called for "union of labor forces" to "restore the Government of the Republic to the hands of the 'plain people.'" Its first demand was for monetary reform: a single, nationally standardized, federal government–issued currency with an increase in circulation to fifty dollars per capita; free coinage of silver and gold at the ratio of 16 to 1; and the subtreasury plan of the Farmers' Alliance "or a better system." In addition, the People's Party demanded a graduated income tax; government ownership of railroad, telephone, and telegraph companies; postal savings banks; an end to speculative and foreign land ownership; and reclamation of unused railroad and corporate lands for actual settlers. For labor, it demanded the eight-hour day, an end to the use of Pinkerton "mercenaries" against workers, immigration restrictions, and enforcement of contract labor laws. There were also calls for a free and secret ballot, direct election of senators, and a limit of one four-year term for the president.

The People's Party candidate won just over a million votes in 1892, 8.5 percent of the total. The party was strongest in the mountain and plains states, along with Alabama, Oregon, and Texas. In the South, massive vote fraud by Democrats defeated Populist (as affiliates of the People's Party came to be known) candidates. Though the party's vote improved by 50 percent in the 1894 elections, the limitations of a third-party strategy—exaggerated by the impact of massive economic depression—were clear. Loyalties to the two major parties were too entrenched, and the dream of winning labor support for an independent farmers' party had proved ephemeral. When the Democrats repudiated their conservative, antilabor, hard-money president and nominated William Jennings Bryan in 1896, the Populists saw no better alternative than to make him their own nominee.

Bryan and fusion politics implanted Alliance/Populist principles in the Democratic Party, which became, in effect, the leading national farmers' organization. But not until the alienation of western and midwestern farmers from the Republican Party allowed Democrats to capture Congress and the presidency in 1912 did the old agrarian movement's agenda begin to bear fruit. An outpouring of regulation, labor, income tax, trade, education, and monetary reform laws in 1913–1917 may thus be seen as the belated legacy of the Farmers' Alliance and populism.

So, too, was the formation of a new farmers' organization in the old Texas Alliance heartland. The Farmers' Union, founded in 1902, carried on many of the same battles and took credit for many of the reforms passed in the Progressive Era. Later, in the 1940s and 1950s, it fought for progressive causes and farmer-labor politics against a newer, much more conservative organization, the Farm Bureau. Today, the Farmers' Union has only about a third the membership of the old Farmers' Alliance at its peak, but it can still be found at congressional hearings arguing for laws to protect the family farm and to oppose tight money and monopoly.

Likewise, the National Grange, revived in the Progressive Era, continues to champion rural, education, and family farm interests that resonate with the old Patrons of Husbandry platforms. But these two farm organizations, with roughly 300,000 members each, are too small to constitute major political forces in the twenty-first century.

Elizabeth Sanders

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; New Deal Farm Policy; Nineteenth Century; Rural Poverty; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Agricultural Adjustment Act

See New Deal Farm Policy

Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing

Agricultural and farm labor organizing arose in the United States in response to the characteristically low wages, intermittent employment, and poor working and living conditions generated by large-scale agriculture. For more than a century, agricultural workers have banded together to demand improvements through spontaneous and planned strikes and other forms of resistance, but a unified, long-lasting farm labor movement has been elusive. Organizing has generally occurred independently in different regions and in the production of different commodities and has often remained localized. Farmworker transience and poverty have made even local organizing difficult to sustain, and the exclusion of farmworkers from the 1935 National Labor Relations Act that recognizes the right of other workers to form unions and bargain collectively has added further impediments. Farm labor organizing and strike activity peaked during the 1930s and again in the 1960s–1970s, both periods of widespread social unrest during which a sympathetic public supported the farm labor movement by exerting economic and political pressure on behalf of workers. Federal and state governments have frequently responded to such pressure with regulation and assistance programs, which have brought better conditions and access to services. But conflict persists, as growers try to reduce production costs in the face of increasing pressures from global competition and workers try to protect the gains they have made in wages, working and living conditions, and organizing.

Local groups of cowboys and sheep shearers created the earliest organizations of hired agricultural labor during the 1880s and 1890s. About the same time, immigrant workers formed mutual aid associations, which operated as both social support groups and labor organizations. During the 1920s and 1930s, Mexican, Filipino, and Japanese farmworkers formed their own trade unions, but these unions also worked closely with other organizing campaigns. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a national labor syndicate espousing the idea of a single union for all workers, began the first nationally directed agricultural organizing campaign among itinerant laborers, who migrated seasonally from city to countryside for employment. In California, the IWW led the 1913 Wheatland strike, in which hop pickers demonstrated against desperate living conditions, low wages, and lack of food and supplies. The strike ended in violence and the organizers' imprisonment, but the IWW reappeared among seasonal wheat harvest workers in the Midwest in 1915. The union successfully influenced wages and working conditions in the wheat harvest for the next two years but declined in the face of internal jurisdictional disputes and active suppression of radical organizations during World War I.

The Dust Bowl and Depression of the 1930s reenergized the farm labor movement as farmworkers sought to secure the same rights as President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal offered industrial workers. Nationally directed organizations of the period included the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) in the early years of the decade, followed by the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA). Both organized primarily in California and Arizona, among Mexican and other long-established groups and among new migrants from the drought-stricken southern plains. In 1933, CAWIU's most successful year, estimates

People attending a meeting for African American and foreign-born members of the Agricultural and Cannery Workers Union. Bridgeton, New Jersey, 1936. (Corbis)

put the number of workers on strike at over 47,000 in cropwide actions against growers of peas, berries, sugarbeets, apricots, pears, peaches, lettuce, grapes, and cotton. Of the twenty-five actions led by CAWIU, only four were lost (Jamieson 1945, 87). Among the most dramatic, the 1933 San Joaquin Valley cotton pickers' strike, led by CAWIU with strong support from the Mexican and other ethnic unions, succeeded in raising wages through a federally mediated settlement. UCAPAWA found less success later in the decade, losing a similar 1939 cotton pickers' strike in 1939, in part because of a change in public sympathy for federal intervention on behalf of workers. UCAPAWA turned to organizing processing workers, whose higher wages and more stable working conditions offered a better prospect for effective organizing.

In the Southeast during the 1930s, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU), an outgrowth of earlier sharecropper and farm labor organizations in the region, became the primary representative of sharecroppers and tenant farmers facing eviction and of day laborers facing falling wages and unemployment. The STFU openly organized without regard to race or tenure status and led both strikes and demonstrations to dramatize the conditions of displaced workers and tenants. Although most STFU actions failed to achieve their explicit goals, the publicity surrounding them forced federal intervention against the worst antistrike violence and brought relief and resettlement to some of the participants. The United Citrus Workers in Florida recruited field and processing workers, as well as mechanics, carpenters, and other wage laborers in an effort to achieve an industry-wide organization. The union led a number of strikes for higher wages and union recognition, but it eventually succumbed in the mid-1930s to powerful employer opposition. In New Jersey, the eastern counterpart of CAWIU, the Agricultural and Cannery Workers Union, led a strike in early 1934 at Seabrook Farms, one of only a few large-scale agricultural enterprises in the region. Workers won increased wages, overtime pay, and union recognition, but the gains were quickly rescinded. A violent second strike later in the year ended with federal mediation that reestablished the wage gains and appointed a board of worker, grower, and government representatives to oversee labor relations but that did not recognize the union.

During and after World War II, foreign farm labor supply programs left little leverage with which to press employers. Rather than continuing to try to organize, the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU), led by H. L. Mitchell, former head of the STFU, focused its energies on opposing the Bracero Program, the Mexican farm labor supply program that lasted until 1964. The NFLU, which became the National Agricultural Workers Union in 1952, quickly disappeared with the appearance of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), affiliated with the AFL-CIO. AWOC, however, remained relatively inactive until reenergized by the rise of a more militant, democratic farmworker movement.

Led by Cesar Chavez, the new farmworker movement was consciously connected to the civil rights and poor people's movements of the 1960s. Chavez and fellow leaders Dolores Huerta and Gilbert Padilla shared years of community organizing experience. The National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) used these community organizing techniques, rather than traditional workplace organizing, and adopted the civil rights movement's strategies of nonviolence and cultivation of public sympathy. Alliances with other activists, especially students, proved to be a valuable source of committed volunteer staff members and a powerful channel for raising public awareness of job actions.

NFWA's first strike, the 1965 Delano Area grape strike, pioneered the public marches and hunger strikes that came to characterize Chavez's leadership and launched the first of the highly successful grape boycotts that brought union recognition. Out of the strike arose the United Farmworkers Organizing Committee (UFWOC), modeled on the democratic design of the NFWA and joined by the remaining local chapters of AWOC. The UFWOC, which became the United Farm Workers (UFW) in 1972, had 10,000 members and contracts with 150 growers covering 20,000 jobs and 85 percent of the table grapes grown in California by 1970 (Mooney and Majka 1995, 164). The union had secured a wide array of benefits, ranging from higher wages, union control of hiring, seniority rights, grievance procedures, pesticide controls, health clinics, and economic assistance for disabled and displaced workers to drinking water, toilets, and rest periods in the fields.

Agricultural employers in California quickly organized in opposition, concerned by the UFW's ability to disrupt the critical timing of the harvesting of perishable crops. They lobbied state government, and in order to undermine the growing power of the UFW, they signed collective bargaining agreements with the Teamsters Union, which represented agricultural processing workers in the area and had long-standing jurisdictional and political differences with the

UFW leadership. New legislation restricted the use of boycotts, required cooling-off periods before strikes, and prohibited collective bargaining over pesticide use and mechanization. As violent confrontations erupted between UFW pickets and Teamsters Union members working with growers to disrupt strikes, the UFW launched a new national grape boycott in 1973 to force recognition of farmworkers' right to be represented by the union of their choice. In 1975, the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act created the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB), which functioned to protect UFW organizing and collective bargaining rights in California for the next eight years. When the political leadership of the state changed in 1983, however, the membership and orientation of the ALRB also changed. Grievances and enforcement requests by labor were frequently delayed, dismissed, or overturned, and the ALRB declined to intervene when employers resisted organizing drives and contract negotiations. Without ALRB support and stressed by internal disagreements, UFW organizing activity declined rapidly. Although the union experienced a resurgence following the death of Chavez in 1993, the global restructuring of agricultural production has introduced new challenges, including an influx of farmworkers, often undocumented, with only temporary ties to the United States.

In the Midwest, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), led by Baldemar Velásquez, began organizing tomato and cucumber workers in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio, in 1967. Initially adopting tactics similar to those of the UFW, FLOC won some localized strikes in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Unlike in California, however, most specialty crop growers in the Midwest contracted directly with processing companies for their entire crop at an agreed price for the season, leaving growers with limited flexibility to increase wages. In light of this arrangement, by the late 1970s, the union embarked on a new strategy, unique in the American labor movement, to bring the processing companies into three-way negotiations with workers and growers. The Campbell Soup Company, which held contracts for processing tomatoes, became the first target and responded by requiring its contract growers to mechanize their tomato harvests. FLOC initiated a consumer boycott against Campbell Soup in 1979, modeled on the successful UFW grape boycott, but by 1984, FLOC had developed an additional strategy of public demonstrations and boycott threats against corporations with close ties to Campbell to encourage them to pressure the company to negotiate. The negative publicity from both campaigns led to contract talks in 1985. Other large processing corporations, including the H. J. Heinz Company and Vlasic, also signed contracts providing higher wages, benefits, and improved working conditions. In subsequent contracts, the union also negotiated an end to the practice among cucumber pickle growers of declaring farmworkers to be independent contractors, which had kept them from coverage under workers' compensation, Social Security, and child labor laws.

FLOC continues to organize in the Texas and Florida home bases of many Midwest migrants, as well as in other areas of the Southeast. In addition to FLOC and the UFW, small local and regional unions also demonstrate and negotiate to improve the working and living conditions of agricultural labor, as they have for more than a century. The unions are complemented by the continuing work of farmworker advocacy organizations, a legacy of the allied activism of the 1960s and 1970s. These groups focus on securing the legal assistance, health care, housing, education, and other services farmworkers often cannot find or afford on their own.

Anne B. W. Effland

[The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.]

See also: Agrarian Movements; Bracero Program; Chicana/o Movement; Dust Bowl Migration; *Factories in the Field; The Grapes of Wrath; Harvest of Shame;* Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; New Deal Farm Policy; Rural Poverty; Sharecropping; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC)

Between 1935 and 1996, Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)/Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)—Title IV of the Social Security Act of 1935—provided basic income support for millions of poor women and their children. Commonly known as "welfare," the program was funded jointly by the federal government and the states and was administered by the states under supervision of various federal agencies, the latest of which was the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Aid to Dependent Children (subsequently renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children), although deficient in a number of respects, provided these poor mothers with an alternative to hunger and to having to take any job at any wage. Moreover, it was a major refuge for minority families rendered economically dependent by discrimination, low wages, and chronic unemployment and underemployment. The program, however, was always controversial, and its history is one of continuous attempts to "reform" it. This article summarizes the history of ADC/AFDC, its eligibility conditions, the adequacy of its benefit levels, its changing assumptions about women's roles, the AFDC-labor market interface, and the process known as welfare "reform" that culminated in the repeal of welfare.

ADC was hardly noticed at the time of its enactment in the midst of the Great Depression, and it did not generate nearly the same level of debate and controversy as did the other parts of the Social Security Act of 1935. In a time of many social movements, there were none for or by poor women and their families. The chief advocates for ADC were social welfare leaders, including Grace Abbott, and administrators of the U.S. Children's Bureau Katharine Lenroot and Martha Eliot, who as professional staff of the bureau were principally responsible for drafting the bill. Many of these advocates were part of the network of maternalist reformers who had been actively promoting aid to mothers and children since the Progressive Era. Basing their recommendations on state mothers' aid or widows' pension programs, the bureau's leaders prepared a report on which the ADC legislation was based.

Although modeled on state programs, ADC departed from them in significant ways. In contrast to its predecessors, ADC was partly funded by the federal government, was available in all jurisdictions of participating states, and was at least nominally subject to federal supervision and minimal standards. In time, ADC came to serve many more women of color, never-married, and divorced or separated mothers than did the orig-

U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means, Hearings on the Economic Security Act Statement of Miss Grace Abbott, Member, Advisory Council on Economic Security and Former Chief of U.S. Children's Bureau, January 30, 1935

Grace Abbott, longtime social welfare activist, head of the U.S. Children's Bureau from 1921 to 1934, and leading child welfare expert, was one of the architects of the Aid to Dependent Children program in her capacity as a member of the President's Advisory Council on Economic Security in 1934–1935. In her testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee about the proposed Economic Security Act (later retitled and passed as the Social Security Act of 1935), Abbott endorsed the act's provisions for the care of dependent children, emphasizing their essential continuity with the state-run mothers' pension programs while pointing out the need for a stronger federal role. Abbott did take issue, however, with the legislation's failure to house the program's administration in the U.S. Children's Bureau, which by the mid-1930s had built up considerable expertise on the implementation of mothers' pensions and the overall well-being of children.

The whole idea of mothers' pensions is that it should be enough to care for the children adequately, to keep the mother at home and thus give some security in the home. . . .

It is not only the best but the cheapest method of taking care of children—much cheaper than taking care of them in an institution or in somebody else's home. And it does preserve the relationship of the mother and the child.

This type of legislation, then, has been tested. Its value is not challenged but it is impossible to expect to make State and local governments take over the whole load that is now being carried on relief without some assistance. If the Federal Government assists, and encourages the State to make a larger contribution, the gain will be very great.

It seems to me of very great importance. The types of families that are not now receiving mothers' pensions resemble those of 25 years ago. We have been making a study of the families that are on the waiting list for the mothers' pension in the juvenile court and also of those on relief in Chicago. We find the same discouraging type of situation that we used to find before the mothers' pension was granted.

A widowed mother, with a large number of children or a small number, is usually quite unable to take care of them. For instance, here is one case of a mother whose husband died at 30. She has 3 children, 2 boys of 5 and 12, and a girl of 8. At the time of her husband's death they owned a home, but about a year later the mortgage was foreclosed. With the $500 that she received at the time of the foreclosure, she rented a basement flat in which they now live and turned the front room into a store, stocking it with candies and cigars, things of that sort. She has one other room where the family lives. She keeps the shop open all day and into the night, until about 10 or 11 o'clock. But she does not make enough to pay the rent and take care of the family, even though all of them live in the one rear room. They are very inadequately fed, and very inadequately clothed. This woman has been on the mothers' pension waiting list for 2 years. She expects to be evicted almost any time.

In one case that I have here, the mother has put the children in an orphanage, although the children want to get out and she wants to get them out. The most she has been able to earn is $7.50 a week, and she cannot take care of them and herself on that wage. So she is doing the best she can by contributing somewhat to their support and keeping in touch with them.

. . . [O]ne could go on and on with instances of that sort. Usually the children are really nice children and the families are nice families, if they could just be put on a permanent basis of knowing that the money was coming, and plan for it. It would make a great difference in the security of these families.

I am sorry that the administration of this grant in aid program is not given to the Children's Bureau. I think it belongs in a permanent bureau instead of an emergency bureau, and the Children's Bureau has worked for 21 or 22 years on this problem with the States.

inal state programs. Nevertheless, both were based on the assumption that mothers were nurturers, not breadwinners—an approach consonant with the Depression-era policy of removing women from the labor force as a solution to mass unemployment. Particularly in its formative years, ADC continued another mothers' aid policy, making moral worthiness a criterion of eligibility.

Despite ADC's maternalist approach, many poor mothers were forced to work outside their homes. Eager to protect the low-wage economy of their region, southern senators removed from the draft of the Social Security Act the requirement that monthly benefits provide "a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health." Consequently, many states paid very low benefits throughout the history of ADC and AFDC. When AFDC was terminated, all state allowances, plus the cash value of food stamps, were on average below the meager U.S. poverty standard of $12,516 for a family of three in 1996 (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means 1996, 437–438). Many poor families whose incomes exceeded their state's paltry cutoff levels were ineligible for assistance, leaving them no recourse but low-wage employment. Minimal benefits also led some mothers to combine work and welfare, often not reporting some or all of their income to welfare officials in order to maintain their benefits (Edin and Lein 1997).

Two other policies kept families off the rolls, particularly before the 1960s. First, some states periodically cut families from assistance when more laborers, such as field hands, were needed (Bell 1965). Second, many mothers whose behavior was deemed "unsuitable" (usually interpreted as having children out of wedlock) were also deemed ineligible and denied assistance. Since unmarried motherhood was much higher among African Americans than among whites, this policy was only thinly veiled racism (Bell 1965). Thus, while ADC became an entitlement in 1950, meaning that everyone who met eligibility requirements would receive benefits, many poor, single-mother families failed to meet these conditions.

In still another respect, ADC/AFDC was not an entitlement for *all* poor children. Planners of the Social Security Act assumed that single-mother families were without breadwinners, but they did not so regard two-parent families where the parents were unemployed but ineligible for the program. They expected that the economy would either accommodate most unemployed men or that the federal government would continue to employ them in work programs like those initiated during the Great Depression (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 39). Neither hope was realized.

Nevertheless, overall employment conditions did have an important impact on welfare. As a by-product of waging World War II, the nation experienced full employment, and during that brief interval, the welfare rolls fell, despite changes that would otherwise have expanded the rolls (for example, modest benefit increases). Between 1942 and 1945, the number of ADC recipients per 1,000 population under the age of eighteen fell by more than one-third (Alling 1948, 13). Despite its demonstrated benefits, Congress defeated full-employment legislation in 1945. For most of the postwar period, however, millions of men and women, particularly minorities, faced chronic unemployment and underemployment in unstable, low-paying labor markets while remaining ineligible for public assistance. Although families with two unemployed parents became eligible for AFDC in some states in the 1960s, unemployment was defined so narrowly that few two-parent families actually qualified. Feminist scholars have maintained that AFDC regulated poor women and rewarded those who upheld the family ethic (Abramovitz 1996). Yet AFDC denied benefits to most women in poor, two-parent families, women who were adhering to the family ethic of marriage.

In the postwar years, increases in divorce, unmarried motherhood, and unemployment (except during the Korean War) increased the need for public assistance. Another source of increasing need was the high unemployment rate of African American men and women who migrated from rural areas to northern and southern cities. Yet restrictive eligibility conditions, including moral worthiness and residence requirements, as well as social stigma, kept many families off the rolls who should have been on them.

During the 1950s, rising costs and numbers of caseloads troubled politicians on both sides of the aisle, even though the number served fell far short of the number who needed help. Increasing numbers of African Americans on the rolls were another source of unpopularity. In 1961, national attention focused on Newburgh, New York, whose conservative mayor responded to the "coloring" of the town's caseload with measures that violated New York State welfare laws; for example, benefits were denied to unwed mothers and to those who voluntarily left their jobs. Yet the mayor's crackdown included many devices that were being used around the country to reduce caseloads and costs (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 51–52).

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy's administration responded to Newburgh with amendments to the Social Security Act aimed at reducing the welfare rolls by means of rehabilitative services. The assumption was that the causes of poverty were more social than economic. In proposing the legislation, Kennedy observed that "many women now on assistance rolls could become self-supporting if daycare programs for their children were available" (Kennedy 1962, 10). Accordingly, the administration proposed not only federal funds for day care but a break with the policy of reducing benefits by the same amount as earnings. The emphasis on self-support in the labor market broke with the earlier maternalist policy and was coincident with the increasing participation of women in the paid labor force. Kennedy also initiated the Unemployed Parent program (AFDC-UP), which provided benefits to some two-parent families with an unemployed parent, and the program was renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The Social Services Amendments of 1962, however, failed to reduce need or to trim the welfare rolls, largely because they were aimed at changing the behavior of poor people rather than addressing the problems of low-wage work, unemployment, discrimination, inadequate opportunities, and other conditions driving the need for assistance (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 77–78).

The seeming paradox of welfare in the 1960s is that the rolls exploded in a time of low unemployment and unparalleled prosperity. This is not to say that labor market disadvantage had disappeared. Quite a few observers, including some high government officials, recognized that Black unemployment and subemployment—a composite measure including involuntary part-time employment and wages below the poverty level—remained at crisis levels, as documented by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Joint Economic Committee (Goldberg and Collins, 2001, 89–91).

But labor market conditions were not the only factor driving welfare enrollments, which also respond to family composition, changes in public opinion, attitudes and assertiveness of prospective relief recipients, and judicial, legislative, and administrative policies. All of these, with the probable exception of changes in public opinion, were at play in the 1960s. The two most important, however, were mutually reinforcing: the much higher proportion of those in need who actually applied for welfare and their higher rate of acceptance into aid programs. Both of these developments reflected broader social and political changes that tended somewhat to loosen the historically stringent regulations and deliberately limited reach of welfare. Thus, the post–World War II migrations that brought African Americans to the cities of the North, Midwest, and West also made welfare more of an option than it had been in the overtly racist, comparatively restrictive rural and small-town South. At the same time, more of the poor claimed the benefits to which they were entitled, and relief officials accepted a higher rate of applications, in part as a result of an era of "rights consciousness" (Patterson 1996, 673). Moreover, the poor got considerable support in asserting their rights from a combination of government and voluntary sources. President Lyndon B. Johnson's antipoverty program contributed community organizers and lawyers through its Community Action Program (CAP) and Legal Services unit. With government and voluntary resources, much of it from church bodies, AFDC gained an organized constituency, the most visible of which was the National Welfare Rights Organization, established in 1966 by welfare mothers influenced by the civil rights movement and antipoverty activism. Legal service lawyers not only represented welfare clients in their individual grievances but successfully challenged restrictive welfare laws and administrative procedures through class-action suits. U.S. Supreme Court decisions in 1968–1970 outlawed residence requirements and other restrictive eligibility conditions and contributed, in turn, to rising welfare rolls.

Johnson billed his War on Poverty as "a hand up instead of a handout"; nevertheless, his program contributed to the expansion of so-called handouts. One reason for this seeming paradox is that the increased provision of relief was an answer to the civil unrest, notably the urban riots in a number of U.S. cities, that began in 1963 (Piven and Cloward 1993). Expanding welfare required no new laws, was a shared expense of federal and state governments, and was both cheaper and more acceptable to the business community than the strategy of major job creation favored by some administration officials and later recommended by the Kerner Commission, the presidential commission investigating the riots (*Report of the National Advisory Commission* 1968; Goldberg and Collins 2001).

Together, the combination of enduring labor market disadvantage, migration, social activism, and shifting government policy contributed to the changing composition as well as the size of the welfare rolls. By the end of the 1960s, the number of people on AFDC had more than doubled. The number of whites receiving assistance increased, but the proportion of Blacks on the rolls also rose. A program already stigmatized by race became even more so. Indeed, it came to be seen as a "Black" program even though African Americans were always a minority of the recipients (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means 1996, 474).

Policymakers interpreted rapidly rising welfare rolls in a time of unparalleled prosperity as a "crisis" and as a sign of family breakdown rather than as the result of meeting neglected need. Thus, efforts to "reform"—that is, restrict—welfare overlapped the expansion of the rolls. The welfare expansion continued until the early 1970s, but in 1967, Congress took aim at escalating relief rolls and targeted another proxy for African American women, "illegitimacy." The 1967 amendments to the Social Security Act included a freeze on federal matching funds for increased costs related to "illegitimacy" and desertion as well as incentives and coercion to encourage welfare recipients (and potential welfare recipients) to work. Although the freeze was not implemented, it was a signal to single mothers that Congress could get tough with them. Since there were not enough training slots, there was little bite to these initial work requirements. Anticipating subsequent rounds of welfare "reform," later versions of this Work Incentive Program (WIN) put more emphasis on immediate employment than on training. The fact that job availability was a missing ingredient in welfare "reform" was occasionally pointed out but was officially ignored.

During the 1970s, Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Jimmy Carter attempted to reform welfare by providing a modest federal guaranteed income for all families with children—not only single mothers—and a liberalization of the tax on earnings. Both proposed reforms would have given family welfare important political advantages: Welfare would no longer be confined to a stigmatized, single-mother clientele; the income guarantee would unite the interests of welfare recipients and the working poor and would increase the proportion of white recipients, thereby reducing family welfare's racial characterization. The Nixon plan, known as the Family Assistance Plan, was opposed by conservatives who feared the loss of a cheap labor supply (Burke and Burke 1974, 2; Moynihan 1973, 378) and by liberals who considered the guarantee too low and opposed its mild work requirement. In the end, Nixon lost interest because, among other things, he considered the program too expensive (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 145–146). Carter failed to push hard for his Program for Better Jobs and Income, which would have combined a small guaranteed income with work requirements and job creation. The program ran into some of the same political dynamics, however, and was seriously undermined by the political climate of tax revolt. In the wake of the defeat of Nixon's Family Assistance Plan, some of its opponents successfully advocated a refundable tax credit, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), to offset the burden of payroll taxes on low-wage workers. Twenty years later, the EITC was spending more federal funds than AFDC. This decade of failed welfare reform also saw the highest unemployment rates since the Great Depression and responses that were either temporary or ineffective; the first government work programs since the Great Depression (terminated even as unemployment was rising under President Ronald Reagan's administration); and a second attempt to guarantee jobs, the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978, which achieved neither of its goals.

The election of Reagan in 1980 brought to power a conservative movement aimed at reducing the size of the welfare state, eroding the political clout of labor and advocates for the poor, and restoring power to corporations. Unable to reduce Social Security due to its powerful senior lobby, Republicans instead focused on the politically more vulnerable means-tested programs like AFDC (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 169–170). Never a popular program, AFDC became a stand-in for so-called big government and its attendant evils. Conservative social theorists such as Charles Murray (1984) provided policymakers with rationales for reducing aid to the poor by asserting that programs like AFDC were responsible for poverty, dependency, and social dysfunction. What welfare recipients needed, they claimed, was a policy of "tough love," involving lower benefits and much more stringent work requirements, or even the elimination of welfare altogether.

Budget cuts and changes in eligibility rules, along with state-level retrenchment and the failure to index welfare payments to inflation, are estimated to have cost 500,000 families access to income support in the 1980s (Pierson 1994, 118–119). In addition, states were given waivers from federal rules to create programs that required recipients to engage in work experience programs in exchange for their welfare checks. To be truly effective, such programs would have to spend more money—on training and education, job creation, day care, and the like—but in the economic climate of the 1980s, states were neither willing nor prepared to make this commitment. By 1987, as many as forty states were exercising the work option.

The opening of Reagan's second term began another round of efforts to "reform" welfare at the national level, with Congress, governors, and liberal social welfare institutions all participating. This renewed interest in "reforming" welfare represented a gathering consensus among policy elites that the breakdown of the family and inadequate inner-city educational systems were generating a permanently dependent "underclass," that a reformed system should be based on the concept of reciprocal responsibilities between

Special Message to the Congress on Reform of the Nation's Welfare System, President Richard M. Nixon, August 11, 1969

Several months after assuming office in January 1969, President Richard M. Nixon announced an ambitious proposal to reform the nation's welfare system. Known as the Family Assistance Plan (FAP), the proposal envisioned collapsing federal cash-assistance programs into a single federally administered income guarantee covering most working-age families as well as the elderly, blind, and disabled, coupled with a work requirement for the able-boded and exempting mothers of children under six. In promoting the plan, the administration appealed to liberals by emphasizing the fact that it would eliminate some of welfare's major inequities—establishing a federal floor beneath benefits that varied widely across states and making aid to two-parent families a federal rather than a state-by-state provision. At the same time, FAP proponents promised conservatives a work requirement, along with a reduction in the social services bureaucracy and government "red tape." After several rounds of revision and negotiation and after twice gaining approval from the House Ways and Means Committee, the administration failed to satisfy any major constituency, and the plan was defeated in the Senate—with the exception of proposed improvements in assistance for the low-income elderly, blind, and disabled, which were met through the creation of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. Moreover, by pitching its appeal to two-parent, "working poor" families, the administration played off of the distorted, heavily racialized imagery of Black welfare mothers that eventually helped to steer welfare "reform" away from public income supports and federal standards and toward the work requirements, "devolution," and marriage promotion that currently prevail in welfare policy.

To the Congress of the United States:

A measure of the greatness of a powerful nation is the character of the life it creates for those who are powerless to make ends meet.

If we do not find the way to become a working nation that properly cares for the dependent, we shall become a Welfare State that undermines the incentives of the working man.

The present welfare system has failed us—it has fostered family breakup, has provided very little help in many States and has even deepened dependency by all too often making it more attractive to go on welfare than to go to work.

I propose a new approach. . . .

I propose that the Federal government pay a basic income to those American families who cannot care for themselves in whichever State they live.

I propose that dependent families receiving such income be given good reason to go to work by making the first sixty dollars a month they earn completely their own, with no deduction from their benefits.

government and the welfare recipient, and that states should be given greater discretion over certain aspects of welfare policy.

The Family Support Act (FSA) of 1988 was the result of this latest wave of "reform." The legislation expanded federal requirements that states move their welfare caseloads into work-related programs and increased the states' discretion in designing them. The centerpiece was the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) training program, requiring states to provide assessment, training, education, and work experience or job-search assistance to welfare recipients. It sought to "make work pay" by requiring states to provide child care and Medicaid for up to one year for families leaving the welfare rolls for paid work, by raising the amount of earnings that are disregarded in calculating welfare benefits, and by mandating educational activities as appropriate. While requiring poor family heads

I propose that we make available an addition to the incomes of the "working poor," to encourage them to go on working and to eliminate the possibility of making more from welfare than from wages.

I propose that these payments be made upon certification of income, with demeaning and costly investigations replaced by simplified reviews and spot checks and with no eligibility requirements that the household be without a father. That present requirement in many States has the effect of breaking up families and contributes to delinquency and violence.

I propose that all employable persons who choose to accept these payments be required to register for work or job training and be required to accept that work or training, provided suitable jobs are available either locally or if transportation is provided. Adequate and convenient day care would be provided children wherever necessary to enable a parent to train or work. The only exception to this work requirement would be mothers of preschool children.

I propose a major expansion of job training and day care facilities, so that current welfare recipients able to work can be set on the road to self-reliance.

I propose that we also provide uniform Federal payment minimums for the present three categories of welfare aid to adults—the aged, the blind and the disabled.

This would be total welfare reform—the transformation of a system frozen in failure and frustration into a system that would work and would encourage people to work. . . .

This would be the effect of the transformation of welfare into "workfare," a new work-rewarding system:

For the first time, all dependent families with children in America, regardless of where they live, would be assured of minimum standard payments based upon uniform and single eligibility standards.

For the first time, the more than two million families who make up the "working poor" would be helped toward self-sufficiency and away from future welfare dependency.

For the first time, training and work opportunity with effective incentives would be given millions of families who would otherwise be locked into a welfare system for generations.

For the first time, the Federal government would make a strong contribution toward relieving the financial burden of welfare payments from State governments.

For the first time, the family in America would be encouraged to stay together, free from economic pressure to split apart.

These are far-reaching effects. They cannot be purchased cheaply, or by piecemeal efforts. This total reform looks in a new direction; it requires new thinking, a new spirit and a fresh dedication to reverse the downhill course of welfare. . . .

We have it in our power to raise the standard of living and the realizable hopes of millions of our fellow citizens. By providing an equal chance at the starting line, we can reinforce the traditional American spirit of self-reliance and self-respect.

to engage in work or work-related activity under threat of penalty, it exempted mothers with young children from the work requirements. Perhaps bowing to conservative claims that AFDC created disincentives to marriage, the FSA required all states to provide time-limited welfare payments to poor two-parent families whose "principal earner" was unemployed, requiring that at least one of the parents participate in a work program. (Still, very few two-parent families were served, even in the last years of the program.) The FSA also required states to establish paternity and to garnish the wages of noncustodial parents.

The FSA, however, was destined to be short-lived. The Reagan administration's debt burden, perhaps deliberately created, guaranteed that federal funds, which states would need to move their welfare clients into education, training, or work-experience programs, would not be adequate. Moreover, few states put any effort into job creation, a requisite for moving welfare recipients into the labor market.

Recession in 1991 brought rising welfare rolls and reduced state budgets, pushing states to reduce programs that assisted low-income households. In 1991 and 1992, 78 percent of the states froze or cut welfare benefits and made cuts in other low-income programs, and a majority of states failed to draw down their full federal allocations (Goldberg and Collins 2001, 178). Capitalizing on the public perception of welfare recipients as "immoral" and "irresponsible," many Republican governors requested waivers from federal regulators allowing them to develop programs that were more punitive than the FSA. Shifting from an earlier focus on education and training, states began to emphasize rapid job placement, usually in low-wage, low-quality jobs with no benefits. Although several states sought to loosen federal restrictions, which had made it difficult to move welfare recipients into the labor force, over half imposed stricter penalties for failure to comply with program rules, time limits, and work requirements, as well as penalties for additional childbearing.

Campaigning for the presidency in 1992 as a "New Democrat," Bill Clinton declared his intention to "end welfare as we know it" and hinted at a two-year time limit on welfare support, thus profoundly altering the terms of the debate. Republicans now in control of Congress ran with the slogan, and in 1996 succeeded in passing the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act with the consent of half the Democrats in Congress. This legislation consolidated several categorical aid programs into block grants. AFDC was repealed and replaced by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), an annual block grant given to the states for a six-year period. TANF gave states broad discretion to design welfare programs but set a five-year lifetime limit on government support for families, mandated work requirements, mandated minimum penalties to compel recipient mothers to establish paternity and cooperate with child support enforcement, and limited support for education and training. An entitlement to government support for single-mother families, however limited, was now effectively abolished.

Sheila D. Collins and
Gertrude Schaffner Goldberg

See also: African American Migration; African Americans; Dependency; Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Employment Policy; Feminisms; Food Stamps; Kerner Commission Report; Legal Aid/Legal Services; Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; Means Testing and Universalism; Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Poverty Law; Poverty Line; Racism; Social Security Act of 1935; Unemployment; U.S. Children's Bureau; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement; Welfare State; Workfare; see also the extracts from the following court cases (in sidebars to the entry Poverty Law): *King v. Smith* (1968); *Shapiro, Commissioner of Welfare of Connecticut, v. Thompson* (1969); *Goldberg v. Kelly* (1970); *Dandridge v. Williams* (1970); *Saenz v. Roe* (1999)

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Alaska Natives

The term "Alaska Natives" refers to peoples indigenous to the present-day state of Alaska. Like the tribes located within the contiguous United States, they are linguistically, socioeconomically, and culturally diverse.

Alaska has the highest percentage of Native Americans relative to its total population of any state in the nation. According to the 2000 U.S. census, Alaska Natives and members of American Indian tribes numbered 119,241, or 19 percent of the total population of the state. Concentrated in the northern and western parts of the region, the largest tribal groups were Yup'ik (22,671), Inupiat Eskimo (17, 016), Alaskan Athabascan (14,546), and Tlingit-Haida (12,523) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

Despite their diversity and distinctive cultures, contemporary Alaska Natives share much in common with other indigenous peoples in North America. The ratio of males to females is nearly equal but, as is the case with American Indians generally, Alaska Natives are young. The median age for Alaska Natives is 23.6 years, versus 35.3 years for the total U.S. population. They also have high indices of poverty in comparison to the population at large. The poverty rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, was 25.7 percent in 2000. That well exceeds the 17.8 percent for all Americans and 9.8 percent for Alaskans of all races. Life expectancy, at 69.4 years, is significantly lower than the 76.7 years for the general population in the United States (Indian Health Service 2000).

Poverty among Alaska Natives must be understood in the context of a complicated political and legal relationship with the United States. First contact with whites began with the Russians during the mid-eighteenth century and continued into the nineteenth century. In 1867, the Treaty of Cession transferred claims to present-day Alaska to the United States. Alaska Natives did not recognize this transaction as valid but found themselves quickly on the defensive. By the late nineteenth century, the extension of civilian rule in the territory was accompanied by an onslaught of settlers and gold seekers. Having been deprived of legal protection under Indian or territorial law, Alaska Natives had no recourse against a devastating process of encroachment and expropriation that continued into the twentieth century. With a population ravaged by disease and with the ability to subsist through hunting and fishing almost completely stripped from them, Alaska Natives pressed hard for the recognition of their aboriginal land claims.

The Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 accelerated the struggle. Although the state was allowed to lay claim to 108 million of the 375 million acres of land in the area, preexisting aboriginal land claims had yet to be resolved. Not surprisingly, this land was the vital hunting and fishing grounds upon which indigenous peoples relied. In October 1966, the Alaska Federation of Natives was formed to serve as a vehicle for defending aboriginal claims to their homelands and to hunting and fishing rights. They rested their argument, in part, on the language of the Organic Act of 1884, which declared, "Indians or other persons in said district shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use or occupation or now claimed by them but the terms under which such persons may acquire title to such lands is reserved for future legislation by Congress" (quoted in Maas 1996, 10). In late 1966, due partially to the pressure placed on the federal government by the Alaska Federation of Natives, Interior Secretary Stewart Udall placed a freeze on the state assumption of any additional land and the issuance of mineral leases.

Congress enacted the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971 to resolve the nettlesome question of aboriginal land claims. It was the culmination of multiple interests, many of them revolving around the discovery of oil on the North Slope in 1968. Both Alaska Natives who sought to defend their land and private corporations that wanted to exploit the valuable resource agreed that a definitive settlement was needed. ANCSA recognized aboriginal land claims and issued fee simple title to individual Alaska Natives. They, in turn, were members of twelve regional and 200 village profit-making business corporations that were charged with managing the property. In all, the United States recognized aboriginal claims to 44 million acres and provided $962.5 million in compensation (Worl 1996, 276).

Present-day economic indicators suggest that the millions of acres of land and hundreds of millions of dollars did not prove to be the boon one might expect. Indeed, far more land went to private corporations for the development of oil and gas pipelines and was set aside as national parks and wildlife refuges than went to aboriginal claims. Indeed, by the early 1990s, the state of Alaska itself had collected some $32 billion from the development of the North Slope oil fields alone (Maas 1996, 12). But even more significant, ANCSA has not provided a means for Alaska Natives to maintain their traditional ways of life or exercise sovereignty. This, in addition to the expropriation of aboriginal lands and resources, has contributed to the persistence of poverty among Alaska Natives.

Daniel M. Cobb

See also: Native Hawaiians; Native Americans/American Indians

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American Association for Labor Legislation

The American Association for Labor Legislation (AALL) was one of the most prominent social reform organizations of the Progressive Era. Dominated by elite academics, the AALL was unique in its emphasis on labor legislation as the solution to the nation's economic and social ills. AALL leaders opposed direct relief, favoring instead laws that would provide American workers with basic security. The AALL achieved historic success with some of its occupational safety and health initiatives, most notably the creation of workers' compensation. Yet its campaign for compulsory health insurance benefits failed disastrously, demarcating the limits of the American welfare state.

Economists Richard Ely and Henry Farnam founded the AALL in 1906 as the American branch of the Geneva-based International Association for Labor Legislation. John R. Commons, a well-known labor economist at the University of Wisconsin, became the organization's first secretary. National membership never grew to much more than 3,000, but the AALL's journal, *American Labor Legislation Review,* was widely circulated and cited as the major source of information on labor laws throughout the Progressive Era. The association's board was unusually varied; its members ranged from settlement house workers and labor union leaders to physicians and insurance executives. This diversity of interests would sometimes prove to be the organization's strength, but it was also often its weakness.

The AALL's concerns represented the anxieties of the Progressive-Era middle class, torn between sympathy for the masses and fears of a worker uprising. The organization did not advocate socialism; instead, it sought to preserve the capitalist system by curtailing its abuses and protecting American workers from its worst excesses. The AALL viewed government as an instrument of expert-led regulation, not of redistribution. And AALL leaders viewed themselves as disinterested mediators between labor and capital. Labor laws, they argued, would benefit employers as well as workers by improving efficiency and morale.

In its fight against poverty, the AALL advocated European-style social insurance, which would protect workers against injury, sickness, unemployment, and old age. The emphasis on social insurance reflected a preference for prevention rather than relief. The AALL leaders shared the common conception that relief was charity and thus damaging to individual morality and self-respect. Social insurance avoided these pitfalls since workers would contribute from their own paychecks. The AALL's single-minded pursuit of the insurance model led to an exclusive emphasis on the problems of the industrial workforce; agricultural, service, and domestic workers, as well as the chronically unemployed, fell outside the AALL's vision of security.

The AALL achieved its greatest successes and suffered its most stunning failures under the leadership of John B. Andrews, an economist who had studied under Commons. In 1909, Andrews, along with his wife Irene Osgood Andrews, launched an investigation of the gruesome disease known as "phossy jaw" suffered by match-factory workers. By 1912, the AALL had won a federal law eliminating the use of poisonous phosphorus in matches. The organization's next campaign, social insurance in the form of workmen's compensation laws for on-the-job injuries, also bore fruit. Workmen's compensation illustrated two central tenets of AALL philosophy: It would benefit employers as well as workers by replacing the employers' liability system with predictable premium payments, and it would prevent injuries by giving employers a financial incentive to improve workplace safety. Thanks in large part to the AALL's leadership, thirty-eight states and the federal government (for federal employees) created workers' compensation systems between 1911 and 1918.

Believing that compulsory health insurance, another pillar of European worker protection, would follow easily upon the heels of workmen's compensation, reformers were unprepared for a difficult and ultimately futile battle. The AALL's model health insurance bill of 1915 included medical care and sick pay for workers who lost time due to illness, and a small death benefit, to be paid for by equal contributions from workers, employers, and the state. But early support from the medical profession quickly eroded as physicians decried the loss of control over their incomes and practices that health insurance supposedly would entail. The American Medical Association and state medical societies joined with employers, insurance companies, and conservative labor unions to defeat the AALL's health insurance bills in California and New York in 1917 and 1919. The AALL conceded defeat, and compulsory health insurance vanished from public discussion until the New Deal.

Attempts to establish unemployment insurance met a similar fate during the 1920s. The AALL helped introduce unemployment insurance bills repeatedly in several industrial states throughout the decade, but it faced the same stubborn opposition from employers and insurers. Commons and his followers had better luck in their efforts to strengthen state workmen's compensation laws. During the Great Depression, the AALL suffered an ideological divide when Commons and Andrews pushed for an unemployment insurance model, known as the "Wisconsin Plan," that was based on employer contributions and that was more conservative than the federal system advocated by former AALL supporters Isaac Rubinow and Abraham Epstein. The Wisconsin model proved to be more influential in creating the nation's unemployment insurance system.

With the conspicuous exception of health insurance, AALL reformers saw most of their vision realized during the New Deal. As historian David Moss wrote, "The ideas and political activities of the AALL reformers during the progressive period helped to set the subsequent trajectory of U.S. social welfare policy" (Moss 1996, 171). The AALL's activities laid the foundation for a system of protection against injury, old age, and unemployment while reinforcing the system's neglect of nonindustrial workers, its elite-driven policymaking, and its stigmatization of direct relief.

Beatrix Hoffman

See also: Health Policy; Social Security Act of 1935; Unemployment Insurance; Workers' Compensation

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Americanization Movement

Between the 1890s and the 1920s, middle-class reformers, intellectuals, and industrialists promoted the rapid assimilation of immigrants from Europe, Mexico, and Asia in order to alleviate poverty and ease their transition to life in the United States. Started in urban settlement houses and championed by Patriotic Societies and industry after the turn of the century, the Americanization movement aimed to accelerate the process of assimilation and to control its outcome. Over the next fifteen years, it gained some adherents who held genuine humanitarian interests and others who, fearing cultural heterogeneity, desired social control. Private organizations, federal agencies, state and local governments, industrial corporations, and educators turned their attention to making "immigrants" into "Americans" in terms of language, habits, and values. This included establishing public and private policy regarding instruction in the English language, civics and government, hygiene, and manual and domestic arts. Americanization took on ideological and practical dimensions, as Americanizers worked to instill "American" culture while providing essential skills for social, political, and economic participation in the United States.

The movement intensified during World War I and peaked during the subsequent Red Scare of 1919–1920. As Americanizers went on the offensive against perceived immigrant tendencies toward bolshevism, humanitarian elements gave way to outright hostility toward newcomers. Programs and propaganda increasingly highlighted and criticized differences between immigrants and old-stock citizens. However, in the Red Scare's wake, national organizations dissolved; federal, state, and local governments withdrew; most corporations eliminated their programs; and the movement dissolved. Many Americanizers came to regard assimilation as impossible and advocated immigration restriction instead.

After 1920, the Americanization movement endured primarily in education, as sociologists, educators, and industrialists targeted children, hoping to achieve assimilation for the next generation. Yet school-based programs clearly revealed fundamental contradictions. Ostensibly utilitarian curricula, focused on industrial discipline and manual labor, ignored academic training and never stressed economic mobility or political empowerment. This discrete assimilation offered little more than second-class citizenship and demonstrated the Americanization movement's deepest flaw: It never intended to make immigrants first-class U.S. citizens.

Because they attempted to moderate immigrants' transition to life in the United States and to mediate their assimilation, social and settlement house workers took one path toward Americanization. Influenced by firsthand experience and the University of Chicago's sociologists, they were the most humanitarian of their ilk and rarely encouraged immigrants to detach themselves completely from their home cultures and traditions. A lawyer and sociologist by training, Frances Kellor, the most active of these reformers, wrote muckraking essays, served on the New York Commission on Immigration, and founded or directed several private organizations, including the North American Civic League for Immigrants and the Committee for Immigrants in America, which later became the National Americanization Committee. Especially in the early years, Kellor and her Progressive colleagues prioritized immigrants' social welfare and uplift.

Concurrently, patriotic societies, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion, developed their own brand of Americanization, "100 percent Americanism." These zealots saw immigration as a threat to specific values, and they targeted adult males for instruction in English, U.S. history, and proper habits. These included regular voting, submission to U.S. laws, and loyalty to their new nation. In addition to demanding conformity, 100 percent Americanists fostered an intense nationalism among their adherents and their audience.

As the Americanization movement gained momentum, businesses, government agencies, and educators increased their participation. For industrialists who saw their immigrant employees as refugees from a preindustrial world, Americanization programs provided a template for training loyal, disciplined workers who respected the clock and valued hard work. Ford and others instituted mandatory English-language and citizenship naturalization classes at their largest factories and in company towns. The federal Education Bureau and Naturalization Bureau both dabbled in Americanization. Following New York's lead, several states established commissions to address immigrant issues. Numerous school systems initiated adult education programs with the same goals and began emphasizing language skills for immigrant children, while businesses worked with local school boards to develop vocational training programs.

Although still concerned with social welfare, the Americanization movement flourished during World War I as a remedy to disunity and disloyalty. Motivated in part by fear, and complimented by the 100 percenters' nationalism, even humanitarian Americanizers advocated national defense and "America First" in broad-based propaganda campaigns. Liberal approaches lost favor during the war. When the Red Scare gripped the nation on the heels of the war, 100 percenters became the movement's leaders, and its humanitarian elements receded. Securing national unity and immigrant loyalty became paramount, conformity and obedience became mandatory, and the impetus toward policy innovation and immigrant assistance evaporated. Yet even in this extreme phase, the Americanization movement relied on persuasion rather than legislation, for most state laws failed to withstand constitutional scrutiny.

During the Red Scare, expedience superseded organization, and the recession of 1920 left the movement bereft of economic support. More generally, in abandoning all pretense to immigrant aid and social welfare, Americanization had lost much of its sustaining spirit. Many Progressive Americanizers turned their attention elsewhere, while 100 percenters joined the push for total immigration restriction. The Americanization programs that survived in elementary schools and adult education classes during the 1920s and 1930s proved truly destructive. Children were taught that their parents' culture was inferior, creating significant generational tensions at home. By emphasizing instruction in vocational, manual, and decorative arts rather than academic subjects, Americanization in the schools relegated students to lives of industrial and domestic labor without offering support for socioeconomic mobility. Finally, the ongoing assertion of essential difference supported efforts to segregate Mexican and Asian schoolchildren in the Southwest and West.

David Torres-Rouff

See also: Hull House; *Hull-House Maps and Papers;* Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Progressive Era and 1920s; Settlement Houses; Social Surveys; Social Work; *Twenty Years at Hull-House;* Vocational Education; Welfare Capitalism

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AmeriCorps

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the National and Community Service Trust Act, thereby establishing the Corporation for National Service. This corporation oversees three major projects: Learn and Serve America, the National Senior Service Corps, and AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps brought together two preexisting federal community service programs, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA, created in 1964 by the Economic Opportunity Act) and the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC, created in 1992 as part of a defense appropriations bill amendment), with the new AmeriCorps State and National Project. Since its creation in 1993, AmeriCorps has allowed more than 250,000 men and women to provide needed assistance to both rural and urban communities. Working through a nationwide network of over 2,100 nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and faith-based initiatives, AmeriCorps volunteers have infused such programs with a vital flow of dedicated and trained individuals to meet diverse needs in the areas of health, public safety, education, and the environment. Major projects have included tutoring youth, teaching computer skills in disadvantaged communities, building affordable housing, disaster response, and cleaning up public parks.

AmeriCorps volunteers serve between twenty and forty hours each week, usually for one year. In exchange, they receive an education award to pay back student loans or to fund future college education. Approximately half also receive a small living stipend and health benefits. Largely decentralized in organization, AmeriCorps relies on states and nonprofit organizations to exercise primary control over resource allocations and volunteer placements. Three-fourths of the program's grant funding is controlled by governor-appointed state commissions, which then pass funds on to selected nonprofit organizations. The remaining funding is directly granted to regional and national organizations who apply for such grants. Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Teach for America, and many smaller organizations have taken advantage of such access to federal resources.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush proposed a major expansion of AmeriCorps programs in public safety, public health, and disaster relief as part of his larger homeland security agenda. Throughout the 1990s, AmeriCorps members worked in the area of disaster relief, often in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross. In 2002, Bush created the USA Freedom Corps to promote volunteerism and "expand and strengthen federal service programs like the Peace Corps, Citizen Corps, AmeriCorps, and Senior Corps" (USA Freedom Corps). However, as of early 2004, plans to drastically increase the size and funding of AmeriCorps had stalled, despite a sizable increase in enrollment applications of those wishing to contribute their time and energy to this and other service organizations.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Peace Corps; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

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Antihunger Coalitions

Antihunger groups have historically focused on problems of hunger and poor nutrition as a way of drawing attention to larger problems of poverty and social injustice, since the 1980s coordinating with other groups to form a "hunger lobby" on behalf of the poor.

Since the War on Poverty, antihunger and social justice campaigns in the United States have shifted from a focus on welfare rights, to a focus on hunger, then to homelessness, and more recently to impoverished children and to the attempt to establish the roles of individuals and communities—as well as government—in alleviating hunger and poverty.

Following the model of the civil rights movement, antipoverty lawyers during the late 1960s advanced the notion of a constitutional "right to live" that would guarantee a minimum income to all citizens. After achieving an initial string of successes, the welfare rights argument was ultimately rejected by the courts. Growing public opposition to the notion of welfare rights, along with the defeat of guaranteed-income proposals in Congress and the demise of the welfare rights movement, led advocates to move away from the welfare rights litigation strategy in the early 1970s.

Although welfare rights activists lost ground in both the courts and in Congress, a loose coalition of public interest groups, churches, labor unions, and physicians and nutritionists coalesced in the early 1970s in order to document—and fight—hunger in America. Prominent among the national organizations was the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), which was established in 1970 as a public interest law firm and which has subsequently become a leading research, policy analysis, and advocacy organization serving a nationwide constituency of antihunger and antipoverty organizations. The coalition that formed around FRAC and other groups rapidly gained ground in their attempts to increase federal spending on the poor—principally through expansions in the food stamp program. Between 1970 and 1977, real annual growth in food stamps averaged more than 15 percent—five times the growth rate for the gross national product and twice the growth rate for government as a whole. Supported by private foundations and the Community Services Administration (CSA) and Legal Services Corporation (LSC), the hunger lobby gained support from the media and from key members of Congress and their staffs. It spearheaded the drive to create the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs and gained allies on the House Agriculture Committee. But, again, this period of gains proved short-lived. By 1980, a series of congressional limitations on food stamps along with cuts in federal funding to nonprofit organizations effectively ended the gains of the hunger lobby.

The push by President Ronald Reagan's administration to limit the scope of the federal government represented another challenge to the hunger lobby. Based on his years as governor of California, Reagan and his staff were well aware of the ability of advocates for the poor to harass and challenge efforts to limit welfare. The White House preempted these moves by undercutting federal funding to organizations that opposed the Reagan agenda.

But even as federal support for advocacy was slashed, rates of homelessness in the United States began to rise. Deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill combined with the recession of the early 1980s led to rapidly escalating numbers of homeless Americans, which prompted a growing nationwide mobilization against homelessness. At the forefront of this movement were social movement organizations such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), the National Union for the Homeless, and the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV).

During the 1980s, these activists garnered media coverage through direct action campaigns protesting hunger and homelessness. They built tent city "Reaganvilles" and soup kitchens on the Capitol steps, and they held mass rallies and sit-ins across the country. At the peak of this campaign, CCNV's Mitch Snyder embarked on a fifty-one-day hunger fast, which inspired a made-for-television movie and led to direct negotiations with the White House. This activism, and the media attention it drew, led to congressional hearings on homelessness and to the passage of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Though the ultimate size of allocations for McKinney was fairly small, its adoption in 1987 represented the first expansion in federal social welfare spending since the cuts of 1981. But passage of the McKinney Act also largely diffused efforts to mobilize by and for the homeless.

During the 1990s, antipoverty activists faced a very different set of opportunities and constraints. Poverty rates persisted despite the economic recovery of the late 1980s, leading academics and journalists to write about the lasting implications of a rising economic tide that was failing to lift all Americans out of poverty. Most disconcerting was the persistence of child poverty. Activists thought they had gained a powerful ally in the fight against child poverty in the incoming Clinton administration. The long association of President Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton with children's issues and with the Children's Defense Fund offered hope of a renewed federal commitment to alleviating poverty and hunger—particularly among children. But while the children's lobby made several significant gains during the 1990s, particularly in terms of federal support for better child care and family support policies, their principal successes were in holding more serious cuts at bay.

The subsequent conservative realignment of Congress led to the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which ended the federal entitlement to support for the poorest citizens. The effects of the lifetime caps on eligibility for assistance implemented as part of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program are still to be determined. Only now is the first wave of recipients coming up against the cap.

The health of the economy through the 1990s resulted in extremely low rates of unemployment, and the PRWORA returned still more of the authority for structuring welfare and assistance programs to individual states. There have been widespread indicators, however—including survey results and record demands on local food banks—showing a rise in the number of families who cannot meet their basic nutritional needs. In addition, many low-income families have been cut off from food assistance as a result of restrictions on the eligibility of legal immigrants.

Currently, there are two frontiers of antipoverty/antihunger activism in this country. There is a strand of "old-style" activism working to mobilize massive public support on behalf of progressive social policy. But probably the dominant strain of antipoverty activism today is based on data-driven policy analysis. Advocates who argue from this base concede that fiscal constraints and tepid political will impose limitations on what government can do, and they argue that there are roles for individuals and communities as well as for governments to play in combating poverty and hunger.

Douglas Imig

See also: Food Banks; Food Stamps; Hunger; Nutrition and Food Assistance

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Appalachia

Appalachia is commonly identified as an American region of widespread and persistent poverty. Defined by the federal government as consisting of 410 mountainous counties in twelve states from New York to Mississippi, 15.4 percent of its 23 million people were identified as impoverished by federal economic criteria in 1990, in comparison to 13.1 percent of the U.S. population. Poverty rates varied that year from a low of 10.2 percent in Appalachian Georgia to a high of 29 percent in Appalachian Kentucky. With a poverty rate 221 percent higher than the national average, Appalachian Kentucky manifests the region's greatest poverty (Appalachian Regional Commission). Indeed, in 1990, 10 percent of the poorest counties in the United States were in Kentucky, almost all of them in Appalachian Kentucky. Of the twenty-five counties with the lowest per capita income in the United States in 1990, six were in Appalachian Kentucky (Billings and Blee 2000, 4). Although the twelve-state Appalachian region is culturally, economically, and demographically diverse, poverty has commonly been used to define (and stigmatize) the region as a whole since the late nineteenth century, when Appalachia was first identified (wrongly) as a culturally distinct region. Appalachia has been rediscovered (and forgotten) many times since, especially during the Great Depression and in the 1960s. Each of these periods generated competing explanations and remedies for Appalachian poverty, as well as internal movements for social and economic justice.

Appalachia was first imagined to be a coherent region with a homogeneous culture in the last third of the nineteenth century amid the rapid growth of Appalachian railroad building, timber extraction, and coal mining. Alongside the mine operators, land agents, lawyers, and engineers, novelists, home missionaries, educators, and social workers descended upon and narrated the region. Despite rapid industrialization of the countryside, what most fascinated these diverse agents of economic and cultural intervention was what they imagined to be Appalachia's isolation and poverty, factors that seemed to constitute a zone of rural backwardness. Thus imagined, Appalachia served to authenticate, by its exception, the norm of American urban and industrial progress.

Appalachia at that time was commonly described as a strange land and a peculiar people by popular writers, but it was a Kentucky writer, John Fox Jr., who, more than anyone else, popularized the stereotypes of impoverished mountain people in such widely read novels as *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* (1908) and *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* (1903).

Late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century stereotypes portrayed poor Appalachians in both positive and negative terms. Although slaveholding was not uncommon in the mountain South and support for the Union during the American Civil War had been mixed, the postbellum builders of Appalachian schools and settlement houses portrayed mountain people to northern benefactors as being loyal Unionists, the descendants of pioneer America upon whom charity would not be wasted. In the context of middle-class fears about ethnic immigration and despite the region's ethnic and racial diversity, they also pictured Appalachia as a homeland reservoir of worthy, white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants who were in need of educational uplift but who were nonetheless capable of balancing the influx of Catholic, Jewish, and eastern European populations in urban areas. On the other hand, advocates for railroad, mining, and timber industries, as well as apologists for child labor (who portrayed employment in southern cotton mills as being healthier for children than life on impoverished mountain farms), described Appalachian life as degraded and degenerate. Imperialist writings, not unlike those of colonizing regimes in Africa, Asia, or Latin America, depicted mountain people as ignorant and violent obstacles to economic development in order to justify the expropriation of Appalachia's vast timber and mineral resources. In this context, John C. Campbell, secretary of the Southern Highland Division of the Russell Sage Foundation, argued that perhaps no region of the United States was more misunderstood. In 1921, he published the first systematic survey of social conditions in Appalachia, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland,* and at about the same time, he helped establish the Southern Mountain Workers' Conference, later known as the Council of the Southern Mountains, which became one of the most important early social reform organizations in Appalachia.

Although early Appalachia has been depicted as almost completely isolated geographically and economically, research shows that prior to the twentieth-century development of coal mining, it was more economically diverse and far less isolated than popularly imagined. One study of commerce and industry in antebellum Appalachia, for instance, identified thousands of small manufacturing enterprises, many based on slave labor, that helped link the mountain South to extraregional markets; so, too, did the sale of Appalachian slaves to Deep South planters. Far from being the homespun, egalitarian society of stereotype, nineteenth-century Appalachia was characterized by roughly the same degree of social inequality as the rest of the South. Commercial entrepreneurs (and slave-owning elites in the antebellum period) dominated political life and local government. Unable to generate enough capital on their own to build the transportation infrastructure that modern industrialization required, they became the lawyers, land agents, and junior partners of the outside capitalists who built the railroad, coal, and timber industries that developed the region. Local elites defended the interests of corporate investors, kept taxes on absentee-owned properties low, and used their control of local government to pacify supporters through patronage benefits, including jobs in schools, welfare provisioning, and highway construction and maintenance. They frequently opposed local reform and often co-opted antipoverty programs designed to aid the poor in Appalachia.

Despite the greater prevalence of economic markets than commonly acknowledged, many rural Appalachians lived relatively independently of commerce in the nineteenth century by relying on subsistence farming, open-range livestock grazing, home manufacturing, family labor, and interhousehold exchange to meet their economic needs. Surplus crops and livestock were sold, but farm production was primarily geared to use rather than exchange. For several generations after settlement, these practices provided abundant livelihoods for the Appalachian population, but eventually population increase and the subdivision of farms across generations led to declining farm size and yield, reduced levels of wealth, and increased landlessness and economic hardship. The social origins of Appalachian poverty preceded twentieth-century industrialization, but industrialization nevertheless put severe strain on the farming society by placing additional demands on the land. Farmers sold timber and mineral rights to defend their economic independence, and many turned to employment, at low wage levels, in the region's expanding industries to meet their needs.

Attracted to Appalachia by abundant supplies of high-quality coal and cheap labor, industrialists bought up vast amounts of mountain land, built large mining communities almost overnight in sparsely populated areas, and employed hundreds of thousands of workers in the early decades of the twentieth century. African Americans from the South and immigrants from eastern Europe augmented wage laborers from Appalachia. Employers in the highly competitive coal industry paid low wages (often in scrip redeemable only at company stores), used violent means to resist unionization, restricted civil liberties in tightly controlled company towns, and minimized investments in health and safety. Only the two world wars brought about more American deaths in the twentieth century than did American coal mines, and more nonfatal injuries occurred in U.S. mines than in all the nation's wars from the Revolution through the Vietnam War (Stewart 1996, 99). In the 1920s, mechanization brought the pick-and-shovel era in mining to a close, and 200,000 Appalachian miners lost their jobs.

The nation rediscovered Appalachia in the 1930s when several representations of Appalachian poverty competed for authority. With national policy focused on the threat of underconsumption, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued the first federally sponsored survey of economic conditions in Appalachia. It described the region as the largest zone of noncommercial ("unproductive") agriculture in the United States and urged the emigration of Appalachia's "underemployed" rural population. At the same time, new disciplinary regimes of economic development, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), were established. The TVA flooded mountain farms and whole communities to provide cheap power for southern economic development and forced numerous mountain farmers into the waged workforce. It was also then that the iconic image of the lazy "hillbilly" was standardized in national cartoons. The hillbilly's reputed disregard for economic success expressed a mixture of dread and envy during this time of acute national crisis and served both to call attention to and explain Appalachian poverty.

Other Depression-era reformers advanced alternative representations. Women active in the settlement house movement, for instance, created the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild to preserve their preferred versions of "mountain culture" and to provide economic relief by organizing and marketing women's homemade products. The guild rationalized craft production by supplying standardized materials and design patterns (sometimes of European origin) for commodities that, despite their contrived nature, were marketed as authentic mountain crafts. This approach was opposed by other reformers in the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor who attempted to define women artisans as exploited, full-time, low-wage laborers, rather than part-time domestic workers, and to regulate their wages and working conditions (Becker 1998).

Finally, some members of the American Left represented Appalachia during the Depression as a symbol of capitalist exploitation and imminent proletarian revolution. In this, they were inspired by the mass insurgency of 10,000 armed coal miners who had marched from Charleston, West Virginia, in the 1920s to overthrow the thug-dominated government of Logan County, and by the Communist-led strike of blacklisted miners in Harlan County, Kentucky, in the 1930s. For many on the Left, such events lent credence to the picture of Appalachia as a zone of spontaneous class militancy. Most notably, novelist Theodore Dreiser and his National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners took Kentucky mountain folksinger Aunt Molly Jackson to New York City to represent in song Appalachian miners' plight, poverty, and determination.

By the 1960s, the heroic era of class conflict in Appalachia seemingly had passed. Federal laws passed during the New Deal that guaranteed workers' rights to organize aided the unionization of the Appalachian coalfields. The demand for coal shrank after World War II, however, as other fuels began to replace coal use in railroads and home heating. The now-powerful United Mine Workers of America supported further mechanization of the coal industry and the elimination of marginal firms by allying with large producers organized as the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. It exchanged industry-wide contracts and no-strike clauses in the 1950s and 1960s for tonnage royalties used to create pension funds for retired miners and much-needed health care benefits for both working and retired miners and their families (including a chain of hospitals). But mechanization caused many Appalachian miners to lose their jobs and pushed others into low-wage, nonunion mines. Mechanization, along with further agricultural decline, led to the permanent or temporary migration of as many as 7 million people from Appalachia in the three decades after World War II (Philliber 1981). Although many found new jobs in the industrial cities of the Midwest,

Mother and child in Page County, Virginia. Images like this were used to stir public sympathy for poor people in Appalachia during the early 1960s, in the years leading up to President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of war on poverty. (Wally McNamee/Corbis)

others ended up living in slum neighborhoods in cities like Chicago, Cincinnati, and Cleveland, where they were stigmatized as "hillbillies" or Appalachian "poor whites" and otherwise experienced prejudice and discrimination. In response, some of these neighborhoods saw the emergence of urban Appalachian identity centers, set up to provide needed social services to poor migrants and to nurture self-respect and group identity.

By 1960, it was not uncommon to find counties in West Virginia and Kentucky with federally defined poverty rates over 50 percent. The publication of Michael Harrington's *Other America* (1962) and Harry Caudill's *Night Comes to the*

Cumberlands (1963), John F. Kennedy's widely televised battle for the Democratic presidential nomination in West Virginia in 1959, Kennedy's 1963 appointment of a presidential commission on Appalachian poverty, and President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty (announced by the president in 1964 from the home of an impoverished Appalachian Kentucky family)—each brought Appalachian poverty to national attention. Sociologists portrayed Appalachia as a regionwide culture of poverty, while mainstream economists—blind to the very factors that had led to crisis—described Appalachia as a region apart that lacked integration with the wider economy. A new regime of economic development, the Appalachian Regional Commission, promised to integrate Appalachia into the national free-enterprise system by investing in highways, sewers, industrial parks, urban growth centers, and training, while the Office of Economic Opportunity sought to overcome the hypothetical alienation of a culture of poverty in Appalachia by encouraging community action by the poor.

When those who tried to advance community action ran up against the obdurate resistance of established power structures, however, they began to describe Appalachia as the third world of the United States. Rather than a culture of poverty, Appalachia was a colony. Its connection to, rather than isolation from, corporate capitalism came to be viewed as the source of Appalachian poverty. Although scholars no longer accept internal colonialism as a useful way of thinking about Appalachian poverty, the trope of Appalachia as a colony helped mobilize movements for social and economic justice in Appalachia that continue today, making it one of the most activist regions in the United States. These movements include efforts to defend welfare rights, democratize communities, reform and strengthen unions, improve occupational health and safety, defend the environment, tax absentee land and mineral owners more equitably, pay living wages, and support sustainable, nonexploitative forms of economic development.

Dwight B. Billings

See also: Area Redevelopment Act; Community Development; Great Depression and New Deal; Highlander; *Night Comes to the Cumberlands; The Other America;* Poverty Research; Rural Poverty; Tennessee Valley Authority; War on Poverty

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Applied Research Center

The Applied Research Center (ARC) is devoted to investigative research on public policy. Its particular and distinctive mission is to develop the information and analyses that support grassroots organizations working to reduce racial and economic injustice.

ARC was founded in 1980 under the leadership of Gary Delgado, who had earlier helped establish the Center for Third World Organizing (CTWO), an organization that itself grew out of the welfare rights movement. A recent ARC publication captures the orientation of the Center at its founding: "Information is not neutral; like most commodities in the public arena, research benefits certain interests. Most of the applied research conducted by institutions such as the Stanford Research Institute, the Brookings Institution, and most universities directly services public and private bureaucracies. Independent grassroots organizations have no comparable analytical arm that would allow for proactive policy development" (Applied Research Center 2003, 2).

Based in Oakland, California, ARC now has a permanent staff of about twenty and recently opened branch offices in Chicago and New York. Consistent with its distinctive mission, ARC has ongoing working relationships with more than 100 grassroots, advocacy, and policy groups across the country. It also continues to work in partnership with CTWO. Together, they helped convene and staff a fledgling network of welfare rights groups known as Grassroots Organizing for Welfare Leadership (GROWL).

ARC is proudest of its efforts in the area of race. It works to keep race issues at the forefront of community organizing efforts. In 2000, it established the Welfare Advocacy and Research Project, which, in cooperation with grassroots welfare recipient groups, collected data documenting racial, gender, and language discrimination in welfare policy. The resulting report, *Cruel and Unusual: How Welfare "Reform" Punishes Poor People*, circulates widely among advocacy and welfare recipient groups.

The organization's other publications include *Beyond the Politics of Place; Sex, Lies, and Politics; Confronting the New Racisms;* and *From Poverty to Punishment*. The quarterly magazine launched by ARC and CTWO in 1998, *Color Lines*, covers racial issues in a wide range of policy areas and also regularly reports on ongoing community organizing efforts. The magazine has already received a number of journalism awards, and its readership has climbed to 30,000.

Frances Fox Piven

See also: Community Organizing; Poverty Research; Welfare Rights Movement

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Arab Americans

Arab Americans are Americans whose ancestral heritage derives from the Arabic-speaking cultures of the Middle East and North Africa. The Arab American community in the United States is estimated at 1 million to 3 million individuals (Arab American Institute 2000). Arab immigration to the United States is divided into three waves: a first wave, roughly toward the latter part of the nineteenth century; a second wave, from World War I to the mid-1960s; and a third wave, after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Diverse in religion (Christian and Muslim), economic class, and political affiliation, Arab Americans struggle against stereotypes that link them to terrorism and obscure their long history in the United States.

Most of the immigrants in the first wave of migration were Christian Syrians and Lebanese, who came in response to economic opportunity rather than political discrimination. Ninety percent of these immigrants worked, at least briefly, as traveling peddlers, with women and children participating as both peddlers and manufacturers of products (Naff 1983, 15). Like their southern European counterparts, they faced hostility, including from Protestant and Catholic institutions that did not recognize their Eastern Rite or Orthodox rituals and customs. But their Christianity also assisted their assimilation, as did an ethnic network that both employed the new migrants as peddlers and supported them with services, products to sell, and settlements.

Second-wave immigrants fled to the United States in response to the political turmoil caused by decolonization in the Middle East, as well as for education and postwar economic opportunities. Muslims began to join Christian immigrants in this period. The first substantial emigration of professionals also arrived, many after completing higher education in their own countries or Europe. Chain migration and expanding industrial opportunities continued to bring in working-class immigrants, including many who worked in the automobile plants in and around Detroit.

Third-wave immigrants came in response to the Arab-Israeli conflict and from a region undergoing a rebirth of nationalism and pan-Arab sentiment. The 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the Lebanese civil war in the 1970s, and the 1982 Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon all created streams of migrants. Although valuing the freedoms and economic opportunities of their new country, many of these immigrants saw America's role in their homelands as imperialist and anti-Arab, and their skepticism was strengthened by the political ferment and resurgence of ethnic identification in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. Muslim migration also began to outpace Christian migration in this period, leading to the establishment of mosques and community centers, Islamic parochial schools, and Muslim associations.

Arab Americans in the United States face a variety of economic and social conditions. Among the most impoverished are Iraqi Sh'ia refugees who fled after the 1991 Gulf War; most had very little education before leaving Iraq and had lived in camps in Saudi Arabia for years before resettlement. At the other end of the income scale are doctors, engineers, and businessmen; about 36 percent of Arab Americans, compared to 18 percent of Americans nationwide, have bachelor's or graduate degrees (U.S. Census Bureau 1994, 1998). The largest communities of Arab Americans nationwide live in four metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Arab American identities constantly undergo reexamination. Early migrants identified with their religious rite (such as Melkite or Maronite) or their nationality rather than as "Arab." A series of court cases in the early twentieth century debated whether Arabs should be considered "white," and thus eligible for citizenship, or "Asiatic," and thus ineligible (Samhain 1999). However, prejudice against Arabs and self-identification as Arab American became more salient at the end of the twentieth century. The Gulf War and consequent sanctions against Iraq, continuing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the war to oust Saddam Hussein made Arab Americans more visible to themselves and to others. Some leaders responded by calling on Arab Americans to put aside regional, national, and sectarian identifications in favor of the pan-ethnic "Arab American" label. Groups like the Arab American Institute (AAI) and the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) worked to have "Arab" listed as an official race on the U.S. census. These groups have also provided information to political leaders and advocates, filed lawsuits, and sponsored many activities to create more awareness of the Arab American community.

Other leaders have promoted "Muslim American" as an identity that could unite East Asian, South Asian, African, and Arab Americans. The post-1965 period saw increasing waves of Muslim migration from all over the world, and many Islamic institutions, especially those serving more-settled immigrants and their children, acquired a pan-ethnic character in response. Prominent Muslim-American groups, including the Center for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the Muslim Student Association (MSA), have taken active roles in providing support and establishing institutions for Muslims and in fighting discrimination against Islam and its practices. The American-born children of the second and third waves of Arab migration are also shaping these developments, as they rediscover, adopt, and adapt religious practices that their parents discarded or never had at all.

Ann Chih Lin

See also: Americanization Movement; Asian Americans; Catholic Church; Citizenship; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Islam; Protestant Denominations; Racism

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Area Redevelopment Act

The Area Redevelopment Act of 1961 established a program of geographically targeted federal grants and loans aimed at relieving unemployment and industrial stagnation in economically distressed urban and rural areas. Although short-lived, the program was an early and important component of the Kennedy administration's domestic economic strategy, and its geographic targeting of resources to needy cities and regions set a precedent for later "place-based" federal economic development programs. The act was also notable in that federal support of private capital investment was central to the program, making it a departure from earlier federal economic development strategies that had focused solely on public works projects. Between 1961 and 1964, the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) established by this act provided about $300 million to "labor surplus" communities through business loans ($170 million), public facility improvements ($90 million), and a smaller amount of technical assistance and workforce training (Patterson 1994, 127). In marked contrast to many of the antipoverty programs that followed it, the ARA focused on rebuilding economic and physical infrastructure rather than improving worker skills and education. The program did not seek to redress the economic discrimination faced by particular groups of *people*, such as racial minorities, but instead focused on distressed *places* that had been left behind by the industrial shifts and technological advances of the postwar period.

Although the program is often identified with President Kennedy's efforts to improve Appalachia, it had its origins in congressional concerns about Midwestern and northeastern rural areas particularly hard-hit by the economic contraction of heavy industry and mining. The most important actor in the design and creation of the area redevelopment program was Illinois Democratic Senator Paul H. Douglas, who first proposed area redevelopment legislation in 1955. The proposal reflected Douglas's and other Rust Belt–area legislators' worries that parts of their region were bypassed by the postwar economic boom, as well as their growing frustration at the disproportionate regional allocation of federal defense spending to Sunbelt states like California. This legislation and subsequent measures introduced by Douglas and others during the late 1950s and early 1960s failed due to partisan disagreements about the scope and administration of such a program. Despite voicing support for geographically targeted measures to reduce unemployment and poverty, President Eisenhower vetoed area redevelopment legislation twice, in 1958 and in 1960.

The repeated failure of area redevelopment bills to become law, combined with a short recession that had increased the number and visibility of high-unemployment "labor surplus" areas, made area redevelopment a high-profile political issue in the 1960 presidential campaign. Democratic nominee John F. Kennedy seized upon this issue and drew attention to the plight of poor communities and regions through campaign events and speeches. The importance of West Virginia to Kennedy's electoral prospects helped to shift the emphasis of his campaign rhetoric toward the economic problems of Appalachia, and through campaign events and speeches Kennedy made the economic distress of this region a national political concern. After his election, Kennedy created a task force on high-unemployment areas and appointed Douglas as its chair. The task force submitted a report to the President in January 1961 recommending that a multibillion-dollar program for area redevelopment be the centerpiece of Kennedy's national unemployment-fighting strategy. In the subsequent Congress, Douglas's area redevelopment bill passed quickly and was signed into law by Kennedy in May 1961.

Despite its high political visibility as the first major product of the President's "New Frontier" domestic agenda, the ARA had difficulties realizing its grand objectives from the start. In order to win broad congressional support for the program, eligibility had been extended to a large number of communities, all of which had to share in a relatively small amount of funding. Under these criteria, the ARA designated nearly 900 urban and rural counties as eligible for assistance; these areas contained more than one-sixth of the U.S. population (Levitan 1964, 64). The lingering national recession meant that a large number of areas were experiencing high rates of blue-collar unemployment, conditions that increased interregional competition for firms and jobs and further disadvantaged the highly distressed areas targeted by the ARA. In addition, rather than becoming the independent agency that its original advocates had envisioned, the ARA became a small subagency of Commerce. As such, the ARA had limited physical space and staffing capacity, and its political effectiveness became hobbled by its location within an inattentive bureaucracy.

The ARA thus had limited resources with which to implement a broad and ambitious mandate to revitalize deeply and chronically poor communities. Lacking both a powerful central administration and a comprehensive and coherent field structure, the program rapidly devolved into "pork-barrel" spending patterns that channeled support in response to political pressure rather than pure economic need. Congress soon realized that the ARA was not working as intended, and congressional debate reopened on how best to help depressed areas. Rather than reauthorizing the ARA upon the act's expiration in 1965, Congress replaced it with more broadly based economic assistance legislation, the Public Works and Economic Development Act (PWEDA). The new program offered a similar combination of public facilities grants and private-sector loans, but it emphasized multicounty and regional economic development efforts rather than the fragmented single-county revitalization schemes funded by the ARA.

Margaret Pugh O'Mara

See also: Community Development; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Rural Poverty; Urban Poverty; War on Poverty

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Asian Americans

The history of Asian American poverty is inseparable from the history of immigration. Both the timing and context of Asian immigration to the United States and the response of settled Americans to Asian immigrants have conditioned economic opportunities and economic security. Racism and nativism generated discrimination against Asian Americans, while differences of language and culture impaired Asian immigrants' access to many educational opportunities. As a result, many Asian immigrants have been relegated to exploitative low-wage jobs. Poverty among Asian Americans has also been shaped by changing public policies toward immigrants and immigration: for example, immigration and naturalization policy, which restricted Asian migration to the United States and prohibited their naturalization during the first half of the twentieth century; refugee policy, which opened doors to migrants from Asian Communist countries during the second half of the twentieth century; and current U.S. social welfare policies that restrict immigrant participation in social programs.

From the onset of racially restrictive immigration laws in the 1880s, Asians were singled out as "undesirable," and when not excluded altogether, they were barred from citizenship and, in some states, denied access to education, certain categories of jobs, basic legal protections, and property rights. These laws were principally aimed at Chinese and Japanese immigrants—until recent decades the largest proportion of Asian immigrants—and justified through racist ideas about their "devious" or "disloyal" character. The Immigration Reform Act of 1965 finally ended racially biased quotas and instituted a preference for family reunification in immigration, which in turn dramatically increased the absolute and relative numbers coming from Asia. In the decade of the 1950s, 153,000 Asians made up only 6 percent of the incoming immigrants, but 1.59 million Asians made up 35 percent of the incoming immigrants of the 1970s. Refugees augmented the inflow, pushing up the number of incoming Asians to 2.74 million in the 1980s, a level that was maintained through the 1990s. With renewed large-scale immigration, the Asian American population grew from less than a million in 1960 to nearly 12 million in 2000. The growth was accompanied by a shift in composition by nativity. Over two out of three Asian Americans in 1960 were born in the United States, and the proportion fell to less than one out of three in 1990. Although that proportion has gone up slightly, immigrants still make up a large majority of Asian Americans (Ong and Leung 2003).

Post-1965 Asian immigrants are incredibly diverse in terms of socioeconomic background. The largest segment of the population is composed of those who entered the United States through family reunification, and the group that initially benefited the most had family members in the United States prior to 1965. This group included individuals with considerable human capital and individuals with very limited marketable skills. Another important segment is made up of those who entered through occupational preferences and their families. Occupational preferences are designed to attract workers with technical skills, high educational attainment, and exceptional talent. This selective screening has contributed to a remarkable expansion of the middle and professional classes among Asian Americans. Finally, there are the political refugees, made up primarily of those who fled Southeast Asia after the end of the Vietnam War. A disproportionately high number of this group have very limited formal education and few marketable skills. The net result of this mix of immigrants is a population that is overrepresented at both the top and bottom end of the labor market.

The bimodal distribution has altered the poverty rate for Asian Americans relative to the rate for non-Hispanic whites. In 1960, the two rates were comparable, slightly under 18 percent. Economic growth in the 1960s lowered the rate for both groups (to about 10 percent for non-Hispanic whites and 11 percent for Asian Americans in 1970), but since then, the two groups have gone in different directions. By 1990, there was a noticeable disparity: The poverty rate was over 14 percent for Asian Americans and under 9 percent for non-Hispanic whites. The technology-driven business boom of the 1990s has narrowed the gap only slightly. By the latter part of the decade, the average poverty rate for Asian Americans was 12.6 percent, more than 4 percentage points higher than the rate for non-Hispanic whites (Ong and McConville 2004).

Variations in immigration patterns produce ethnic differences in the level of poverty. Japanese Americans are the least affected by contemporary immigration, and two out of three Japanese Americans are at least second generation. As a well-established and highly assimilated group, they have a low poverty rate, only 10 percent in 2000, half the rate for all Asian Americans. The other Asian ethnic populations are all predominantly immigrant groups, but despite this commonality, their poverty rates vary tremendously. Filipinos and Asian Indians have benefited the most from selective occupational migration, and their poverty rates are lower than average (6 percent and 10 percent in 2000, respectively). At the other end are the Southeast Asian refugees. Although the population includes the pre-1975 elite from that region of the world, the typical person has less than a high school education, does not speak English, and has limited work experience relevant to an advanced economy. The lack of human capital translates into high levels of poverty: 16 percent for Vietnamese, 29 percent for Cambodians, and 29 percent for Hmongs (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

Asian American poverty is concentrated in two types of inner-city enclaves. The first is revitalized Chinatowns, which have been transformed by immigration into working-poor neighborhoods. The highly visible part of the enclave economy is based on tourism, but the hidden half is based on sweatshops, especially in the garment industry. Regardless of sector, the jobs pay low wages and offer few benefits, and many of the working poor are only a paycheck away from falling into poverty. Chinatowns also have a sizable low-income elderly population, many of whom do not have pensions or Social Security.

The second type of enclave is communities that were established since the mid-1970s. Some of these neighborhoods, such as southern California's Little Saigon, are not low-income neighborhoods. Others, such as New Phnom Penh, in Long Beach, California, are extremely economically depressed. Adults in well over a third of the households are jobless, and their main source of income is welfare benefits. The reliance on public assistance is due to both a lack of marketable skills and a failure of refugee policy and programs to integrate this group into the economic mainstream. Welfare reform of the late 1990s is adding to the economic problems of these communities and their residents. The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act erects high new hurdles to participation by noncitizen immigrants in social programs from welfare to food stamps to Medicaid. Without access to the social safety net, poverty can be devastating for Asian immigrants.

Unfortunately, Asian American poverty has not received adequate attention. Because of the enormous ethnic diversity among Asian Americans, the underlying causes and the barriers to achieving economic self-sufficiency are complex and numerous. Each ethnic population in poverty has unique and distinct programmatic needs, but designing and implementing appropriate services are difficult because each group is relatively small. The diverse needs and a lack of economies of scale prevent Asian Americans from receiving culturally and linguistically appropriate help. Their small numbers place the groups in a weak political position, which makes it difficult for them to garner a fair share of the available resources. Equally important, poor Asian Americans are overlooked because the prevailing stereotype is one of high educational and occupational achievement. One cannot and should not deny the accomplishments of Asian Americans, but, tragically, that success is masking the economic hardships of 1 million Asian Americans.

Paul Ong

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Asian Law Caucus/Asian Law Alliance; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Refugee Policy; Sweatshop; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Asian Law Caucus/ Asian Law Alliance

The Asian Law Caucus and the Asian Law Alliance are nonprofit, community-based legal organizations that focus on the economic needs, legal services, and civil rights of low-income Asian Pacific Americans (APAs). These law offices work to fight against discrimination and for the empowerment of underrepresented Asian Pacific Americans, of whom immigrants and refugees make up the vast majority. Both organizations incorporate educational programs and community organizing with litigation and policy advocacy.

Founded in 1972, the Asian Law Caucus (ALC) is the first and oldest organization of its kind. First located in Oakland, California, the ALC started as a small storefront operation, staffed largely by volunteers. It then moved to Market Street in San Francisco and now operates with a staff of more than twenty persons and a budget of nearly $1 million. Influenced by the civil rights, Asian American, and other social movements, the ALC founders were motivated to create a community law office for those who have historically had little or no access to adequate legal services or remedies for discriminatory practices. Dale Minami, the cofounder and first managing attorney of the ALC, wrote in 1975, "We wanted to provide free and low-cost legal services for Asian Americans, initiate broad suits attacking institutional racism, forge close ties with community groups, participate in community struggles, . . . and create a model to encourage others to join in community law practice" (Asian Law Caucus 1997).

Since its inception, the ALC has focused on an extensive range of issues that have had widespread impact. Most notable was the critical ALC participation in overturning the wartime convictions for curfew violations imposed against Japanese Americans in *Korematsu v. United States* ([584 F. Supp. 1406]; 1984 U.S. Dist. 1984). This legal victory influenced the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, resulting in the redress and reparations for Japanese Americans interned during World War II. The ALC won its earliest victory in *Chann v. Scott* (1972), a class-action lawsuit against the San Francisco Police Department for practicing racially discriminatory dragnet arrests of Chinatown youths. In 1972, the ALC successfully settled the first major class-action lawsuit for employment discrimination against Asian Americans in the case of *Salazar v. Blue Shield. Ha, et al. v. T & W Fashions* (1983) was a significant victory, winning a settlement against a major garment contractor and manufacturer, and in 1993, *Chen, et al. v. Ocean Garment Manufacturing, et al.* was the first case to hold the manufacturer liable for labor violations committed by a subcontractor. The ALC continues to use litigation, public education, and organizing to reform the garment industry, and it is a leading member of Sweatshop Watch, a California-wide coalition committed to the elimination of sweatshop conditions in the garment industry.

The Asian Law Alliance (ALA), inspired and modeled after the ALC, was formally established in 1977 to provide legal services to the growing APA community of Santa Clara County of California. Since its beginning, the ALA has assisted tens of thousands of people in obtaining decent housing, justice in the immigration process, and access to basic human and legal rights. Providing legal services particularly for those who are limited in English and who cannot afford legal fees, the ALA provides free or low-cost services in APA languages and conducts extensive outreach and education about basic legal rights.

Campaigns engaged by the ALA have included participation in the redress campaign for Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II, a joint lawsuit to preserve multilingual services in the Santa Clara County Department of Social Services, assistance with the larger Santa Clara County campaign to oppose discriminatory immigration legislation, and efforts within various Asian language groups to address the problem of domestic violence within APA families.

Housing discrimination has remained a central focus for the ALC and the ALA. The ALC joined the legal defense team in the tenant battle against the eviction of mostly low-income elderly Filipinos from the International Hotel in San Francisco's Chinatown, a landmark struggle of the 1970s for housing rights. In the 1990s, the ALC successfully litigated cases with the San Francisco Housing Authority to remedy unsafe and violent conditions for Asian residents, and in March 2000, the ALC was instrumental in preventing the eviction of residents from a residential hotel on Clay Street in San Francisco's Chinatown.

The ALA has addressed affordable housing and housing discrimination issues in Silicon Valley, where a highly exploited immigrant labor pool must find housing in a high-cost area. With the Fair Housing Consortium and the San Jose Residents for Rent Relief, the ALA has been essential in the formation of tenant associations and has mounted community education classes. In collaboration with other legal organizations, the ALA represented low-income residents in a lawsuit filed against their landlord after they had endured years of nearly uninhabitable living conditions.

A persistent challenge for immigrants has been gaining fair access to welfare benefits, particularly after the 1996 welfare reform complicated requirements for noncitizens. From 1979 to 1981, hundreds of elderly Asian immigrants were prevented by the Immigration and Naturalization Service from reentering the United States after short visits abroad because they received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and were subject to Public Charge provisions. Their passports and green cards were confiscated because they had received public assistance. The ALC successfully defended many of these immigrants, preserving their immigration status and allowing them to remain on SSI. In 1994, California passed the Save-Our-State initiative, or Proposition 187, which required schools, medical clinics, and public social service providers to deny education and services to undocumented persons. The ALC joined the legal team in *Gregoria T. v. Wilson*, which succeeded in halting implementation of Proposition 187. Both the ALC and the ALA were central to the community organizing efforts that challenged the constitutionality of Proposition 187, as well as to the legal effort.

The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) has had far-reaching consequences for the APA immigrants and refugees living in poverty. The change in eligibility requirements for legal permanent residents resulted in the loss of SSI and food stamps for thousands of legal permanent residents. The ALC, the ALA, and countless other community-based organizations responded to widespread panic and confusion through massive public education campaigns, naturalization drives, and state and local organizing efforts to challenge anti-immigrant provisions.

In addition to assisting individual immigrants reclaim lost benefits, both the ALC and the ALA, along with other community organizations, provided language- and culture-sensitive naturalization programs to encourage preparation for the citizenship test. Also, recognizing that citizenship is the one sure way for immigrants to regain eligibility for SSI and food stamps, staff attorneys and community volunteers worked directly with thousands of immigrants to navigate circumstances that could jeopardize their naturalization.

Immediately following the implementation of food stamp cuts for most immigrants, the ALC and other attorneys filed over 3,500 appeals on behalf of Hmong immigrants who had participated in U.S. military efforts in Laos during the war in Southeast Asia but who were excluded from veteran status due to imprecise wording of the 1996 welfare law. As a result of the flood of cases and a simultaneous visibility campaign, the Agricultural Research Act of 1998 restored food stamps to certain immigrant children, as well as to certain elderly and disabled immigrants. It also allowed members of the Hmong and other highland Laos tribes and their spouses, widows, and children to qualify.

To address the effects of the 1996 welfare reform on immigrants and refugees at the national level, the ALC, along with the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (of which the ALC is a founding member) submitted an amicus brief in *Sinelnikov v. Shalala*, Seventh Circuit (189 F.3d 598 1999 U.S. App), a case that challenged the constitutionality of the 1996 immigrant provisions. Immigrant access to food stamps and other social assistance remains a top priority for ALC and ALA, especially as hunger in immigrant families rises under the impact of the harsh exclusions of 1996 legislation.

Lynn H. Fujiwara

See also: Asian Americans; Food Stamps; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Supplemental Security Income; Sweatshop; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)

The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) is one of the country's largest, best-organized, and most-effective grassroots antipoverty organizations. Founded in 1970 as a community organizing project of the Little Rock, Arkansas, chapter of the National Welfare Rights Organization, ACORN has since spawned chapters in fifty-five cities in twenty-four states. ACORN has pioneered grassroots struggles in almost every aspect of antipoverty work, including working for living-wage legislation, workfare workers' rights, public housing tenant unions, and against predatory lending practices by banks and other lenders. ACORN has also created innovative programs to protect and develop low-income housing, has led campaigns against the privatization of public schools, and has sponsored its own public schools. ACORN has helped organize service employee unions and has generated a voter-registration organization and alternative progressive political parties. Chapters conduct multiple, simultaneous campaigns, relying on a committed senior staff, an energetic junior staff of organizers, and grassroots leaders drawn from their membership (150,000 households nationwide). ACORN chapters rely on members' dues for 50–80 percent of their funding, with the balance coming from private foundations (ACORN 2004).

ACORN emphasizes direct action and membership building. It seeks to maintain a strong base of dues-paying members, from which it draws leaders and foot-soldiers for its many campaigns, organizing staff, and governance for the organization. Though guided by national staff and by an elected national board, ACORN chapters are largely autonomous. At the local level, member-leaders and staff steer the organization. Regular meetings keep leaders and staff closely accountable and responsive to active members, even as they educate the members and shape their views on the issues at hand.

Though based loosely on Saul Alinsky's principles of community organizing, ACORN does not organize large coalitions of existing neighborhood institutions. Rather, it builds its own membership. ACORN has often found it difficult to balance the compromises of coalition work with the more deliberative decision-making processes required of membership-based organizations. Stubborn about steering agendas to reflect its members' wishes, it has gained a reputation among other organizations for being a difficult and turf-oriented coalition partner. In spite of these tensions, ACORN has worked in coalitions on nearly every one of its major campaigns for nearly two decades.

ACORN campaigns build their power by focusing on often-divisive issues, such as institutionalized racism in public education or banking, that nevertheless unite their mainly low-income members. ACORN's direct action tactics are backed by campaign-oriented research and tempered by a willingness to negotiate with adversaries. The long-term commitment (and institutional memory) of much of ACORN's senior staff and leadership, along with the renewable outrage and energy generated by its membership, have enabled ACORN to be sophisticated and effective while retaining a militancy unusual among contemporary antipoverty organizations.

John Krinsky

See also: Community Development; Community Organizing; Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); Living-Wage Campaigns; Welfare Rights Movement; Workfare

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Bakke, E. Wight

See The Unemployed Worker and *Citizens without Work*

Birth Control

Birth control encompasses practices that prevent conception. Contraception was first referred to as "birth control" by Margaret Sanger in 1914 as part of her efforts to inaugurate a social movement to overturn laws that had banned the devices in the 1870s. Although Americans may take the right to contraception for granted today, the legal status of contraception has shifted over the course of the nation's history. Public demand for contraceptives in the mid-nineteenth century spurred a booming patent medicine industry and raised concerns that middle-class Americans were shirking their duty to become parents. These fears led, in the 1870s, to federal and state laws that made it a crime to distribute contraceptive information and devices. Throughout U.S. history, elitist prejudices linking poverty to poor planning abilities and to excessive sensuality have provoked anxiety about childbearing among poorer Americans and have inspired efforts to restrict their fertility. Those prejudices were very apparent in the drive to secure compulsory-sterilization laws in twenty-eight states between 1907 and 1931 and in the 1927 *Buck v. Bell* (274 U.S. 200) U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding those laws. The individual's right to make fertility decisions was only established in the mid-twentieth century in two key U.S. Supreme Court cases: the 1942 *Skinner v. Oklahoma* (316 U.S. 535) decision, which limited some sterilization laws and defined the right to procreate as a fundamental; and the 1965 *Griswold v. Connecticut* (381 U.S. 479) decision, which defined the use of contraception to be constitutionally protected by the right to privacy. Even with these decisions supporting individual reproductive choice, fears about the kind of people having children continue to influence state interventions into family planning and into poor women's access to birth control.

Despite its shifting legal status, people practiced birth control throughout U.S. history. Prolonged breast-feeding, withdrawal, and marital abstinence were some of the earliest methods used. Douches, vaginal suppositories, condoms, and other barrier methods were sold commercially in the mid-1800s. And recipe books contained instructions for homemade herbal concoctions. The twentieth century commercial contraceptive market continued to grow, especially with the hard times of the Depression in the 1930s. Massengill and Lysol both advertised their products as douching agents. A wide variety of foams, tablets, and suppositories were also available. Condom manufacturers developed new latex models and expanded their marketing to gas stations and restaurants. Contraceptive manufacturing was unregulated, however, and the reliability and effectiveness of products varied widely. As the twentieth century progressed, women turned more and more to doctor-prescribed contraceptive methods. Clinics sponsored by the birth control movement supported the initial development of spermicides, diaphragms, intrauterine devices (IUDs), and the pill. The 1960 introduction of the pill seemed to promise women a medical method that was almost 100 percent effective. Although the pill is often credited with causing the great decline in fertility since the 1960s, sterilization is actually the leading form of birth control in the United States, with 28 percent of women relying on female sterilization and another 11 percent relying on vasectomies of their male partners (Alan Guttmacher Institute). These surveys do not distinguish between voluntary and coerced sterilizations. Before age thirty-five, poor women, African American women, and women with less than a college education are far more likely to rely on female sterilization than are other women. Given that Medicaid and health insurers often cover only the full costs of permanent birth control methods, this differential pattern reflects, at least in part, the very different reproductive "choices" of poor women of color (Tone 2001).

The first sustained challenge to the legal ban on contraceptives passed in the 1870s came in the wake of Sanger's activism. A participant in radical and socialist politics in New York, Sanger shifted her full attention to birth control in 1914. That year, she was arrested for writing about abortion and contraception in her magazine, *The Woman Rebel.* She also wrote and distributed *Family Limitation,* a pamphlet that provided detailed descriptions of various contraceptive methods. The first pamphlet of its kind, it was widely distributed through socialist and anarchist political circles. In 1916, she and two other women opened the first U.S. birth control clinic in Brooklyn. Sanger chose the Brownsville community as the site for the clinic, in part because of its strong working-class community. And Brownsville's women flocked to the clinic in large numbers in the ten days before the police shut it down. Sanger and her compatriots spent thirty days in jail for their actions and inspired groups around the country to open clinics and challenge laws. Sanger opened her second clinic in New York City in 1923 and helped establish a national network of clinics that joined together as Planned Parenthood in 1942. These clinics provided services to all married women regardless of their ability to pay. Because of the sexual controversy that birth control embodied, the movement was largely disconnected from other female-led social welfare movements of the period.

At the same time that the birth control movement was trying to secure the individual right to contraception, a national movement for compulsory sterilization sought laws to prevent reproduction among "the unfit." Grounded in eugenics, which claimed to apply scientific principles of heredity to human reproduction, this movement helped pass laws in twenty-eight states that required the sterilization of institutionalized, retarded, and insane persons and of convicts. Thus, the first birth control technique actually legalized in the twentieth century was surgical sterilization imposed by court order. In practice, the application of sterilization law fell most heavily on poor women. The standards for fitness used by advocates of sterilization laws embodied class-based and gender prejudices. By the twentieth century, middle-class common sense, derived from Thomas Malthus, held that families should only have as many children as they could afford to support. Following the myth that through hard work and thrift every American could prosper, couples were expected to delay marriage and childbearing until they had secured a stable economic position. In addition, girls, especially, were expected to refrain from sex until they married. Thus only thriftlessness and inherent irresponsibility could explain why poor families had (too many) children and why young women gave birth out of wedlock. Eugenics, which argued that pauperism was hereditary, suggested that those children would necessarily become burdens to society. Such beliefs were widely shared. So for instance, while Sanger criticized the arrogance of the eugenicists' claim to be able to determine a person's fitness, she also expressed disappointment in working-class and poor women when their fertility rates did not decline as quickly as middle-class standards dictated.

In upholding the Virginia sterilization laws in its 1927 *Buck v. Bell* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court enshrined elitist and eugenic prejudices. Ruling that "in order to prevent our being swamped with incompetence," compulsory sterilization was justified. The Court held "it was better" if society could "prevent those who are manifestly unfit from reproducing their kind" (quoted in Reilly 1991). The decision covered only those who were confined in government facilities. However, teenage girls from poor and working-class families who became sexually active before marriage were often placed in such facilities precisely to secure their sterilization. The *Buck* case itself involved such a situation: Carrie Buck, a seventeen-year-old unwed mother and the daughter of an unwed mother, was ordered to be sterilized. Poor young men were most likely to run afoul of compulsory sterilization laws if they were incarcerated for juvenile offenses. In its 1942 ruling in *Skinner v. Oklahoma,* the Court limited the circumstances in which states could compel sterilization. In this case, the Court ruled that Oklahoma's law requiring the sterilization of habitual criminals was subject to class bias because it excluded many kinds of crimes likely to be committed by middle-class persons. Thus, embezzlers would not be subject to the law whereas petty thieves were. The Court ruled that the law violated the equal protection clause. In its ruling, it recognized for the first time that the decision to have children is a fundamental right.

The *Skinner* decision did not end government's role in fertility control. In the 1950s and 1960s, with concern about rising proportions of racial minorities on the welfare rolls, the focus of sterilizations shifted to poor Black, Hispanic, and Native American women. After the *Griswold v. Connecticut* decision legalized contraception, the federal government began funding federal family programs directed at limiting poor women's fertility. Those programs initially increased the practice of compelling poor women to submit to permanent sterilization. In 1978, as a result of activism by a coalition of welfare rights, civil rights, and feminist organizations to end sterilization abuse, the government issued guidelines for Medicaid-covered sterilization. Although forced permanent sterilizations declined, during the 1990s, some state governments pushed the distribution of two long-acting contraceptives, Norplant and Depo Provera, in hopes of preventing conception among poor women, especially teenagers, and thereby reducing welfare rolls. In addition, the federal government incorporated abstinence-only education provisions in the 1996 welfare law, urging unmarried women to practice abstinence until they have achieved economic self-sufficiency. Thus, the eugenic idea that excess fertility causes poverty and that preventing conception is the solution continues to inform much of the current social policy (Roberts 1997).

Carole McCann

See also: Eugenics; Feminisms; Reproductive Rights; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Black Churches

Throughout a history marred by economic and political oppression, Black churches have served their communities as the primary source for financial, social, and moral uplift. Many historians refer to Black religion in the United States as the "nation within a nation."

For over 300 years, African American churches (and mosques, synagogues, and temples) were the only Black institutions permitted by white authorities. Although categorized as "slaves" and "laborers" in white America, within their religious institutions, African Americans were able to cultivate independence and individual authority. Church buildings were the only place available for African American public meetings, and positions within church bureaucracies for many years provided one of the few opportunities for Black leadership. Thus, with their formal membership, headquarters, publications, and regularly scheduled gatherings, Black churches have historically served as a source of information, management skills, and political mobilization to a people relegated to the margins of American public life—exemplifying the degree to which African Americans have mastered political and economic tactics both within *and* outside of mainstream political processes. African Americans have utilized their churches to organize boycotts, protest marches, and local economic ministries to counter the trends of a culture historically organized against their race.

It would be mistaken, however, to understand the experience of African Americans or Black churches as discrete or unitary. African American religion is as multidimensional and diverse as every Black individual in America. What unifies these disparate believers (and nonbelievers) is the continuing struggle to manage the consequences of racial segregation and oppression. Disproportionately impoverished and persistently prohibited from political participation, African Americans sought and built organizational change and individual economic uplift from the most stable institution within their communities.

Some scholars suggest that the first political act of African American religion was its survival within the dehumanizing system of slavery. As the "invisible institution," the Black churches of the slave era supplied hope and communal encouragement in a context of extreme oppression. Although many studies suggest that the introduction of Christianity by Anglican, Baptist, and Methodist missionaries was a furthering of white social control, it is impossible to deny the empowering and supportive role of religion during the era of slavery (1630–1863). During the antebellum era, the majority of the active Black abolitionists were ministers of independent Black Christian churches, like David Walker, author of *An Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829), and Henry Highland Garnet, a prominent speaker at the antebellum Negro Conventions. The Underground Railroad was managed in part by African American religious leadership and networking; slave preachers (Gabriel Prosser in 1800, Denmark Vesey in 1822, and Nat Turner in 1831) led the three largest slave revolts.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, independent African American churches emerged from the religious syncretism of African survivals, Islamic traditions, and Christian missionary efforts. These churches inevitably sought to provide not only spiritual but also economic and social nourishment for their free and bonded parishioners. Mutual aid societies were often the result. In 1787, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones founded one of the earliest mutual aid societies, called the Free African Society. Out of that society, in 1794, Allen organized the Mother Bethel AME Church of Philadelphia. Throughout the nineteenth century, Black religious institutions and their related mutual aid societies would provide a feeding ground for Black economic development, including the formation of the first African American bank (Freedman's Savings and Trust Company in 1874) and insurance agency (North Carolina Mutual in 1898). Not only were churches the spawning ground for Black enterprises, but they were also themselves economic institutions that provided financial aid to the downtrodden and endorsements to political causes.

The Civil Rights Act of 1866 (effectively revoked by President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1877) brought a brief moment of franchise to the former slaves of the South and to Black people in the North. During a ten-year period, twenty Black congressmen and two Black senators were elected to Congress, the majority of them ministers or lay leaders in Black churches. For example, an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) clergyman, Hiram Revels of Mississippi, became in 1870 the first Black citizen and first Black senator elected to Congress. But even nonelected leadership wielded power in late-nineteenth-century African American culture. The most radical political voice of this era was Henry McNeil Turner, a bishop in the AME Church. Turner wielded a nationalist liberation theology to call for slave reparations and mass emigration to Africa. His position was largely determined by his belief that economic conditions, regardless of the growing financial prowess of Black churches, would never improve for Blacks in America.

The 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision (163 U.S. 537) effectively ratified Jim Crow segregation in the southern states. Until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Black churches became the main arena for Black political activity. During this period, Black America experienced a major demographic shift as hundreds of thousands of African Americans migrated to northern cities, escaping the long-term decline of sharecropping and segregation with the hope of economic mobility in northern industries. Although a great deal of financial advancement was made among these new northerners, racism and residential segregation were pervasive. High rates of poverty, unemployment, and underemployment were common among urban Blacks and were accompanied by poor housing, substandard schools, hunger, and high rates of infant mortality. Black churches began to hire on-site social workers, and secular coalitions, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League, were formed from religious leadership to fight for broad-based political action in Black communities.

The situation in northern cities encouraged a diverse array of religious ideologies that attempted to answer the economic strife experienced by African Americans. Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914, advocating Black business ownership and political independence. Major Jealous Divine (1880?–1965), known as Father Divine, was committed to a strict moral code and communitarian ethos with his Peace Mission movement of the 1920s and 1930s, providing housing, food, and spiritual comfort to all those suffering from sickness and poverty. Finally, Wallace D. Fard (Master Fard Muhammad) (c. 1877–1934), founder of the Nation of Islam in 1930, and Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975), his chief follower, attracted a strong following with their message of personal discipline, economic independence, and Black racial supremacy. Perhaps the most famous African American Muslim, Malcolm X (1925–1965), emphasized a nationalist sensibility in order to uplift African Americans from grinding poverty and cultural alienation.

Malcolm X's prominence symbolized a new era for Black churches. The rise of a mass media culture coincided with the civil rights movement, a social effort that confirmed the central role of the Black church in African American life and pressed many individual African Americans into the national spotlight. Black churches were the major points of mobilization for mass meetings and demonstrations, and most of the local Black people who marched and worked in the demonstrations were there as a result of religious campaigns to motivate political activism. It is estimated that several hundred churches in the South were bombed, burned, or attacked during the civil rights years, with ninety-three of the bombings occurring between 1962 and 1965, tragically underscoring white awareness of the power these buildings had within the Black community. The members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), headed by Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968), worked to demolish the structural constraints on African American life. Although at first King emphasized the need for political franchise, he eventually sought to overhaul a culture that stratified classes along racial lines. Through the many movements of the civil rights era, countless food, shelter, and job programs were initiated to abate the economic suffering of African Americans.

Following the civil rights movement, African American religious life has continued to diversify and multiply, following trends across the racial religious spectrum. African American churches persist as financial and political centers in their communities. Contemporary politicians, Black and white, attend national denominational conventions and Sunday luncheons to garner support from the African American electorate. Black churches continue to fund antipoverty programs throughout the country, providing local ministry and political clout to continue the fight against institutional oppression and economic disparity.

Kathryn Lofton

See also: African American Migration; African Americans; Civil Rights Movement; Islam; Mutual Aid; Nation of Islam; Slavery

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Black Panther Party

The Black Panther Party was one of the most prominent political groups of the 1960s and 1970s fighting for racial equality, social justice, and an end to discrimination against African Americans. The party used bold and provocative tactics to mobilize Blacks to fight for their freedom and democracy. Founded by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California, in October 1966, the party's activities were developed to achieve the organization's Ten Point Platform and Program. The founders demanded full employment for Blacks, an end to capitalist exploitation, decent housing, relevant education, free health care, an end to police brutality, an end to the government's racist and aggressive wars, release of all persons unfairly imprisoned, and fair legal treatment. Moreover, the party advocated Black self-determination or control over all institutions within Black communities.

Beginning with very limited resources, the early Panthers focused their activities on challenging one of the most visible problems in the Black community: police brutality. Arming themselves with guns and law books, the Panthers monitored police interaction with Blacks and promptly intervened when they observed illegal or unwarranted activity directed toward Black citizens. This practice led to numerous confrontations with police officers, who were unaccustomed to having their behavior evaluated and contested. However, the Panthers had reviewed the law and were prepared to use their weapons when the police attempted to harm Blacks or illegally confiscate their weapons. Many Black communities in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area saw the Black Panther Party as fearless and courageous. But the party was indisputably controversial. Conservative lawmakers, especially, disapproved of the Panthers and in 1967 proposed legislation aimed at the Panthers making it illegal for most California citizens to carry loaded weapons.

In May 1967, armed party members led by Seale protested this legislation in the state capital, Sacramento. They were arrested following their protest. The news coverage made the Panthers known state- and nationwide. Five months later, the Panthers again gained national media attention when Newton was accused of killing a police officer. The party used Newton's imprisonment and indictment for murder as a rallying cry to raise funds for his legal defense and to build the party across the country. The strategy worked. Newton, although imprisoned for three years, was acquitted of murder in 1970. During this period, the party gained thousands of new members around the country. Many were young Black men and women, including college and high school students, military veterans, and workers.

Although fighting to get Newton out of prison, the party began creating specific programs addressing poverty and the difficult socio-

Eldridge Cleaver was among the most prominent members of the Black Panther Party. Following a period of exile, he reemerged as an outspoken and conservative Christian. (Library of Congress)

economic conditions facing Blacks. The most famous was the free breakfast program for kids. Concerned that Black children were not achieving in school because they were literally hungry, the Panthers engaged churches, businesses, organizations, and individuals within the Black community to donate resources to feed the children. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and free breakfast programs emerged in many cities around the country. Their success led the party to implement more programs. National Panther leaders who witnessed this process included Elridge Cleaver, Kathleen Cleaver, David Hilliard, Erika Huggins, Landon Williams, Audrea Jones, and Elaine Brown.

Between 1968 and 1971, Panther state chapters and local branches created health clinics, food programs, transportation programs, clothing and shoe programs, prison visitation programs, and liberation schools. These programs, among others, addressed specific needs and concerns within Black communities in direct and creative ways. To implement their programs, Panthers requested assistance from diverse sectors of the Black community, including nurses, doctors, medical students, lawyers, law students, professionals, teachers, religious leaders, and the unemployed. In contrast to some Black Power groups, the party worked publicly with progressive white, Latino, Asian American, Native American, and other non-Black groups. The party successfully publicized its work through its national newspaper, *The Black Panther*.

At the same time, there was a growing divide within the party between those members who wanted to emphasize the various social service programs and those who wanted to challenge the government's domestic and foreign policies in more direct and militant ways. This disagreement culminated in 1971 in violent clashes between party members, followed by the expulsion by Newton and the central committee of the more radical forces from the party. The FBI and state and local police generally conspired to sabotage the party and exacerbate its internal differences. These police actions led to the imprisonment of many Panthers and to death and self-exile for some.

In 1972, all Panthers were called to California to work on the electoral campaigns of Bobby Seale for mayor of Oakland, Elaine Brown for city council, and others for lesser offices. The process of consolidating all party resources in Oakland reinvigorated the party there but dismantled it as a national organization. Ultimately, Seale and Brown lost their campaigns, and the party was left exhausted. Newton engaged in increasingly violent and bizarre behavior, such as humiliating and brutalizing party members. Seale and other leaders resigned from the party in 1974. In the same year, Newton went into exile to avoid new murder charges.

Elaine Brown assumed leadership of the party in 1974 and revitalized its few remaining local programs. She also engaged in questionable disciplinary activities against party members and left the party in 1977. Newton returned from exile in 1977 and was acquitted of the charges against him. However, he continued his dubious behavior, and the remaining party members gradually abandoned him. The party ended with the official closing of its one remaining school in 1982.

Ollie A. Johnson III

See also: Civil Rights Movement

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Block Grants

See Federalism

Bonus Army

In 1932, around 40,000 veterans of World War I, members of what became known as the Bonus Army, came to and camped in Washington, D.C., in an effort to persuade Congress to issue the payment—often called a bonus—promised them for their military service. In 1919, Congress had issued these veterans certificates—good for a payment based on time served—rather than paying the veterans directly. To reduce the immediate cost of the program, the certificates were to be paid out in the future, like insurance policies: They were due upon the death of the veteran or in 1945. But in 1932, amid deepening economic depression, these unemployed veterans argued that they, as good citizens, deserved the money immediately. From late May until July 28, 1932, the Bonus Army marched in Washington and lobbied members

Some of the 40,000 war veterans composing the Bonus Army are shown here upon their arrival at the Capitol, following their march up Pennsylvania Avenue from the Washington Monument, Washington, D.C., July 4, 1932. (Bettmann/Corbis)

of Congress for some response. On July 28, after a series of legislative defeats of the veterans' proposal, local city officials appealed to the U.S. Army for help in clearing some of the veterans out of central Washington. After President Herbert Hoover approved, General Douglas MacArthur led the forces, which exceeded the initial scope of the order and forced all the Bonus marchers from the city. Though the Bonus Army did not get their demands met in 1932, their appeal generated a wide-ranging debate about what response the federal government should make to the crisis of the Great Depression.

The forceful expulsion of the veterans accentuated the sympathy many Americans felt for their methods. The veterans remained peaceful during their months in Washington. Their makeshift camps in city parks or abandoned buildings were highly visible versions of the shantytowns developing across the country. Most of the participants emphasized their loyalty to their country by eschewing support from communists. And though many of the marchers were single men, those with families highlighted the way their need affected their wives and children. When Americans saw the photographs and newsreels of deserving veterans being driven out of the capital by soldiers with bayonets, many expressed deep dismay.

But sympathy did not translate into support for the marchers' demands. Legislators and reformers urging the passage of a comprehensive system of relief rejected the demands because they would benefit veterans, not all of whom were among the most needy Americans. Leaders already anxious about the prospect of huge federal relief programs, including Hoover, believed that paying the bonus would be too costly during a time when government revenues were already falling short. Franklin D. Roosevelt, straddling these two positions, also refused to endorse the "bonus" payments, preferring instead to give veterans preferential treatment in work programs. By 1936, however, sentiment across the country had shifted enough that the veterans did finally win immediate payment of their certificates.

Lucy Barber

See also: Communist Party; Economic Depression; Federalism; Relief; Unemployment; Veterans' Assistance; Works Progress Administration (WPA)

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See Child-Saving; *The Dangerous Classes of New York;* Urban Poverty

Bracero Program

The Bracero Program was a binational agreement between the United States and Mexico that authorized the importation of contracted agricultural workers under the auspices of the Mexican Farm Labor Program Agreement (Public Law 45 [1942]). In Spanish, the term *bracero* means a worker who works with his hands and arms. The measure allowed for the legal recruitment of Mexican workers who were contracted in their homeland and brought to the United States to meet the domestic employment demands brought by World War II. The war had ushered in a robust economy, with women and men employed at all-time highs in war machinery and other production. Unable to meet the demand for farm products, the agricultural industry was forced to search for cheap and readily available labor. The Bracero Program filled this gap, and between the program's start in 1942 and its termination in 1964, more than 4.5 million braceros entered the United States. After its implementation, the program was extended through various acts and lasted twenty-two years, until it was finally terminated after pressure from unions and labor activists concerned with the systematic exploitation of the workers. The Bracero Program also supplied temporary agricultural and railroad workers during the Korean War.

The Bracero Program made general provisions that were meant to protect the workers. For example, the braceros could not engage in any military service, and the legislation prohibited discriminatory acts of any kind. Under the terms of the agreement, Mexicans entering the United States were supposed to enjoy guarantees of transportation, living expenses, adequate housing and sanitary conditions, and health provisions. The agreement also guaranteed a minimum wage of thirty cents an hour. Finally, hiring was to be done on the basis of a written contract between the worker and the employer.

Mexican workers were not to enjoy the benefits of citizenship, however. Specifically designated as temporary workers, braceros were subject to repatriation once their contracts were up, and they could be used merely to fill gaps in agri-

A Mexican family leaves to cross the border during World War II to fill wartime labor shortages as part of the U.S./Mexican Bracero Program, ca. 1944. (Corbis)

cultural or railroad labor, not to displace U.S. workers. Moreover, although the U.S. government formally guaranteed the protections in the agreement, the reality was far more bleak for the workers. Many workers experienced discrimination from their employers and local communities. The program was widely criticized for failing to protect workers from such abuses as wretched living and working conditions, prejudice, ill treatment, and poor wages. Yet many of these workers resisted discrimination, ill treatment, and poor working conditions by striking, demanding repatriation before their contracts were up, or deserting or through other forms of protest. Many of the original braceros never returned to Mexico, and after the end of the program, the number of illegal immigrants in the United States probably increased as workers became firmly implanted through home ownership, employment, and schooling for their children.

Abel Valenzuela Jr.

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Day Labor; *Factories in the Field;* Migrant Labor/Farm Labor

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Buddhism

Buddhist practice originated in India about 500 years before Christ. Currently, many different kinds of Buddhist practice can be found in the United States, but these different practices, although they have different emphases, share an overarching set of beliefs. Among the most basic are the "four noble truths": (1) Suffering is a part of life. (2) Suffering is caused by our desires or cravings for objects and beings outside of ourselves for personal fulfillment. (3) The end of suffering is located in overcoming our cravings. (4) The way to overcome our cravings is through the eightfold path. Or, as Dogen, the founder of Japanese Zen, noted, "If you cannot find the truth where you are, where do you expect to find it?"

Does Buddhist practice constitute a faith-based approach to poverty and welfare? Yes, although when President George W. Bush extols the virtues of faith-based politics, he is referring primarily to such Christian groups as the Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army. When the Christian Coalition, President Bush, and the Republican Party talk about the importance of "faith" in America, they are probably not thinking about monks in robes. But even though Buddhism falls below the radar screen of faith-based discourses, there are noteworthy efforts by Buddhists to address poverty, inequality, and welfare in America.

It is important to point out that Buddhist approaches to poverty and welfare are very different from those of many of the better-known Christian-sponsored efforts. First, contrary to a common misconception, Buddha is not the "God" of Buddhism. Buddhists do not worship Buddha as Christians do God; rather, Buddhists practice the dharma (the teachings). And the dharma, in turn, is not an inflexible practicum for "sixteen steps to enlightenment." An oft-heard teaching is "When you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha," which is a way of cautioning against treating the dharma as a set of prohibitions.

A second key difference is that certain Christian groups, such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, have, for some time now, had a formal relationship with the government. The government, in a kind of subcontracting relationship with these groups, funds their activities as long as the groups operate separately from the churches they are affiliated with, do not proselytize, and do not discriminate on the basis of religion. Buddhist groups that provide social services, on the other hand, are not commissioned to do so by the government.

A third distinctive aspect of Buddhist antipoverty work follows from the Buddhist understanding of the suffering of *all* people. Such activities as the provision of food for the needy are part of a broad vision that sees suffering wherever it exists and whatever its causes, including suffering as a result of disregard for the environment, the suffering of prisoners who have committed crimes, and the suffering of those with terminal illnesses, such as AIDS and other diseases. But in addition to widely understood charitable activities, such as feeding the hungry, Buddhist social engagement may also "bear witness" to the suffering produced by state violence and war—for example, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and, most recently, the bombing of Afghanistan and the war against Iraq. In short, Buddhist approaches to social activism are different from others' since "witnessing"—an activity that might be viewed as inherently critical of government's neglect or violence—is as much a part of Buddhist social engagement as is feeding the hungry.

After its beginning in India, over many subsequent generations, Buddhism spread across the East, notably to China and Japan. Though many Asian immigrants to the United States in the nineteenth century were Buddhist, there was little interest in Buddhism outside the immigrant communities. But since the 1960s, a trickle of interest in Buddhist meditation and philosophy has grown into a mountain of opportunities for practice. Of the many kinds of Buddhist practice in the United States, four very common "styles" of practice are Zen, Vipassana, Insight, and Tibetan, different practices embracing many teachings.

There are between 2.5 and 4 million Buddhists in America (or approximately 1.6 percent of the total population), which includes both Asian immigrants as well as American converts—although it is important to note that estimates vary considerably (Seager 1999). These estimates should be used with caution since there is no single umbrella organization that oversees Buddhism in the West. The Pluralism Project at Harvard University, a research group that studies religion and diversity in America, found that an incomplete list includes over 1,000 Buddhist centers in the United States as of 2002. One of the difficulties in counting the number of Buddhists in America is that a large and growing number of Americans are interested in various forms of Buddhist meditation as a relaxation technique, for health and medical reasons, or as a means of sitting through difficult times. Also, some people practicing meditation also attend services at Christian churches or at synagogues. One can even earn a master's degree in socially engaged Buddhism at the Naropa Institute. The point here is not that the high or low estimate of the number of Buddhists is the more accurate but, rather, as the Pluralism Project notes citing anecdotal evidence, that Americans from "all walks of life" are "embracing dharma" (Pluralism Project 2004).

"For the benefit of all beings," a saying that is a cornerstone of Buddhist teachings, means that the well-being and the suffering of others are interdependent with our own. This belief is an extension of one of Buddhism's most basic teachings about the relationship of the self to the world. This teaching, known as nondualism or, alternately, codependent origination, is that the self, or the "I," is inextricably identified with the world, or "they." In Buddhism, when one deeply recognizes this teaching, one cannot but feel empathy and compassion for others—whether they are friend, foe, or stranger. For Buddhists, the practice of faith is the practice of mindfulness of our irreducible connection with others.

For many Buddhists, mindfulness of another's poverty, despair, and hunger means *acting* on it. In Buddhism, the principle of *acting* on a social issue is not the same as political action. Buddhists feed the homeless not to make political commentary about homelessness but simply because homeless people are hungry. In general, the Buddhist understanding of activism emphasizes compassionate action as opposed to political action. Buddhist social action, or "socially engaged" Buddhism, a phrase coined by Thich Nhat Han, takes many forms. There are socially engaged Buddhist projects that address war, hunger, poverty, violence, environmental issues, sexual orientation, race, health care, prisons, and schools. A partial list of some of the better-known Buddhist approaches to poverty and welfare include the Buddhist Peacemaker Order founded by Roshi Bernie Glassman; the Order of InterBeing founded by Thich Nhat Han; the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement associated with Roshi Robert Aitken; and the many Buddhist hospice and soup kitchen projects across the nation. Robert Queens, a prominent contributor on engaged Buddhism, suggests that in addition to the above, "mindfulness" workshops—for example, like those developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the author of *Full Catastrophe Living*—should also be included in the list of Buddhist approaches to suffering.

What is it that Buddhists do as a part of their approach to poverty and welfare? The characteristic Buddhist response to poverty is to provide services to fulfill needs, such as feeding the hungry, or to provide community services through tutoring, day care, and the like. For example, the San Francisco Zen Center organizes a bag lunch program for homeless people, sponsors recreational and tutoring activities for homeless families, and teaches mindfulness meditation to interested inmates. Similarly, the Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement (BASE), an outgrowth of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, developed a training and internship program that is modeled, at least in organization, on the Catholic Volunteer Corps model, for social workers and service providers. BASE, operating in a number of locations across the country—from Berkeley to Boston—integrates participants' work experiences with the Buddhist practice of "engaging with suffering." Another exemplary organization, the Zen Peacemaker Order headed by Roshi Bernie Glassman, fosters a kind of "street" engagement with homelessness and poverty. At Glassman's initiative, the Peacemaker Order set up shop in Yonkers, New York. Among the many enterprises operated by Peacemaker Order is a for-profit bakery (the proceeds support the order), a construction company that trains workers, co-op housing, and AIDS hospices. Following in Glassman's steps, Claude Tenshin Anderson, a Vietnam veteran turned Buddhist priest, runs street retreats with young people across the United States and abroad to raise their awareness about violence in society.

Though the specific activities of socially engaged Buddhist projects vary considerably—from providing services to small enterprise to training—there is a common feature: to engage with suffering in an intimate way and to work for the benefit of all.

Dana Takagi

See also: Asian Americans

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C

Capitalism

Capitalism is a broadly encompassing economic and social system that is based on principles of private ownership, production for profit, and market exchange. Its historical development has rested on an ever-evolving combination of technological innovation, ideological and political commitment, institutional support, and fiercely contested struggle that has played out differently in different national settings. In the United States, where the notion of "free market," or "laissez-faire," has been most forcefully embraced, capitalism has evolved within a context of relatively limited government regulation and considerable policy support in the form of laws, institutions, tax treatment, and public subsidies for infrastructure building favorable to its growth. Even as it has produced average standards of living higher than in previous epochs (as measured by gross domestic product or per capita income), capitalism has produced higher rates of inequality and poverty in the United States than in other advanced industrialized economies. Millions are unable to meet their basic needs. Nearly 44 million Americans are without health insurance, and millions go without necessary medical care. Infant mortality in some parts of the United States, particularly urban areas, rivals that of many less-developed economies. Poverty in the United States is deeper and traps individuals for longer periods of time than in other advanced economies because government policies to moderate capitalism's reach and even out its cycles have been less effective compared to those of other developed countries.

Although national governments have historically played an important role in shaping capitalism and its impact on social well-being, capitalism also transcends national boundaries. Capitalism is a global phenomenon, and its generation of un- and underdevelopment is also global. Wealth inequalities within developed countries parallel wealth inequalities between developed and undeveloped countries, driven by the same desire to reduce costs of production at the global level. Although capitalists benefit from the advocacy of international financial institutions and from government policies to promote "free trade," the global structures defending the interests of working and poor people and the environment are relatively few and comparatively weak.

Capitalism as an Economic System

Capitalism is a mode of production whereby private firms produce goods and services for profit. Key features of capitalism are that workers are free to sell their labor to private firms, that the capitalist—the owner of the firm or his or her agents—controls the labor process, and that the dynamics of the system entail competition among firms, which generates un- and underemployment. This is because the profit motive and dynamics of capitalist competition lead firms to innovate and adopt increasingly efficient techniques in order to reduce costs. Often, this takes the form of labor-saving technology that increases the firm's productivity and reduces the amount of labor or number of workers employed. This dynamic creates conditions for a permanent pool of unemployed workers while placing limits on wage growth for the employed. Both of these processes establish the potential for unemployment and underemployment, which are leading causes of poverty. Some governments have been able to mitigate capitalism's negative features through social welfare policies that provide insurance and income support during periods of unemployment and by providing public goods that are not adequately supplied through the private market, such as health care and education. Other governments have found their ability to shape capitalism limited by external factors, such as obligations to pay off debts to rich countries, too few or the wrong kind of resources, or social structures inherited from previous modes of production.

There is widespread agreement that the origins of capitalism can be traced back to sometime between the 1500s and the late 1700s in Europe. In Europe, capitalism emerged out of a feudal economic system, in which the individuals who provided most of the labor power were not free to relocate or even choose their employer. The origins of capitalism are to be found in the transformation from this mode of production into one based on the private ownership of the means of production, that is, private ownership of the tools, equipment, and raw materials—capital—necessary to produce goods and services. Governments made this reassignment of property rights possible by creating legal systems that recognize land deeds, labor and financial contracts, and titles to other implements of production. In the United States, founded after the emergence of capitalism and in revolt against feudal traditions, capitalism was anchored in an ideological tradition that linked political liberty to property rights—albeit under conditions in which property was broadly distributed across the (white, male) population and not concentrated in the hands of an aristocratic elite. Indeed, the question of whether those rights should be invoked to protect corporations and large powerful property holders as well as laborers and small proprietors has been a persistent source of conflict and policy shifts throughout U.S. history.

A profound difference between capitalism and other economic systems is that under capitalism, goods and services are produced by private firms for sale and profit rather than for use or simple exchange. Production for profit provided the underpinnings for capitalism's prodigious growth, compelling entrepreneurs to invest in producing goods and services. In the view of classical political economy, if individual capitalists were unable to reap these rewards, it is unlikely that they would continue to invest and thus create economic growth in the way we now know it. Adam Smith, a Scottish political economist writing in the late eighteenth century, referred to this process as the "invisible hand": Individual actors rationally following their own interest in profit were part of a system that would generate employment while producing goods and services. Although some have used this notion of the invisible hand to argue that capitalism grows and produces well-being of its own accord (and thus needs no regulation), subsequent history has demonstrated that the profit motive is often in conflict with the social good and that overall economic growth rests as crucially on public policy as on the economic activities of individual entrepreneurs.

There are clear demarcations between capitalism and other economic systems. The most critical is that under previous economic systems, individuals were not "workers" in that they were generally not free to engage in labor contracts. Individuals were often tied to the land, as in the case of serfdom, or held as slaves. Thus, Karl Marx, author of the three-volume work *Capital,* which exposed the nature of capitalism, referred to the origin of capitalism as the moment when labor was "freed" from both the land and from outside ownership of the means of production. Workers became "workers" when they had to sell their labor power to survive because they no longer had access to subsistence farming and they did not have sufficient capital to go into business for themselves.

Using money as the universal (or nearly universal) medium of exchange is another prerequisite for capitalism. Monetary exchange facilitates the accumulation of profits. In a nonmonetary economy, individuals must barter over goods and services. Without a medium in which individuals can hold assets, capitalists would be unable to time investments to maximize potential sales and profitability. Further, money allows investors—capitalists—to borrow funds for production. Here again, government plays a supportive role, whether by printing this money itself or by coordinating among the private financial institutions that do. Governments have also played an important role in the rise and evolution of capitalism by regulating the supply, or availability, of money and credit. In most advanced industrialized economies, the overall supply of money is under the control of a central bank; in the United States, that bank is the Federal Reserve (established in 1913). The first U.S. Central Bank, chartered in 1791, generated tremendous political controversy that would be echoed in future debates over bank policy and practices. Farmers, artisans, populists, labor, and antipoverty activists are among those who have historically opposed the influence of financial interests and corporate capitalists in central banking policy.

Under capitalism, the capitalist enjoys control over the production process. Control of production by an elite class is common in many kinds of economic systems; however, under capitalism, this control is more precise in that the capitalist controls the entire labor process, from the worker's smallest movement to the structure of the workday. This distinguishes capitalism from economic systems in which small producers maintain control over their own production process and schedule, as well as from socialist forms of production, in which government-owned enterprises or cooperatives make all decisions about resource allocation. The control over the choice of technique and the structure of the workday is fundamental to how work is generally conducted under capitalism and is at the core of productivity gains. For example, much has been made of the innovations made by Henry Ford in his auto-production plants in the early 1900s in the United States. He had efficiency experts analyze the production process down to the tiniest movements of each member of his production team in order to limit all extraneous movements and facilitate the highest possible productivity. This kind of capitalist control over production allows the firm to "speed up" production, through anything from a faster-moving assembly line to an increase in the number of calls taken per hour in a call center. It also allows the firm to use the most productive techniques, increasing efficiency, outputs, and profitability.

Efficient production is at the core of capitalism and is kept at the forefront of the process through the dynamics of capitalist competition. Competition among firms keeps the actors in the system constantly innovating and encourages entrepreneurship. This competition, in turn, pushes individual firms to produce using the best available technology to keep the costs of production as low as possible. Competition means that the firm with the lowest-cost production method can offer goods or services for sale at the lowest price, thereby undercutting its competitors while still being able to earn profits. In order to stay in business, firms with higher costs must increase productivity (output per worker). Competition, however, often leads to unemployment as workers are replaced by labor-saving technologies.

Inherent Contradictions: Capitalism's Tendency to Create Unemployment

Capitalism's reliance on technological innovation and competition produces what Marx called a "reserve army of labor"—a pool of unemployed and partially employed labor generated by the dynamics of capital accumulation itself. In historical terms, the reserve army of labor first developed when peasants were pushed off their common land in the long transition from a feudal, more agricultural and subsistence economy to an increasingly industrialized capitalist economy. Left with no means of supporting themselves without selling their labor, these workers were subject to the shifting demands and standards of a labor market in which a surplus, or overabundance, of workers would drive wages down and unemployment up. In the modern era, as the economy grows, firms hire more and more workers to facilitate increased output. This leads to falling unemployment as all those who want jobs are able to find them. Lower unemployment is associated with higher wages; workers are freer to bargain over their wages and firms are more desperate to hire and maintain employees. Neoclassical economists refer to this as "efficiency wages" (Shapiro and Stiglitz 1984). To keep costs down, firms look to new, labor-saving technologies or move production to locations that have cheaper labor. This brings on a new round of higher unemployment and, as newly unnecessary workers are let go, creates the reserve army of labor. A simple, concrete example of this can be found in the production of banking services. In the 1980s, many banks moved toward the introduction of automated teller machines, replacing bank tellers by machines, which were more cost-effective. Thus, competition among banks led to the unemployment of bank tellers over time as firms adopted labor-saving technologies. Aggregated to the level of the macroeconomy, this creates the reserve army.

The reserve army of labor and capitalist competition affect wage setting under capitalism. In the macroeconomy, higher unemployment places downward pressure on wages. The macrodynamics of wages and unemployment are evident in capitalist economies around the world, as recently documented by David Blanchflower and Andrew Oswald (1994), who showed that higher unemployment is associated with lower wages, all else being equal. This inverse relationship between unemployment and wages was evident in the United States during the economic boom of the 1990s. Between 1995 and 2000, unemployment averaged 4.8 percent—relatively low by recent historical standards—and average annual wages rose at an annual rate of 2.5 percent, significantly higher than during the previous two decades when higher unemployment had been the norm (author's analysis of Center for Economic and Policy Research 2003).

Capitalism is also prone to recurring economic crises: recessions and depressions. As accumulation proceeds, each firm works to lower its production costs in order to be more competitive. This generates a tendency for the rate of profit to fall as each firm tries to undercut its competitors' sale prices. Capitalist economies are subject to short-term business cycles, which are often caused by overproduction, in which firms are unable to sell all their inventories and see no reason to invest in more production. As this occurs, weaker and perhaps less cost-effective firms may be driven out of business, and because economic crises generate higher unemployment, the power of labor to bargain for higher wages is weakened.

Capitalism does not conform to national boundaries in its search for profits or in the way the dynamics of competition play out. As capitalism expands, firms seek new markets and new pools of labor from which to hire. Over the past few decades, the reach of capital seems

"The Socialist Party and the Working Class," Eugene Debs, September 1, 1904

Criticism of unbridled capitalism reached a height in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, amid the great wave of mergers and monopolistic practices that concentrated immense economic and political power in the hands of corporate capitalists and polarized the extremes of poverty and wealth. Labor activist and five-time Socialist Party candidate for president Eugene Debs drew on this growing discontent in campaigns that would eventually (in 1912) garner as much as 6 percent of the popular vote.

The capitalist system is no longer adapted to the needs of modern society. It is outgrown and fetters the forces of progress. Industrial and commercial competition are largely of the past. The handwriting blazes on the wall. Centralization and combination are the modern forces in industrial and commercial life. Competition is breaking down and co-operation is supplanting it.

The hand tools of early times are used no more. Mammoth machines have taken their places. A few thousand capitalists own them and many millions of workingmen use them.

All the wealth the vast army of labor produces above its subsistence is taken by the machine owning capitalists, who also own the land and the mills, the factories, railroads and mines, the forests and fields and all other means of production and transportation. . . .

The overthrow of capitalism is the object of the Socialist party. . . .

The Socialist party comprehends the magnitude of its task and has the patience of preliminary defeat and the faith of ultimate victory.

The working class must be emancipated by the working class.

Woman must be given her true place in society by the working class.

Child labor must be abolished by the working class.

Society must be reconstructed by the working class.

The working class must be employed by the working class.

The fruits of labor must be enjoyed by the working class.

War, bloody war, must be ended by the working class.

These are the principles and objects of the Socialist party and we fearlessly proclaim them to our fellowmen.

We know our cause is just and that it must prevail.

With faith and hope and courage we hold our heads erect and with dauntless spirit marshal the working class for the march from Capitalism to Socialism, from Slavery to Freedom, from Barbarism to Civilization.

Source: Eugene Debs, "The Socialist Party and the Working Class," opening speech delivered as candidate of the Socialist Party for president, at Indianapolis, Indiana, September 1, 1904. Reprinted in *Debs: His Life, Writings, and Speeches, with Department of Appreciations*, ed. Bruce Rogers (Girard, KS: Appeal to Reason, 1908), 371, 373.

especially widespread across the globe as many states have deregulated their financial and commodity markets. However, capital has always had a global reach, as we see in the history of colonization of less-developed countries by imperial powers, which often perpetuated those countries' relative underdevelopment. Individual firms often exploit these gaps in economic development in order to find locations where they can produce at a lower cost. Firms anywhere in the world are increasingly expected to compete using the same global production techniques.

Thus, if firms in South Korea produce steel at the lowest cost, then consumers of steel around the world will purchase their steel from South Korea rather than higher-priced steel produced in their home countries. This pits workers in developed and less-developed countries against each other and against themselves in the fight for adequate employment. For example, virtually all U.S. textile firms now produce overseas because the cost of employing U.S. workers is so much higher than the cost of employing workers in these other countries. Thus, it is fair to say that the reserve army of labor is now also global.

Capitalism as a Social System

Capitalism's dynamics compel it not only to look outward for new markets and labor pools but also to look internally as well, pulling more aspects of social life into its realm. Thus, as capitalism develops, social life is increasingly commodified—that is, brought under the influence of the market. For example, much of the caring labor and home production that was historically provided by unpaid women in the home, even in the early phases of capitalism, has now been commodified. Caring labor, such as child care and home health care, was provided in the home until after the middle of the twentieth century. Now, most families purchase this as a commodity by hiring (often low-paid) care workers. Over time, American families have continued to cut down on home production through the widespread purchase of fast food and pre-prepared meals. Capitalists now earn a profit on these products, whereas decades ago, they did not. This generates growth for the economy overall, but it also has profound consequences for the organization of social life and the level of social well-being.

Greater commodification of social life means that greater numbers of individuals are dependent on firms for their livelihood. In times of economic crisis, millions can end up unemployed and impoverished. With more families needing two incomes to afford even a basic standard of living, the unemployment of one partner in a two-parent family can spell devastation, while single-parent families are under constant economic stress even when the household head is employed. This dynamic also occurs in economies as they move from a traditional mode of production into capitalism. Once families leave subsistence farming (and lose their land), they are then permanent participants in the capitalist economy and subject to capitalism's recurring economic crises.

Political Responses to Capitalism's Inherent Conflicts

The dynamics of the capitalist economy make it a highly productive system for generating goods and services and often for raising living standards. However, there is an inherent tension between an economic system that generates unemployment and strives to keep wages as low as possible and the workers and natural environment that provide the necessary resources to keep the system going. Much of classical and modern economics focuses on the relationship between capitalism and social welfare. Neoclassical economists present the market as benevolent and believe that allowing the market to exist without government interference will increase the welfare of society as a whole. However, the history of modern governments in capitalist economies exposes this doctrine of market benevolence as a myth. Classical economists, such as Marx, Smith, and David Ricardo, saw that capitalism's inherent dynamics often place this system in opposition to social welfare because society's welfare is not in capitalism's purview. It is not in the interest of any one firm to ensure the safety and survival of the society as a whole.

The contradictions inherent within capitalism have led many to criticize it and work to provide alternatives. In the 1800s, socialists and utopian thinkers developed sophisticated criti-

Trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange. (Gail Mooney/Corbis)

cisms of capitalism's indifference to social welfare and advocated alternative, more humane economic systems, which were often grounded in notions of economic equality. Many argued that the government is merely an agent of the capitalist class and that it thus must be overthrown and replaced by governments of and for workers. Over the course of the twentieth century, revolutionary parties in what became the Communist countries of the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and elsewhere established "command economies" in which goods and services were produced by the state rather than by private actors. However, these economies were more often than not coupled with dictatorial political systems, which in the long run made them unstable as well as undemocratic and undermined their own claims to egalitarianism.

Within what have become the advanced capitalist economies, reformist movements sprang from these criticisms of capitalism. Historians argue that the development of the specific form of capitalism that is moderated by the social welfare state was a response to the instabilities generated by capitalism's inherent dynamics. Karl Polanyi (1944) argued that the social welfare state was society's reaction to the notion of the self-regulating market. The growth of the market economy was checked by the institutional development of measures to protect society from having to face the unhindered effects of capitalism. Thus, as capitalism tended toward global expansion, it was met by countermovements checking that expansion in particular directions. The forward capitalist movement was "economic liberalism," which, relying on the trading class, sought to establish a self-regulating market with laissez-faire and free trade as its methods. The countermovement was propelled by the working and landed classes, using protective legislation, restrictive association, and other methods to protect society, both people and natural resources, from the unregulated market.

This back-and-forth between the market and regulation in the name of social welfare has been a hallmark of the development of the modern state. The state has often acted to preserve the capitalist system as a whole rather than for the benefit of particular capitalists. This was often seen as necessary for the survival of the state within democracies but also as necessary to maintain a level of social welfare and to mitigate the vagaries of capitalism. The inherent contradictions between capitalism and liberal democracy require some type of accord to maintain social stability in the face of these two coexisting conflictual social structures. Over the course of state transformation, there was not one model of state involvement, but many. The European social democratic states, such as Sweden and Denmark, chose to implement expansive welfare programs, while the liberal governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada have more-limited social welfare states. In the United States, the New Deal, which vastly expanded the federal role in social welfare provisions, was a direct response to an economic crisis and a means by which federal officials restored social order. During the post–World War II era in the United States, the Keynesian welfare state that grew out of New Deal policies came to be a means of political and economic stabilization. The success of this system was contingent, however, on economic growth and on the ability of the government to manage the economy through fiscal and monetary policy.

Global capitalism is not, however, complemented by a global "state" capable of ensuring global social welfare. Furthermore, over the past few decades, international institutions have hindered the development of social welfare institutions in less-developed countries by requiring them to adopt liberal—or free-market—economic policies oriented toward open trade and capital markets, privatization, and deregulation. These policies have not led to a generalized reduction in poverty or a rise in living standards over the past few decades. The push toward an open global economy will probably further amplify the inherent tension between capitalism and social welfare.

Heather Boushey

See also: Communist Party; Economic Depression; Economic Theories; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Industrialization; Labor Markets; New Right; Property; Socialist Party; Wealth; Welfare Capitalism; Welfare State

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Caregiving

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Child Care; Domestic Work; Home Health Care Work; Maternalism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Carnegie, Andrew

See "Gospel of Wealth"; Philanthropy; Wealth

Catholic Church

Catholic agencies are major social welfare providers and policy advocates through the departments of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, religious communities, lay organizations, and diocese- and parish-based groups. Catholic Charities USA is the nation's largest private network of social service providers, serving over 9.5 million people. In 1994, government sources provided 65 percent of Catholic Charities' nearly $2 billion budget (Brown and McKeown 1997, 9, 194). These charity and antipoverty efforts are rooted in Catholic social teaching on ministering to those in need, following the example of Jesus and his disciples. They are also rooted in the social and historical experience of the Catholic Church in the United States. Catholic benevolent societies of the mid-nineteenth century were organized in response to the demands of poor and working-class Catholic immigrants—mainly from Ireland and Germany and predominantly urban—because Catholic leaders feared that "their own" would be influenced by Protestant social reform and public service programs. The founding of the National Conference of Catholic Charities (later Catholic Charities USA), a lay organization, signaled the beginning of a shift in the focus of Catholic charities away from poverty relief toward social reform through changing social structures. In the 1930s, Catholic leaders were active in national welfare policymaking. Reflecting demographic change, by the 1960s, Catholic charities had moved from "caring for their own" with parish-raised funds to providing services to African Americans, Latinos, "new immigrants" (as those of non-European origin are often called), and non-Catholics through Catholic-raised and government funds.

The religious basis of Catholic commitment to charity is founded in the belief that one's neighbor has been created in the image of God and therefore should be assisted out of the love of God. Gospel parables teach that service to others is service to Jesus, who, along with lay followers, cared for the poor, sick, and defenseless. Current Catholic social teaching stresses charity and justice as essential to the mission of evangelization and salvation of souls.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Catholic philanthropic giving differed by class status and gender. The small, wealthy class contributed to the construction and support of seminaries, while the large working-class supported local direct-assistance projects by donating money or volunteering time. Bishops directed charitable works in their dioceses, and the boards of Catholic charitable organizations were composed of professional men and clergy. Direct charitable work was considered "women's work," to be conducted mainly by nuns in such orders as the Sisters of Charity. To this day, religious communities of Catholic women are characterized by their service to the poor and adherence to voluntary vows of poverty, which symbolize solidarity with the poor. (In 1920, religious orders did 75 percent of Catholic-sponsored charitable work [O'Brien 1996, 147].)

Following the Civil War, Catholic leaders mobilized congregation and lay efforts to support local institutions and programs to serve Catholics, which grew to include schools, hospitals, orphanages, women's shelters, youth probation and recreation services, and home nursing services. These Catholic charities lacked centralized organization or leadership until the next century.

The postwar freedom of enslaved men and women heightened Catholics' attention to their lack of charity among African Americans and also among American Indians. Protestants outpaced Catholics in missions among African Americans, and white sisterhoods continued to turn away African American applicants. The

Oblate Sisters of Providence, established by African American sisters with the assistance of white priests in Baltimore in 1828, received little funding and took in laundry to support themselves. Beginning in the 1880s, the daughters of Philadelphia banker Francis Drexel devoted inheritance funds to support African American Catholic churches and schools and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People. However, at the turn of the century, a single meeting of Protestants to raise missionary funds for work among African Americans resulted in more donations than Catholics provided annually to such missions (Oates 1995, 58). Further, Catholic social services refused care to African Americans into the early twentieth century. For example, none of 540 Catholic hospitals listed in the 1922 "Directory of Catholic Charities in the United States" admitted Black patients, yet they did admit white, non-Catholic patients (Oates 1995, 64).

In the early twentieth century, social reformers enhanced the Catholic national presence and the "scientific" nature of Catholic charities by creating the National Conference of Catholic Charities (NCCC) in 1910 to evaluate and coordinate Catholic services. Several Jesuit schools specialized in training social workers. Although some Catholic volunteers and clergy criticized these new, overwhelmingly female professionals for earning money by assisting the poor, their services were in demand.

In the 1920s, progressive reformers within the Catholic charity movement argued against the poverty-relief approach to social services and put forward a social justice approach. The NCCC leadership and the bishops' National Catholic Welfare Conference (established as the National Catholic Welfare Council in 1917 and renamed in 1919) maintained that justice requires a foundation of charity. The economic stance of these organizations was progressive, supporting social security, minimum-wage laws, and workers' insurance, but other Catholic positions were socially conservative. For example, the National Council of Catholic Women campaigned against reformers' work to provide birth control to residents of poor Catholic neighborhoods.

During the Depression and the New Deal era, Catholic social welfare advocates gained national prominence, calling on government agencies to supplement inadequate private funds and lobbying to protect Catholic agencies' care for Catholic children under new Social Security legislation. Catholic social workers found work in public welfare departments, and Catholics gained positions of power in federal social welfare agencies. Taking a different approach from that of national policy advocacy, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin founded the Catholic Worker movement in New York in 1933, working at the local level to directly assist the poor.

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) renewed attention to issues of structural injustice, poverty, and peace as part of the charitable vocation. Simultaneously, demographic and economic transformations that had dramatically changed the makeup of post–World War II cities challenged Catholics to address the needs of a largely non-Catholic urban poor. Of particular importance was the upward mobility of second- and third-generation white immigrants, who were drawn to the heavily segregated suburbs by a combination of government-subsidized mortgages and fear of nonwhite neighbors, leaving urban parishes with an increasingly nonwhite ministry. Although on one level the response was to step up efforts to provide services and education to African Americans and other traditionally non-Catholic clienteles, papal encyclicals also urged action toward social transformation as central to Catholics' evangelization mission. A "crusade against poverty," the Campaign for Human Development (CHD), was launched by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1969 to support community-based projects run by poor groups and to motivate people to understand and act on Catholic social teaching. Through such agencies as Catholic Relief Services, established in 1943 as the bishops' overseas development aid program, this structural emphasis became increasingly globalized.

Liberation theology, with a strong emphasis on the church's role as a catalyst in changing "sinful social structures," emerged during the 1960s, most strongly in Latin America. The controversial concept of a "preferential option for the poor" is derived from Latin American Catholic experience and is associated with liberation theology. It calls attention to individuals' and society's responsibility to build solidarity with the poor in order to effect social change. Opponents of the concept argue that it detracts from the universal mission to preach the Gospel to all people and implies that the church is taking a side in "class struggle." Defenders see the concept expressed in the Bible and urge church engagement in progressive politics.

The church's social policy activity in the United States during and since the 1960s has encompassed a broad range of justice-related issues, including advocacy for a national health care plan; protection of the rights of immigrants, migrants, and refugees; promotion of social and economic justice among American Indians; opposition to interrelated structural racism and economic oppression; and calls for peace and disarmament. Support for a social justice approach to Catholic teaching is voiced by Pope John Paul II (installed in 1978), and a 1986 pastoral letter by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops advocated the concept of "economic justice for all." Catholic leaders and agencies opposed federal welfare cuts in the 1990s, citing statistics from Catholic Charities' service programs on inadequate social welfare funding and relying on the moral authority of church statements about governments' responsibility to act for the common good. Continuing a theme from the early twentieth century, they also combined progressive economic stances with socially conservative positions, particularly on birth control and reproductive rights.

The Catholic Church is committed to a continued active role in social services and welfare policymaking. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops released *In All Things Charity* (1999), calling individuals and the government to assist those in need and to work toward social justice. The statement points to enduring poverty in the United States and globally, and it urges people of goodwill to commit to greater solidarity with the poor. It asks Catholics to pray for justice and peace, to serve the poor through volunteering and charitable donations, and to advocate for public policies that "protect human life, promote human dignity, preserve God's creation, and build peace" (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops 1999, 55). In June 2001, the bishops endorsed legislation to implement the Bush administration's proposal for funding faith-based and community initiatives.

Laury Oaks

See also: Catholic Worker Movement; Charity Organization Societies; *Economic Justice for All;* Missionaries

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Catholic Worker Movement

The Catholic Worker movement, founded in New York City in 1933 by Dorothy Day and

Peter Maurin, was a movement both spiritual and political in philosophy and agenda: Committed to anarchism, pacifism, and service to the poor, the Catholic Worker movement would pioneer a style of direct action protest and communal living that would both prefigure and directly influence the protest movements and counterculture of the 1960s.

Dorothy Day, born in Brooklyn in 1897, had a rootless childhood because of her father's peripatetic career as a sportswriter. She was a spiritual wanderer as well: Throughout her childhood and as a young woman, she was strongly if episodically attracted to Christianity, in varying denominational hues. Politics also engaged her interest: As an undergraduate at the University of Illinois she joined the Socialist Party. When she came to New York in 1916, she found employment as a left-wing journalist, and her social circle included many of the founders of the communist movement. In the late 1920s, she formally joined the Catholic Church, but she did not abandon her radical political convictions.

In December 1932, in the depths of the Great Depression, Day had a fateful meeting with a fifty-five-year-old French Catholic immigrant to the United States named Peter Maurin. Like Day, Maurin sought to combine his fervent religious piety with an equally fervent social radicalism. He proposed to Day that the two of them should found a lay Catholic movement, loyal to but independent of the church and devoted to living with and caring for the poor as a practical application of Catholic social teachings. Through Maurin's influence, Day became familiar with the writings of reform-minded European Catholics, like the French philosopher Jacques Maritain. These European Catholics were developing an outlook, known as "personalism," that emphasized the uniqueness and autonomy of the human self and also the responsibility of individuals to involve themselves in the great social and moral issues of the day. With its emphasis on providing an immediate and individual response to injustice and unmet human needs, personalism represented an alternative both to mass collectivist movements, such as communism and fascism, and to the managerialism of social democratic and liberal welfare states.

Day and Maurin launched their movement by starting a newspaper, the monthly *Catholic Worker,* which sold for a penny. Its first edition appeared on May Day 1933. From an initial press run of 2,500 copies, its circulation rose dramatically in the years that followed, peaking at 185,000 on the eve of World War II. The newspaper was filled with political and devotional essays, book reviews, and some pathbreaking journalism about the lives of the poor, labor struggles, and the underside of urban life. Maurin contributed a series of "Easy Essays" to the newspaper outlining his philosophy, but Day soon emerged as the movement's real leader. From early on in the movement's history, people began to regard her as a saint-in-the-making. Michael Harrington, who knew Day in the early 1950s when he was briefly a member of the Catholic Worker movement, described her as having a "severe, almost Slavic, and yet very serene face. With her hair braided around her head and the babushka she sometimes wore, she might have been a peasant or, had the Dostoevsky she read so avidly written of women as he did of monks, a mystic in one of his great novels" (Harrington 1973, 20).

As Harrington's example suggests, the *Catholic Worker* newspaper attracted not only readers but also volunteers eager to put its preaching into action. Soon, the Catholic Worker movement was operating "Houses of Hospitality" in poor neighborhoods in twenty-seven cities and maintaining a dozen farms. The Catholic Worker houses ran soup kitchens and breadlines, provided beds for the homeless (as well as for the middle-class volunteers who were flocking to the movement), and became centers of vibrant and visionary debate. The Catholic Worker's utopianism was regarded by some outside critics as otherworldly and unrealistic. The movement fell on hard times during World War II, which Day opposed on pacifist grounds; many of the Houses of Hospitality closed down in those years. But Day always insisted that her followers, however uncompromising they may sometimes have seemed to outsiders, were very much involved in the here and now of changing the world: "The spiritual works of mercy," she wrote in her autobiography, "include enlightening the ignorant, rebuking the sinner, consoling the afflicted, as well as bearing wrongs patiently, and we have always classed picket lines and the distribution of literature among these works" (Day 1952, 220). It was with this perspective that members of the Catholic Worker movement joined the picket lines of striking workers during the 1930s and pioneered in direct action protests against nuclear testing in the 1950s.

Life in the Catholic Worker houses could be draining, and few volunteers stayed for long. But their lives were often permanently changed by the experience. The Catholic Worker movement trained a generation of dedicated and talented young activists and intellectuals who would go on to play significant roles within the church, the labor movement, and various social reform movements. Catholic priest and antiwar activist Daniel Berrigan would write in 1981 of Day's teachings, "I think of her as one who simply helped us, in a time of self-inflicted blindness, to see." There were any number of individual radical Catholics who had preceded Day, but Catholic radicalism in the United States was largely her invention. She died in 1980, but her movement survived her. The *Catholic Worker* newspaper continues to appear monthly, and at the start of the new millennium, there were over 180 Catholic Worker communities in the United States and abroad. Day was selected by the Catholic Church in 2000 as an official candidate for sainthood.

Maurice Isserman

See also: Catholic Church; *The Other America*

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See Appalachia; *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*

Census Bureau

See Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Poverty Line

Center for Community Change

The Center for Community Change, an outgrowth of the Citizens' Crusade against Poverty, was formally inaugurated in 1968 in honor of the memory of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy. From its inception, the center took as its mission empowering low-income Americans, a preoccupation that characterized the politics of the 1960s. An initial grant from the Ford Foundation of $3.5 million for 2.5 years gave it a stable financial base, and it now has an annual operating budget just short of $4 million, which supports a staff of eighty-six.

The center works on several fronts to help build grassroots organizations in low-income communities. Its staff members work directly with local groups to provide organizer training, organizational and financial advice, and policy expertise in areas that are critical to low-income people, including bank lending, jobs, welfare and employment policy, and housing. Hundreds of organizations across the country have received center assistance in the form of advice and funding.

The center has also initiated a number of special projects, some directed toward strengthening low-income groups by facilitating coalitions among them, such as the Transportation Equity Network, which includes some sixty organizations concerned about inadequate federal funding for public transportation in poor communities. The Neighborhood Revitalization Project works to increase the flow of bank loans to low-income and minority communities. The National Campaign on Jobs and Income Support is a coalition that brings together some 1,000 grassroots groups and advocacy organizations to discuss work and welfare policy issues and to bring grassroots pressure to bear on these issues; the Public Housing Residents National Organizing Campaign similarly brings together resident leaders from public housing. And the Indian and Native American Employment and Training Coalition brings together Indian tribes and off-reservation organizations to exchange information and influence policies that affect Native Americans.

To complement its organizing work, the center also undertakes research on policy issues that affect low-income people, and it has even sponsored initiatives that could become models for public policy reform, such as its Housing Trust Fund Project, which promotes the creation of trust funds dedicated to the construction of low-income housing that draw on public and private sources.

The scope of the center's efforts are suggested by its publication list, which includes action guides in all the policy areas in which it is working as well as such guides to local groups as "How to Tell and Sell Your Story" and "How—and Why—to Influence Public Policy."

Frances Fox Piven

See also: Citizens' Crusade against Poverty (CCAP); Community Development; Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations; War on Poverty

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Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a legal and legislative policy organization dedicated to advocacy on welfare, poverty, and family issues at local, state, and federal levels. Staffed by lawyers and policy analysts, CLASP works with legislators, government administrators, and other advocacy groups to formulate, shape, implement, and explain poverty and welfare policy around the nation. Over its lifetime, the group has focused on such issues as women and poverty, tax reform, the provision of free health care, federally funded legal services for the poor, and family policies including child support reform and enforcement, minimum-wage laws, and job training and creation.

CLASP was founded in 1968 by a group of well-credentialed attorneys with experience in federal agencies and elite corporate law firms, with significant financial and substantive assistance from the Ford Foundation and other philanthropic organizations and with backing from the Great Society–era political establishment that had made litigation and legal services a key component of the War on Poverty. CLASP's creators envisioned its original mission as "representing unrepresented interests," and they sought to "build on the considerable expertise and innovative legal strategies that were emerging in poverty and public interest law" (Halpern 1974, 120). And yet, although CLASP formed alliances with activist organizations, its direction was very much removed from those of grassroots social movements. In explicit contrast to work by poverty lawyers at the time, CLASP emphasized that "the poor are not the only people excluded" from governmental policymaking (Halpern 1974, 120). Working in federal courts and administrative agencies, the legal staff and lawyer-led litigation committee worked on such "middle-class" issues as environmental and administrative law as well as on health care and women's rights. By the end of its first decade, CLASP was the nation's largest general practice public interest law firm.

In the 1980s, faced with rapidly declining foundation support (and thus influence), significant staff changes as units of the organization became independent, and a federal government increasingly hostile in every branch to social policy litigation, the organization made a conscious decision to reorganize. The Reagan administration's hostility to welfare and federally funded legal services further influenced CLASP's choice to specialize in poverty matters. Although deemphasizing federal litigation tactics, CLASP's engagement with policy elites remained constant, its focus on expertise intact.

CLASP's Family Policy Initiative sought to develop "comprehensive, rational" policy on the subject (Center for Law and Social Policy 1995, 5). Recognizing child welfare as the most politically acceptable approach to welfare, the group advocated a guaranteed-child-support program along with enforcement and reform of existing laws. To that end, CLASP collaborated with members of Congress and assisted in lobbying efforts by grassroots groups. In the 1990s, CLASP participated in welfare reform efforts, providing testimony, legislative reviews, and data analysis primarily on the impact of proposed welfare reform legislation on questions of child care, child support, and family issues. Following the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the group provided guidance to state and local government officials as they implemented the provisions of the act. It also advocated for job training and job-creation projects.

A leading advocate in the increasingly uphill struggle to save the Legal Services Corporation in the 1980s and 1990s, CLASP served as legal counsel to local legal services programs in challenges to onerous restrictions on the types of litigation that attorneys for the poor could undertake. CLASP also developed state projects aimed at bolstering legal services for the poor, building local support for comprehensive legal assistance programs in civil legal matters as national support slowly evaporated.

Thomas M. Hilbink

See also: Legal Aid/Legal Services; Poverty Law; War on Poverty; Welfare Law Center; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) is a public interest advocacy group that promotes policies to alleviate poverty and hunger, improve economic opportunity, expand health coverage, and lessen income disparity both in the United States and abroad. Since its founding twenty years ago, CBPP has become the undisputed leader in what many regard as the most effective current form of social justice advocacy: data-driven policy analysis.

CBPP was founded in 1981 by Robert Greenstein, who had served as director of the federal food stamp program during the Carter administration. Armed with a major grant from the Field Foundation, Greenstein positioned CBPP to contest the Reagan administration's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) analyses of poverty and malnutrition in the United States as well as OMB assertions about the effectiveness of federal food and hunger programs. CBPP's principal weapon in this fight was—and continues to be—a steady production of economic and policy analyses distributed to members of Congress, to the media, and to researchers and social justice advocates. (These analyses are available today through the World Wide Web.)

Challenging the White House's devolutionary initiatives in the 1980s, CBPP prepared budget analyses timed to reach Congress and the advocacy community at the same time as—or even before—OMB projections. In so doing, CBPP eroded the rhetorical advantage of the White House and blunted some of the more draconian welfare cuts. Policy analysis continues to be CBPP's principal weapon: Its research is timely and quantitatively sophisticated and clearly articulates the implications for working people of otherwise dense and complex budget matters. In consequence, CBPP provides compelling hard data to activists in the fight against poverty. CBPP provides ammunition to those who believe government can be a force for good, and its compelling analyses force its opponents to respond. The Heritage Foundation, for example, has subsequently launched a Center for Data Analysis, which devotes much of its time to attempting to rebut CBPP analyses (and doing so in analytic terms that are very much the hallmark of the work done by CBPP). CBPP's leadership in data analysis and in data-driven advocacy has earned it high marks from members of Congress, their staffs, and administration officials.

CBPP is credited with helping make the 1996 welfare reforms more reasonable and humane, with securing expansions in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and with leading the effort to secure state EITCs. Today, the center continues to produce research and analysis oriented toward federal policymaking, but it has also expanded its work to include a wide range of state-level programs and has also taken on a major new international budget project working with nongovernmental organizations. The center has continued to grow rapidly, and today it enjoys major financial backing from a range of foundations, including the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.

Douglas Imig

See also: Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); New Right; Poverty Research

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Charitable Choice

The term "charitable choice" refers to laws encouraging state and local governments to contract with faith-based organizations for the delivery of publicly funded social services. The first charitable choice provision was enacted as Section 104 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, landmark welfare reform legislation that replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Section 104 requires the states to treat faith-based organizations on an equal basis with other groups when soliciting bids or awarding contracts for the provision of TANF-funded programs for welfare recipients. Whereas inherently or "pervasively" religious organizations were ineligible for public funds prior to 1996, entities such as churches and congregations may now directly receive public monies to provide welfare-related services, subject to certain statutory conditions.

Section 104 explicitly protects the religious character of faith-based government contractors. They may retain religious art, icons, and symbols in areas where programs take place; use religious concepts in providing services; and employ religious criteria when hiring staff if the criteria are permitted under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. However, public funds may not be used for sectarian activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization. Faith-based providers may not discriminate against clients on the basis of religion, religious practice, or refusal to participate in religious activities. Clients who object to receiving assistance from faith-based organizations must be provided with equivalent, secular alternatives. Since Section 104's enactment, charitable choice provisions have been added to other major federal grant programs, and a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives has been established.

Charitable choice is a major departure from previous law and practice, and it raises significant legal, moral, and practical issues and has sparked much public debate. Advocates claim that faith-based organizations are uniquely effective and cost-efficient and that they are an untapped resource in the fight against poverty and self-destructive behavior. They also argue that faith-based providers historically have encountered barriers to participation and have been pressured by government to downplay or discard their religious emphases. Critics, by contrast, assert that charitable choice poses serious risks for the constitutional rights of needy citizens, for the autonomy of religious organizations, and for America's long-standing commitment to a meaningful separation between church and state.

Laura S. Jensen

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Charity

Charity—although sometimes, particularly in religious writings, held to be a broad sense of love of mankind—can be defined more narrowly to include actions (donations of time or money), public or private, aimed at aiding the poor or needy. American attitudes toward charity have developed over the last two centuries from an emphasis on religious benevolence and local responsibility to a focus on more "scientific" forms of businesslike charity and on more interdependence with the federal government in exercising responsibility for meeting basic social needs. Ironically, while charitable activities have persisted and grown more organized over time, the term "charity" itself has lost favor and is often replaced by "welfare" in the public sphere and "philanthropy" in the private.

American ideas about charity have been strongly rooted in historical precedent. First, from the earliest written records, there is evidence of a human tradition of charity, of aiding kin, friends, and neighbors in times of need. Supplementing those ideas, there is much in the Judeo-Christian and Muslim traditions to encourage charitable behavior toward those of lesser means and to support the rights of the needy to receive. Ideas about mercy, charity, and goodwill toward others infuse the texts of the Torah, the Talmud, the Old Testament, the

New Testament and the Koran, laying the groundwork for the elevation of the idea of charity to the level of virtue, and in many cases, obligation.

Finally, beyond the religious, there were also legal foundations for charity in colonial America and later the United States, based on English common law and encoded in the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 that consolidated and rewrote existing poor laws in England. These laws dictated the responsibilities of public charity, helped define the sphere of private giving, and established some of the bedrock principles—including the concepts of "deservingness," personal and familial obligation, and the work ethic—that continue to guide public and private aid to this day.

During colonial times, local support of the needy—based on traditions of charity among family, kin, and neighbors—was the standard. Colonial Americans, often with their congregations, took responsibility for the needy in their communities. With political and religious powers closely allied, charity toward others was part Christian duty, part state-mandated obligation supported through tithes and taxes. Needs were met locally, and "strangers"—those who had no claim on the community—were "warned off."

Although public charity was the norm, private charity organizations increased in number from colonial times on. The Scots Charitable Society (1657) was the first "friendly society" organized in the colonies. Set up by Scotsmen in Boston, this group, like the countless others that would form throughout the nation, aimed to provide "relief to ourselves and any other" as they saw necessary (Trattner 1999, 35). Throughout the colonies and then the nation, individuals banded together both to assure their own security and to donate time and money to benefit a wide variety of needy recipients. The number of private, charitable societies increased greatly in the early nineteenth century, due at least in part to the impacts of the Second Great Awakening and other religious revivals. During the same period, however, many Americans turned from charity to reform—temperance, the asylum movement, and antislavery—foreshadowing that larger move away from almsgiving that would occur at the end of the century.

During the nineteenth century, although there were a few examples of public, federally funded aid programs such as the Freedmen's Bureau (1865–1872), charity remained predominantly a local responsibility, publicly and privately. One key exception was the Civil War–era U.S. Sanitary Commission, which was a national public health organization, funded and run by private charitable donations. The commission was primarily preventative in its focus, aiming to improve conditions and thus eradicate disease rather than to wait and address its effects. Its focus on "sanitary science" also marked the beginning of a major trend toward the encouragement of a more "scientific" charity based not only on goodwill but also on professional training.

Although traditional forms of charity remained strong throughout the nineteenth century, industrialization, immigration, and urbanization were placing strains on existing practices. In view of an expanding and changing American population, trends in charity also reflected a related concern among social elites about the maintenance of social order. In large urban centers, charitable givers often had no firsthand knowledge of those in need; recipients were no longer their neighbors and fellow parishioners. Reflecting this growing distance between donors and recipients, the demand for professional, charitable organizations increased. Exemplified by the growth of the charity organization movement, donors and leaders in the field of charity began to demand better-organized, more-coordinated charitable efforts that aimed to "improve," or reform, the needy rather than focusing on material need alone. Josephine Shaw Lowell, founder of the New York Charity Organization Society and a leading voice in the movement, summed up the concern of many givers: "Almsgiving and dole giving are hurtful—

The New York Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, Annual Report, 1845

As the experience of mass poverty became a feature of industrializing cities in the nineteenth century, municipalities turned away from earlier practices of poor relief supervised by designated overseers and began to rely on the services of organized charities, which increasingly depended on the services of "friendly visitors"—often women of the upper or middle class—to serve as investigators as well as moral ministers to the poor. The larger aim of such practices, to put charity on a more "scientific," discriminating basis, was realized in groups such as the New York Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor. What follows is an excerpt from the association's 1845 Annual Report.

[The association's] primary object is to discountenance indiscriminate alms-giving, and to put an end to street-begging and vagrancy. Secondly, it proposes to visit the poor at their dwellings, carefully to examine their circumstances, and to extend to them, appropriate relief; and through the friendly intercourse of Visitors, to inculcate among them habits of frugality, temperance, industry, and self-dependence. . . .

The Institution has been instrumental in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, reclaiming the vicious, and ministering to the sick. And while it has sympathized with man as a responsible and intelligent being,—traversed the narrow lanes and crowded alleys of this metropolis on its errands of kindness,—while it has sat by the side of the wretched in their comfortless hovels, to listen to the tales of their sufferings, to soothe their sorrows, and to extend relief,—yet it has not blindly dispensed its favors, so as to discourage struggling virtue, or to encourage in vicious courses the idle and depraved. On the contrary, it has detected the impostor, and arrested the vagrant, while it has stimulated the inert and desponding, and relieved the distresses of the deserving. Possessing superior facilities for collecting and diffusing information, its action, free from prejudices and preferences, has been liberal and comprehensive. In inculcating temperance, frugality, and industry, it has stood as the hand-maid of Christianity, in its endeavors to meliorate the condition of the indigent.

Source: From *The First Annual Report of the New-York Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, for the Year 1845* (New York: John F. Trow and Company, 1845), 17, 21–22. Reprinted in *Annual Reports of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,* nos. 1–10, 1845–1853 (New York: Arno Press and *New York Times,* 1971), pages as in original.

therefore they are not charitable." Handouts were potentially hurtful to the needy because, she argued, "false hopes are excited, the unhappy recipients of alms become dependent, lose their energy, are rendered incapable of self-support, and what they receive in return for the lost character is quite inadequate to supply their needs" (Lowell [1884] 1971, 89, 90).

Leaders of the charity organization movement believed that rather than aiming at supporting the needy, donations should be used to "raise and help" the poor. Charitable donations should be distributed by professionals, experts who could investigate recipients to determine if they were "deserving" and if the money would be "well spent." According to Lowell, "The fundamental principle is that all charity must tend to raise the character and elevate the moral nature, and so improve the condition of those toward whom it is exercised, and must not tend to injure the character or condition of others" (Lowell [1884] 1971, 94). Charity was not to be just about monetary handouts; it was also about moral and character instruction.

Although a growing population and professionalization spurred changes in the organization of charity, similar changes were occurring in the nature of giving by the very wealthy. In an age of incredible wealth (by 1916, there were more than 40,000 millionaires in the United States), a small number of very wealthy individuals began to consider bringing science and business practices to bear on their own charitable practices, moving from handouts to expertise, policy advocacy, and reform. Although such scientific charity was not the norm even for the very wealthy, a handful of high-profile individuals and their foundations embraced it (Judith Sealander in Friedman and McGarvie 2003, 218–220). Men like John D. Rockefeller "did not want merely to relieve misery; [they] hoped to end it" (Sealander in Friedman and McGarvie 2003, 217–218). To achieve this goal, new charitable foundations focused on more-systematic, research-based giving—giving that would offer solutions to the problems of the world, not temporary relief.

In the 1910s, the desire for more-organized and better-coordinated giving found yet another form, the Community Chest. Here, business leaders could organize not only the distribution of funds but also the collection of donations. Rather than responding to multiple requests for charity, a donor could now make a single donation. The Community Chest would take care of distribution. The end result was both the introduction of major, highly successful, coordinated civic fund-raising campaigns and the further distancing of charitable givers from receivers.

Another notable result of the move toward a new type of charity was the fall from grace of the term "charity" itself. For example, historian Ruth Crocker has pointed out that leaders of the Progressive-Era movement to build settlement houses in poor communities "rejected the term 'charity' altogether, even as they attempted to fill public needs unmet by the state, using private funds and volunteer labor" (Crocker in Friedman and McGarvie 2003, 205). Many givers associated the term "charity" with old-fashioned ideas about almsgiving rather than with new notions about reform, coordination, and professionalization.

Increasingly during the twentieth century, public programs, especially on the federal level, were developed to meet the needs of Americans. The first major wave of such programs came in the form of the New Deal in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, when private charities were unable to meet growing needs. Since that time, public welfare programs have continued to grow, and in some cases contract, alongside private efforts. Nonetheless, even though the terms to describe charitable action have changed and the responsibilities of private giving have been somewhat circumscribed, American charity continues. As of 2002, according to historian Peter D. Hall, there were nearly 1.5 million charitable organizations registered as tax-exempt nonprofit organizations (Hall in Friedman and McGarvie 2003, 363–364). Large foundations and multipurpose organizations flourish alongside faith-based charitable efforts, mutual aid societies, and neighborhood associations. Beyond organized forms of charity, countless individuals continue to help others through direct handouts and by volunteering at local, unincorporated charitable organizations.

There is no question that charity has been an important response to issues of poverty and need in America. Real needs have been met, and in some cases, relationships between the charitable and the needy have been forged. However, there continue to exist questions over who—private individuals or the state—should determine what needs are met in the United States and over how funds are used. Most recently, debates have been raging over whether the federal government should subsidize faith-based charitable institutions by awarding them government contracts and other assistance and over the notion, fostered in conservative policy circles, that "devolving" antipoverty responsibility to the localities and the private sector will foster more and more virtuous charitable giving. The resurgent preference in social policy for private charity over public responsibility has considerable consequences for the poor. Those who contribute money and time often have the strongest voice in how the benefits of charity are distributed. Thus, in the case of private charity, individual volunteers and donors often determine who is "deserving" of assistance as well as who does—and does not—receive aid. Giving, which is often quirky, is also sometimes highly reflective of the interests and beliefs of the givers. On the other hand, in recent years scholars have begun to investigate the power dynamics inherent in charity and have demonstrated the ways receivers also played an active role in charity, both shaping charitable decisions and at times modifying the ways intended gifts are actually used.

Laura Tuennerman-Kaplan

See also: Charitable Choice; Charity Organization Societies; Community Chests; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Mutual Aid; Nonprofit Sector; Philanthropy; Poor Laws; Voluntarism

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Charity Organization Societies

Charity organization societies (COSs), private, voluntary agencies, played a central role in delivering services and in shaping social welfare policy and practice in the half century prior to the creation of the federal welfare state. First founded in England in 1869, charity organization societies spread rapidly in the United States between 1877 and 1920. As embodiments of the new theory of scientific charity, these agencies utilized emerging principles of social science to bring order and reform to the complex system of public and private charity that had evolved under the Elizabethan poor laws. Charity organization societies aimed to make charity more efficient and effective by coordinating the efforts of existing charitable agencies in order to prevent fraud and the duplication of services. The ultimate goal of these organizations was not simply to ameliorate want but to identify and treat the underlying causes of "pauperism," or dependency, and thereby to restore individuals to self-support. Through study and investigation of the causes of individual suffering, scientific charity aimed to remove the distribution of relief from the whims of sentimentality and politics and to place it on a rational, scientific footing. Although they wanted to make charity efficient and organized, COS leaders did not intend to make it impersonal or bureaucratic. To the contrary, through their strong commitment to private, voluntary giving, COSs sought to strengthen the bonds between givers and receivers of charity and to heal social divisions.

The charity organization movement was largely a response to the dramatic increases in urban poverty that accompanied industrialization and mass immigration in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Advocates of scientific charity were deeply concerned with growing relief rolls and with the ever-widening gulf between the social classes. To their mind, the problem lay primarily in the charitable system itself: There were too many agencies and individuals granting alms "indiscriminately," without knowing the facts of each case and without knowledge of each other's activities. At best, they argued, this type of giving was ineffective, providing only limited and temporary respite to the poor without addressing the underlying causes of their distress. At worst, it "pauperized" recipients by eroding their self-respect and their will to be self-supporting. To charity organizers, one of the worst examples of indiscriminate aid was public outdoor relief (direct payments to individuals in their homes). Often distributed by urban political machines as a form of patronage, such relief not only encouraged sloth and fraud but also exacerbated social divisions by breeding a sense of entitlement among the poor and resentment among taxpayers. COS leaders lobbied vigorously, and in many cities successfully, to end or reduce outdoor relief. With relief largely in private hands, charity organization societies set out to instruct charitable agencies and individuals in the principles of scientific giving.

As an alternative to indiscriminate giving, charity organization societies promised individualized care that was both scientific and personal. Charitable individuals and organizations were urged to refer alms-seekers to the local COS office before providing aid. A COS agent would investigate, visiting an applicant's home, employer, neighbors, and relatives to unearth the causes of the distress and the extent of the need. Volunteer district committees assessed the facts of each case and recommended a course of action. Charity organization societies were forbidden by their constitutions from maintaining or dispensing relief funds. This prohibition reflected the assumption that ample sources of relief already existed. When relief was necessary, it could be obtained from other sources, preferably from an individual or agency with whom the recipient had some personal connection. The ban on relief giving also reflected the belief that what the poor needed most was not alms but encouragement and guidance. To provide this solace, the COSs relied on "friendly visitors." These volunteers, mostly upper- and middle-class women, were intended to provide a balance to the cold work of investigation and a means of bridging the social gap between rich and poor.

In their desire to avoid the pitfalls of "pauperization," COSs initially placed great emphasis on repressive measures designed to weed out fraud and to suppress begging. Special mendicancy officers secured the arrest of street beggars, and the able-bodied poor were subjected to a "work test" at COS wood yards or laundries, where they earned meager wages for hours of backbreaking labor. Such measures, together with overly intrusive investigations and emphasis on the individual causes of poverty, earned charity organization societies criticism from their contemporary opponents and from modern-day scholars alike. COS policies underwent significant change during the Progressive Era, however. Through their interaction with poor families and through systematic study of social conditions, charity organizers increasingly emphasized the structural causes of poverty and took steps to combat them by operating employment bureaus, day care centers, visiting-nurse services, and savings banks. In recognition of the role that illness, overcrowding, industrial accidents, and unemployment played in creating dependency, charity organization societies supported tenement reform, unemployment insurance, and workmen's compensation, and they led campaigns to combat tuberculosis and other contagious diseases.

Policies on giving relief were also relaxed over time. Despite formal prohibitions against dispensing relief, COS agents and volunteers frequently did so when faced with very needy or very persistent applicants. In recognition of this reality, most societies had by the turn of the century dropped their bans on giving relief, and emphasis shifted from withholding relief to making sure that it was "adequate" to meet applicants' needs. Opposition to public outdoor relief remained strong, however (as evidenced by COS opposition to mothers' pensions), until the 1930s, when widespread unemployment prompted most COS leaders to endorse large-scale public relief and federal intervention.

Though their record is clearly mixed, charity organization societies played a central role in shaping modern social welfare. COS agents pioneered techniques of social casework and laid the foundations of professional social work. These techniques, along with COS methods of investigation, social research, and administration, were disseminated through national publications like the *Survey,* through professional organizations like the National Conference of Social Work, and through training schools like the New York School of Social Work. COS ideals, practices, and personnel found their way into a wide array of public and private social welfare agencies, including criminal and family courts, schools, and departments of public health. Many charity organization societies continued to operate (though usually under different names) as family casework agencies long after the creation of federal welfare programs.

Dawn M. Greeley

See also: Charity; Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Malthusianism; Philanthropy; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Poverty Research; Relief; Social Work

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Chavez, Cesar

See Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Chicana/o Movement; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor

Chicana/o Movement

The Chicana/o movement, like many social movements during the 1960s and 1970s, emerged within the context of the broader civil rights struggles of that era. The civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and the women's rights movement were all part of the social upheaval taking place in the United States. Like these larger movements, the Chicana/o movement had a direct impact on the future social structure of American society because it became the vehicle for increased political awareness, participation, and leadership on the part of Mexican Americans. In doing so, it paved the way for the development of the first national-level third party formed by an ethnic group (Navarro 2000, 1–13). In 1970, La Raza Unida Party was founded in Texas not only to provide Mexican Americans and other Latinos with an alternative to the two-party system but also to specifically address the political needs of Latino communities in the Southwest and other parts of the United States.

Although the Chicana/o movement is defined variously by different Chicano/a scholars, it is widely understood "as a social movement that emerged in the 1960s to protest the circumstances in which the Mexican American community found itself" (García 1998, 4–7). Enraged by the sustained exclusion that many Mexican Americans experienced in their political, economic, and social lives, self-empowered young Mexican Americans, who called themselves Chicanas/os, engaged in a struggle to change the conditions of their communities. Some of the issues that sparked protest and activism during the multifaceted Chicana/o movement included farmworkers' rights, substandard education, police brutality, land grants, and cultural devaluation.

Although the Chicana/o movement surged in the 1960s, its origins can be traced back to the early twentieth century. For example, some scholars point to Ernesto Galarza's 1929 speech against racism toward Mexican immigrant workers, which he delivered while a student at Stanford University, as the root of student activism. In this view, Galarza, a scholar and labor activist who authored such seminal books as *Spiders in the House and Workers in the Field* and *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story*, is the unsung hero of the Chicano youth movement, the precursor to the Chicana/o movement, and the farm labor movement of the 1960s (Navarro 1995, 45–48; Muñoz 1989, 21–28, 48–49).

The Chicana/o movement became a critical social force between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s, inspiring the development of organizations such as the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), the Mexican American Student Organization (MASO), the United Mexican American Students (UMAS), the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), and the Crusade for Justice; encouraging the student strikes ("blowouts"), the farm labor movement, and the Chicano Moratorium; and leading to the emergence of charismatic leaders such as Cesar Chavez, Reies López Tijerina, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, and José Angel Gutiérrez.

Underlying the social relevance of the movement as well as its potential long-term impact was the stark fact of the economic and political exclusion of Mexican Americans in U.S. society before and during the period of the Chicana/o movement. For example, the seminal work *Mexican-American People, the Nation's Second Largest Majority* (1970), by Leo Grebler, Joan W. Moore, and Ralph C. Guzman, used U.S. Census Bureau data to document the gross educational and income inequality suffered by Mexican Americans during the 1950s and 1960s. The accompanying table, extracted from their study, illustrates both the tremendous gap in educational attainment between Hispanic and Anglo residents of the Southwest and the resulting gap in income between these two groups. As Grebler, Moore, and Guzman stated, the most startling observation was that "Mexican Americans had only 47 cents for every dollar of Anglo income, and they were worse off than non-Whites." Furthermore, the study illustrated that although educational attainment was low for Mexican Americans, education alone did not explain this level of income inequality. Residential segregation was also associated with this income disparity (Grebler, Moore, and Guzman 1970, 19, 144).

Table 1

1960 education and economic indicators of Chicana/o inequality in the Southwest

	Anglo	Hispanic	Non-white
Educational Gap			
0–8 years	25.8%	61.4%	44.9%
9–12	52.1%	32.9%	43.4%
Some College	22.1%	5.6%	11.7%
Economic Gap			
Median Family Income Index (Anglo=100)	100	65	56
Median Individual Income	100	47	51

(Adapted from Grebler, Moore, Guzman 1970, 19, 144)

In addition to the gross economic and educational differences between Mexican Americans and Anglos, another important catalyst for this social movement was the educational segregation and perceived discrimination in the Southwest. In southwestern public schools, the practice of segregating students of Mexican origin was common before the 1960s and can be traced to the late 1890s, before the 1896 ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537) that sanctioned the doctrine of "separate but equal." According to historian Gilbert González, the segregation of Mexican children was extensive between 1900 and 1950. He calls this period "the era of *de jure* segregation" of Mexican Americans in public school systems in the Southwest because the segregation of Mexican students was often supported by administrative policies that justified segregating students, either based on language and cultural "deficiencies" or for "Americanization" purposes (González 1990, 13–29). Some school districts, however, simply barred Mexican American children from attending regular public schools because of their ethnicity. In addition, separate schools and classrooms usually meant inferior facilities, equipment, teaching materials, and curricula, leading to a substandard education for segregated students (González 1990; San Miguel 1987). This segregation and perceived lack of equal educational opportunity played an important role in the student strikes of the late 1960s. Between 1968 and 1970, California (in Los Angeles, Delano, and Santa Clara), Texas (San Antonio, Elsa, and Abilene), Arizona (Phoenix), and Colorado (Denver) experienced student strikes, as did some cities in the Midwest (Martínez 2001, 175–177; Acuña 2000, 362–366; Rosales 2000, 331–332; Navarro 1995, 58–60).

In addition to protesting unequal education, the movement also produced social organizations and networks committed to advancing the economic and political participation of Mexican Americans within their communities. New organizations that focused on improving the social conditions for Mexican Americans included La Raza Unida Party, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), the Southwest Voter Registration Project, and the National Council of La Raza (NCLR). Each of these expressed the specific regional and national concerns of the Mexican-origin community in the Southwest. Later, two of these groups, MALDEF and NCLR, developed into national pan-Latino, civil rights organizations.

Beyond the social and political organizations that emerged directly from the Chicana/o movement of the 1960s, the movement led to the establishment of Mexican American/Chicano studies programs in colleges and universities throughout the Southwest. These programs served the following purposes: (1) They developed Mexican American/Chicano–centered curricula largely taught by Chicana/o faculty; (2) they provided a respectful intellectual environment for Mexican-origin and other minority students; (3) they facilitated the development of student groups that were interested in maintaining involvement within the Mexican American/Chicano community; (4) they were a critical force in affirmative action with respect to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Chicana/o faculty; and (5) they provided a psychological space in which Mexican-origin students could negotiate and understand the complexity of their own identities (Muñoz 1989, 191–202).

Although the Chicana/o movement did strive to represent the Mexican American community as a whole, the movement also repeated the gender stratification and differentiation that could be found both in the community and in the larger U.S. society. More often than not, the identified leaders within the movement were men. In many instances, male leaders enjoyed visibility not only because they authentically represented community interests but also because they exhibited unique charismatic qualities that captured the imagination and support of various Chicana/o communities. The best-known charismatic leaders were Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers; "Corky" Gonzales, leader of the Crusade for Justice; José Angel Gutiérrez, one of the founders of the national La Raza Unida Party; and Reies López Tijerina, leader of the land-grant movement and of La Alianza Federal de Mercedes (García 1998, 32–34, 61–62).

Although they were less visible as traditional leaders, women were equally important to the success of the Chicana/o movement. During the Chicana/o movement, personal and familial issues propelled many women into community action as structural leaders. This Chicana leadership style often called on a collective identity based on shared community concerns rather than on the individual visibility of one person. This quality of women's leadership was critical in sustaining the organizational structure of many Chicana/o movement groups. Unlike the charismatic male leaders of this period, the grassroots women activists provided the organizational structure that translated the political rhetoric into specific outcomes that addressed community needs. Marta Cotera, a La Raza Unida Party leader, put it this way:

> Everybody had a chance that wanted to do something. These guys might sit around talking and think that we're running the whole show, but they weren't, when it comes right down to it; they were the least important people, dare I say that. The important people were the organizers, and the organizers were very often women. But they were not necessarily the ones running for office, and we needed them to run for office. . . . we needed them because their sensitivity was real important to the organizing and development of the community. (Quoted in Rosales 2000, 391)

Because many women activists had dual responsibilities as mothers and workers, their organizations emphasized immediate concerns for the well-being of their families. An example of this type of organization was Parents Involvement in Community Action (PICA), which was started in east Los Angeles by Rose Lopez, Nellie Bustillos, and other Mexican American women who were concerned with the quality of the education their children were receiving in the local public schools. These Chicanas organized around the issue of parental rights, teacher quality, and funding for public schools—issues closely linked to family concerns. These women used educational and social networking strategies for group empowerment, which allowed for rapid membership growth in many local community organizations; PICA's rapid organizational growth was one example: "PICA was all women. . . . probably about 300, and that's probably a low estimate because . . . there were people coming out of curiosity. . . . each of us went back and told everybody 'Hey, do you know what's happening?' So it got bigger and bigger. . . . that's when we started breaking off chapters" (interview with retired activist Nellie Bustillos, September 24, 2001). Thus, PICA's organizational success in the area of educational reform in east Los Angeles is directly attributable to the leadership skills and style of its main Chicana organizers.

The notable women who led the Chicano/a movement included Dolores Huerta, cofounder of the United Farm Workers; Marta Cotera, Maria Hernandez, and Virginia Musquiz of the La Raza Unida Party, who also formed Mujeres Pro Raza Unida; and Alicia Escalante, founder of the Chicana Welfare Rights Organization (Rosales 2000, 391–393; García 1998, 40–41; Ruíz 1998, 112–113). Unfortunately, there are many more local structural leaders—like Rose Lopez and Nellie Bustillos—who have not yet been recognized for their contributions as leaders in many local communities during this period. The work of all of these women—Chicanas—helped mitigate and fight the political, educational, and economic causes and effects of poverty in Mexican American communities.

Adela de la Torre and
Maritza De La Trinidad

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations; Latino/as; Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF); National Council of La Raza; Racial Segregation; Racism

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Child Care

The term "child care" refers to the regular care of children provided by persons other than their parents, usually while parents are pursuing education, training, or paid employment outside the home. In the United States today, child care provision is divided into two distinct sectors, public and private. In both sectors, several different types of services may be available, ranging from in-home care to child care centers, and the methods of payment differ. In the private sector, middle- and upper-income parents choose and pay for services directly. In the public sector, poor and low-income parents must find child care centers or family day care providers that will accept state-issued vouchers to be reimbursed at fixed rates, or they may, in some instances, receive state reimbursement for individual arrangements with kith or kin. Although the private sector appears to be wholly self-supporting, in fact it too is subsidized indirectly by the federal government through various income tax provisions and incentives to employers who establish child care services.

The division between the public and private systems of providing child care is the outcome of its erratic history in the United States. Over the centuries, child care has taken many forms, including in-home care by other relatives, domestic servants, and baby-sitters; care in institutions variously named crèches, day nurseries, day care centers, and child care centers; and care in institutions designed for other purposes, including summer camps, preschools and nursery schools, and even orphanages. Because of the enduring value placed on "mother care" within American culture, child care by others has come under frequent criticism, and efforts to gain support for public services have met with strong opposition. The federal government has offered inconsistent support for child care: briefly during the New Deal and World War II, and more extensively since the 1960s, as part of its efforts to reform public welfare policy.

Formal child care was rarely needed in the preindustrial societies of North America; both Native Americans and Euro-Americans were able to combine child rearing with other domestic and productive tasks. In these hunting-and-gathering or agrarian economies, adults placed their offspring nearby while they worked, using various devices, including cradle boards and standing stools, to keep very young children out of harm's way. Most care was provided within the household, though during busy seasons, colonial New Englanders might send slightly older children to inexpensive, loosely organized "dame schools" for supervision and rudimentary education. In general, child care was not seen as the exclusive task of mothers but was shared with fathers, older siblings, servants, and neighbors.

These arrangements became strained as market-based demands sped up the pace of production and as factories drew workers out of homes and fields, making it difficult for household members to combine productive and reproductive tasks. At the same time, late-colonial and early-republican ideologies, both patriotic and religious, defined a more distinctively gendered division of labor within families by enshrining motherhood and emphasizing fathers' breadwinning responsibilities. Although the value of women's productive labor declined, their childrearing and homemaking roles expanded and gained new stature. But the realities of life in industrializing America—illness, poverty, unemployment, desertion, early death—often prevented parents from fulfilling these ideals. Women left to maintain households on their own struggled to get by on paltry wages and whatever their children could earn on the streets. Torn between serving as both caretakers and breadwinners, many ended up entering a workhouse or almshouse and giving their children up for indenture.

It was within this context that the first formal child care in the United States developed. In 1793, a group of female Quaker philanthropists in Philadelphia, moved by the plight of dozens of women who had become widowed as the result of a yellow fever epidemic, decided to circumvent the prospect of family breakup by providing mothers with a means of supporting themselves and keeping their children with them. The House of Industry set up by the Female Society for the Relief and Employment of the Poor allowed the majority of women to work at spinning and weaving while their children were supervised in a separate nursery by some of the older widows. This not only provided the mothers with a small income but also kept the children off the streets; at the same time, it gave philanthropists an opportunity to inculcate the children with the "habits and virtues" of an industrious life.

Other female philanthropists in Philadelphia and in other cities across the United States soon followed the Quaker women's lead, but few, if any, of the "day nurseries" they set up seem to have included workrooms. Services were, for the most part, "custodial"; that is, children were fed, clothed, and kept safe, but their routines were highly regimented, and little attention was paid to education. By the 1870s, dozens of day nurseries were in operation, but their capacity was still far too small to accommodate the needs of the thousands of mothers thrown into the workforce by the vicissitudes of the economy and then by the Civil War and its aftermath. Despite the persistence of maternal employment among poor and working-class families, middle-class child care philanthropists continued to present their services as something mothers might turn to not on a regular basis but only when they were in distress. Moreover, many mothers were put off by the moralistic tone that characterized the nurseries.

Some parents were able to find a more hospitable form of child care in one of the many infant schools that were started in cities and villages along the eastern seaboard from the mid-1820s to the late 1840s. Inspired by several British models, including one established by the utopian industrialist Robert Owen in New Lanark, Scotland, the founders of these schools emphasized education as well as supervision and claimed that even very young children could benefit from attendance. Aware that employment was common among the mothers of the lower classes and that older children were often kept out of school to care for younger siblings, they sought to enroll all children on a regular basis, not only when their families were deemed to be in crisis. This, unfortunately, led to the decline of the infant schools, for middle-class parents, imbued with the ideal of mother care, began to fear that their own influence would be supplanted by that of the schools and withdrew their support. After about two decades, the infant school movement died out.

Another form of child care could be found in the antebellum South, where slaveholding planters regularly assigned slaves who were either too old or too young for heavy labor to care for very young slave children while their mothers worked at other tasks. On larger plantations, a "nuss house" might hold up to 100 African American children. This system was, of course, devised wholly to benefit the planters; it allowed them to maximize both the productive and reproductive labor of their female slaves, while minimizing the need for family ties among the slaves themselves and also controlling the socialization of their children. Ironically, while female slaves were denied the right to nurture their own offspring, they were frequently pressed into service as "mammies" or even wet nurses to slaveholders' children.

After Emancipation, African American women continued to work outside the home in greater numbers than white women, often as domestic servants and caretakers of white children. African American women's organizations like the National Association of Colored Women responded to the ongoing need for child care by founding a number of day nurseries, particularly in the urban South. The Neighborhood Union in Atlanta, for example, founded five free kindergartens between 1905 and 1908. Unlike their white counterparts, Black child care philanthropists regarded maternal employment as a normal (if less than desirable) part of family life and thus sought to create long-term, rather than temporary, services; instead of the wealthy funding child care for the poor, support was spread widely across African American communities.

Throughout the nineteenth century, lone mothers (and sometimes fathers) of all races who were compelled to work but had no alternative form of care sent their children to orphanages for various lengths of time in order to avoid indenture. These parents had no intention of surrendering the children for adoption; indeed, they often paid for the children's room and board. By the second half of the century, the placement of "half orphans" in asylums became so widespread that some critics accused parents of shirking their responsibilities.

Most orphanages refused to admit infants, creating a dilemma for women who had newborn children and who needed to support themselves. To accommodate this group, in 1854, female philanthropists in New York City founded the New York Nursery and Child's Hospital, and in 1873, Philadelphia women followed suit with the Philadelphia Home for Infants. Such institutions offered two options: Mothers could place their children in the nursery and hire themselves out as wet nurses, or they could remain in the hospital and receive room and board while nursing another infant in addition to their own. Unfortunately, the mortality rate in these nurseries was very high owing to the lack of antibiotics and other biomedical remedies and the severe impact of infectious contagion among infants whose resistance was lowered by what later physicians would diagnose as "hospitalism" or "failure to thrive" under institutional conditions.

Throughout this period, parents who had to work outside the home also turned to older children, their own siblings, and other relatives or neighbors for informal care. Reformers deplored situations in which children were either left alone or in the care of "little mothers"—sisters only slightly older than their charges—but they reserved their severest criticism for "baby farms," the term they used for informal caretaking arrangements in poor urban neighborhoods. Although scurrilous newspaper reports and investigations accused these "shady" and "notorious" operations of trafficking in infants or of allowing them to perish through starvation or neglect, later studies suggest that most such caretakers acted responsibly and provided affordable services to low-income mothers who felt more comfortable leaving their children in a familiar environment (often with co-ethnics, an important consideration for minorities and immigrants) rather than in the sterile, rigid surroundings of a charitable day nursery.

At the end of the nineteenth century, then, American child care had come to consist of a range of formal and informal provisions that were generally associated with the poor, minorities, and immigrants and were stigmatized as charitable and custodial. This pattern of practices and institutions provided a weak foundation for building twentieth-century social services. As women's reform efforts picked up steam during the Progressive Era, however, child care became a target for reform and modernization. To draw attention to the need for child care and to demonstrate "approved methods of rearing children from infancy on" (quoted in Michel 1999, 51), a group of prominent New York philanthropists led by Josephine Jewell Dodge set up a Model Day Nursery in the Children's Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago and then went on to found the National Federation of Day Nurseries (NFDN), the first nationwide organization devoted to this issue, in 1898.

The philosophy of the NFDN was somewhat self-contradictory. Bent upon bringing day nurseries up to date by incorporating the methods of the emerging fields of social work and early childhood education, its leaders nevertheless clung to nineteenth-century attitudes toward maternal employment; that is, they continued to regard day care as an emergency stopgap, as not part of normal family life. In keeping with this philosophy, nurseries subjected applicants to strict scrutiny and expelled children once their families were no longer in dire need, regardless of the educational benefits they might be enjoying. As a result of such practices, day nurseries came to be seen as backward and were pushed to the margins of progressive social services.

In the meantime, reformers began to formulate another solution to the dilemma of poor mothers compelled to work outside the home: mothers' or widows' pensions. In the view of prominent Progressives such as Jane Addams, day nurseries only added to such women's difficulties by encouraging them to take arduous, low-paid jobs while their children suffered from inadequate attention and care. Thus she and her Hull House colleagues, including Julia Lathrop, who would go on to become the first chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau when it was founded in 1912, called for a policy to support mothers so they could stay at home with their children. Unlike child care, the idea of mothers' pensions quickly gained popular support because it did nothing to challenge conventional gender roles. Indeed, some reformers argued that mothers, like soldiers, were performing a "service to the nation" and therefore deserved public support when they lacked a male breadwinner. Pensions "spread like wildfire" (Skocpol 1992, 424) as several large national organizations, including the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Congress of Mothers, mounted a highly successful state-by-state legislative campaign for state-funded mothers' pensions. By 1930, nearly every state in the union had passed some form of mothers' or widows' pension law, making this the policy of choice for addressing the needs of low-income mothers and pushing child care further into the shadows of private charity.

Despite the rhetoric, however, mothers' pensions could not fully address the problems of poor and low-income mothers, and many women had no alternative but to go out to work. In most states, funding for pensions was inadequate, and many mothers found themselves ineligible because of highly restrictive criteria or stringent, biased administrative practices. African American women in particular were frequently denied benefits, in the North as well as the South, on the grounds that they, unlike white women, were accustomed to working for wages and thus should not be encouraged to stay at home to rear their children. Because pension coverage was sporadic and scattered, maternal employment not only persisted but increased, adding to the demand for child care. Philanthropists were hard put to meet this growing need using private funding alone. With mothers' pensions monopolizing the social policy agenda, however, they had no prospect of winning public funding for day nurseries.

This pattern continued into the 1920s, as the U.S. Children's Bureau (CB) conducted a series of studies of maternal and child labor in agriculture and industry across the country. Although investigators found many instances of injuries, illnesses, and even fatalities resulting from situations in which infants and toddlers were either left alone or brought into hazardous workplaces, the CB refused to advocate for federal support for child care; instead, it worked to strengthen mothers' pensions so that more mothers could stay at home. CB officials were influenced, in part, by the thinking of experts such as the physician Douglas Thom, an advocate of child guidance who argued that "worn and wearied" wage-earning mothers who had no time for their children's welfare stifled their development (quoted in Michel 1999, 110). At the same time, the reputation of day nurseries continued to slide as efforts to upgrade their educational component flagged due to lack of funds, and nursery schools, the darlings of Progressive-Era early childhood educators, began to capture the middle-class imagination.

The Depression and then World War II had a mixed impact on the fortunes of child care. On the eve of the Great Depression, fewer than 300 nursery schools were in operation, compared to 800 day nurseries, but as unemployment rose, day nursery enrollments fell sharply and charitable donations also declined, forcing 200 day nurseries to close down between 1931 and 1940. Meanwhile, at the urging of prominent early childhood educators, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a key New Deal agency, established a program of Emergency Nursery Schools (ENS). Primarily intended to offer employment opportunities to unemployed teachers, these schools were also seen as a means of compensating for the "physical and mental handicaps" (quoted in Michel 1999, 120) caused by the economic downturn. Nearly 3,000 schools, enrolling more than 64,000 children, were started between 1933 and 1934; over the next year, these were consolidated into 1,900 schools with a capacity for approximately 75,000 students (cited in Michel 1999, 119). The program covered forty-three states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Unlike the earlier nursery schools, which were largely private, charged fees, and served a middle-class clientele, these free, government-sponsored schools were open to children of all classes.

Designed as schools rather than as child care facilities, the ENS were only open for part of the day, and their enrollments were supposedly restricted to the children of the unemployed. They did, however, become a form of de facto child care for parents employed on various WPA work-relief projects. Unlike that of the day nurseries, the educational component of the ENS was well developed because of early childhood educators' strong interest in the program. Organizations such as the National Association for Nursery Education, which was eager to promulgate the ideas of progressive pedagogy, even sent in their own staff members to supervise teacher training and to oversee curricula. The educators were frustrated, however, by inadequate facilities and equipment and by difficulties in convincing teachers with conventional classroom experience to adopt a less-structured approach to working with young children. By the late 1930s, the ENS also began to suffer from high staff turnover as teachers left to take up better-paying jobs in defense plants. Between 1936 and 1942, nearly 1,000 schools were forced to close down.

Although the approach of World War II reduced the unemployment crisis in the United States, it created a social crisis as millions of women, including many mothers, sought employment in war-related industries. Despite a critical labor shortage, the federal government was at first reluctant to recruit mothers of small children, claiming that "mothers who remain at home are performing an essential patriotic service" (quoted in Michel 1999, 131). Gaining support from social workers, who opposed maternal employment on psychological grounds, government officials dallied in responding to the unprecedented need for child care. In 1941 Congress passed the Lanham Act, which was intended to create community facilities in "war-impact areas," but it was not until 1943 that this was interpreted as authorizing support for child care. In the meantime, Congress allocated $6 million to convert the remaining ENS into child care facilities. The organization of new services bogged down in interagency competition at the federal level and in the considerable red tape involved when local communities applied for federal funding. According to the government's own guidelines, one child care slot was required for every ten female defense workers; however, when the female labor force peaked at 19 million in 1944, only 3,000 child care centers were operating, with a capacity for 130,000 children—far short of the 2 million places that were theoretically needed.

Public opinion was slow to accept the dual ideas of maternal employment and child care. The popular media frequently reported on the spread of "latchkey children" and on instances of sleeping children found locked in cars in company parking lots while their mothers worked the night shift. Such stories served to castigate "selfish" wage-earning mothers rather than to point up the need for child care. At the same time, children's experts warned parents that children in group care might suffer the effects of "maternal deprivation" and urged them to maintain tranquil home environments to protect their children from the war's upheaval. What child care there was did little to dispel public concerns. Hastily organized and often poorly staffed, most centers fell far short of the high standards early childhood educators had sought to establish for the ENS. One exception was the Child Service Centers set up by the Kaiser Company at its shipyards in Portland, Oregon. Architect-designed and scaled to children's needs, they offered care twenty-four hours a day (to accommodate night-shift workers), a highly trained staff, a curriculum planned by leading early childhood experts, and even a cooked-food service for weary parents picking up their children after an arduous shift.

Despite its inadequacies, federally sponsored New Deal and wartime child care marked an important step in American social provision. Congress, however, was wary of creating permanent services and repeatedly emphasized that public support would be provided "for the duration only." Soon after V-J Day, funding for the Lanham Act was cut off, forcing most of the child care centers to shut down within a year or two. But the need for child care persisted, as maternal employment, after an initial dip due to postwar layoffs, actually began to rise. Across the country, national organizations like the Child Welfare League of America, along with numerous local groups, demonstrated and lobbied for continuing public support. These groups failed to persuade Congress to pass the 1946 Maternal and Child Welfare Act, which would have continued federal funding for child care, but they did win public child care provisions in New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., and in California. During the Korean War, Congress approved a public child care program but then refused to appropriate funds for it. Finally, in 1954, Congress found an approach to child care it could live with: the child care tax deduction. This permitted low- to moderate-income families (couples could earn up to $4,500 per year) to deduct up to $600 for child care from their income taxes, provided the services were needed "to permit the taxpayer to hold gainful employment."

The tax deduction offered some financial relief to certain groups of parents, but reformers were not satisfied, for such a measure failed to address basic issues such as the supply, distribution, affordability, and quality of child care. In 1958, building on the experience they had gained in lobbying for postwar provisions, activists formed a national organization devoted exclusively to child care, the Inter-City Committee for Day Care of Children (ICC, later to become the National Committee on the Day Care of Children). The organization was led by Elinor Guggenheimer, a longtime New York City child care activist; Sadie Ginsberg, a leader of the Child Study Association of America; Cornelia Goldsmith, a New York City official who had helped establish a licensing system for child care in that city; and Winifred Moore, a child care specialist who had worked in both government and the private sector. Unlike its predecessor, the National Federation of Day Nurseries (which had been absorbed by the Child Welfare League of America in 1942), the ICC believed that private charity could not provide adequate child care on its own; instead, the new organization sought to work closely with government agencies like the U.S. Children's Bureau and the U.S. Women's Bureau (WB) to gain federal support.

The ICC experimented with a number of different rationales for child care, generally preferring to avoid references to maternal employment in favor of stressing the need to "safeguard children's welfare." In 1958 and 1959, the ICC helped mobilize grassroots support for several child care bills introduced into Congress by Senator Jacob Javits (R-New York), but to no avail. The ICC did succeed in convincing the CB and WB to cosponsor a National Conference on the Day Care of Children in Washington, D.C., in November 1960. At that conference, several government officials pointed to the growing demand for labor and to what now appeared to be an irreversible trend toward maternal employment, but many attendees continued to express ambivalence about placing young children in group care. Guggenheimer, however, noted that mothers would work "whether good care is available or not. It is the child," she emphasized, "that suffers when the care is poor" (quoted in Michel 1999, 232). Guggenheimer did not call directly for government support for child care, but she made it clear that private and voluntary agencies could no longer shoulder the burden. The CB and WB, under the direction of chiefs appointed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, were reluctant to take the lead on this issue, but the president-elect, John F. Kennedy, in a message to the conference, expressed his awareness of the problem, stating, "I believe we must take further steps to encourage day care programs that will protect our children and provide them with a basis for a full life in later years" (quoted in Michel 1999, 235).

Kennedy's message, along with subsequent statements, implied that his administration sought a broad-based approach to child care. In a widely circulated report, the President's Commission on the Status of Women acknowledged that maternal employment was becoming the norm and pointed out that child care could not only help women who decided to work outside the home but also serve as a developmental boon to children and advance social and racial integration. But the Kennedy administration could not muster sufficient political support to push through a universal child care policy. Instead, in two welfare reform bills, passed in 1962 and 1965, Congress linked federal support for child care to policies designed to encourage poor and low-income women to enter training programs or take employment outside the home. The goal was to reduce the number of Americans receiving "welfare" (Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC) and prevent women from becoming recipients in the first place.

From 1969 to 1971, a coalition of feminists, labor leaders, civil rights leaders, and early childhood advocates worked with Congress to legislate universal child care policy, but their efforts failed when President Richard M. Nixon vetoed the Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971. As a result, for the next three decades, direct federal support for child care was limited to policies targeting low-income families. At the same time, however, the federal government offered several types of indirect support to middle- and upper-class families in the form of tax incentives for employer-sponsored child care and several ways of using child care costs to reduce personal income taxes. In the 1980s, under the Reagan administration, the distribution of federal child care funding shifted, as expenditures for low-income families were dramatically reduced while those benefiting middle- and high-income families nearly doubled. Such measures stimulated the growth of voluntary and for-profit child care, much of which was beyond the reach of low-income families. These families received some help from the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), passed in 1990, which allocated $825 million to individual states.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 replaced AFDC with time-limited public assistance coupled with stringent employment mandates. Acknowledging the need for expanded child care to support this welfare-to-work plan, Congress combined CCDBG, along with several smaller programs, into a single block grant—the Child Care and Development Fund. Although more public funds for child care were available than ever before, problems of supply and quality continue to limit access to child care for welfare recipients who are now compelled to take employment, and moderate-income families must cope with ever-rising costs for child care. For all families, the quality of child care is compromised by the high rate of turnover among employees in the field, in itself the result of low pay and poor benefits.

Because of its long history and current structure, the American child care system is divided along class lines, making it difficult for parents to unite and lobby for improved services and increased public funding for child care for all children. When it comes to public provisions for children and families, the United States compares poorly with other advanced industrial nations such as France, Sweden, and Denmark, which not only offer free or subsidized care to children over three but also provide paid maternity or parental leaves. Unlike the United States, these countries use child care not as a lever in a harsh mandatory employment policy toward low-income mothers but as a means of helping parents of all classes reconcile the demands of work and family life.

Sonya Michel

See also: Child-Saving; Foster Care; Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; Orphanages; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Child Labor

Child labor generally means wage work done by children and adolescents, which is viewed as harmful to their growth and overall development. Children had always worked in the United States, but in the mid-nineteenth century, the term "child labor" took on a negative connotation. Prior to the Civil War, most American children labored on family farms or as slaves. A smaller group, like Benjamin Franklin, worked

"Child-Labor in Southern Cotton Mills," Irene M. Ashby, 1901

Come with me to an Alabama town, where there is a large cheerful-looking factory. Walking up the long, orderly building, deafened by the racket, yet fascinated by the ingenious machinery, you become suddenly aware of a little gray shadow flitting restlessly up and down the aisles—a small girl, and with bare feet and pale face. She has a worn and anxious aspect, as if a weight of care and responsibility rested already on her baby shoulders. She either does not look at you at all or she turns her eyes but for a moment, unchildlike in their lack of interest, looking back immediately to the spinning frame. A thread breaks first at one end of the long frame, then at the other. The tiny fingers repair the damage at the first place and she walks listlessly to the other. Something goes wrong above, and the child pushes forward a box to stand on that she may reach it. With a great shock it dawns on you that this child is working. . . .

I was prepared to find child-labor [in Alabama], for wherever easily manipulated machinery takes the place of human muscles the child is inevitably drawn into the labor market, unless there are laws to protect it. But one could hardly be prepared to find in America today white children, six and seven years of age, working for twelve hours a day—aroused before daybreak and toiling till long after sundown in winter, with only half an hour for rest and refreshment. . . . Some [mills] run the machinery at night, and little children are called on to endure the strain of all-night work—and are sometimes kept awake by the vigilant superintendent with cold water dashed into their faces.

Source: Irene M. Ashby, "Child-Labor in Southern Cotton Mills," *World's Work* 2 (October 1901): 1290–1295. Reprinted in *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths and Other Documents of Social Reform in the Progressive Era South*, ed. William A. Link (New York and Boston: Bedford Books, 1996), 87–88.

as unpaid apprentices in artisan shops. Such work was often difficult and brutal, as Franklin attested in his autobiography, but the intimacy of working for family and friends tempered criticism of the practice.

The Industrial Revolution marked a shift away from children's traditional work roles. In 1790, Samuel Slater of Rhode Island hired nine children, aged seven through twelve, to work in a large room filled with spinning wheels. George Washington's treasury secretary, Alexander Hamilton, welcomed such efforts as a means of easing what seemed to be a growing problem of poverty among widows and fatherless children. The standard practice of paying children less than half the wage given to adult men, along with a perception that young workers were more docile, made child labor popular with employers. In addition, 50 percent of the U.S. population in the decade prior to the Civil War was age seventeen or younger. Consequently, wage-earning children became a growing part of the nation's workforce as the country moved to a more industrial and urban-based economy.

The growth in wage labor among children contrasted sharply with the development of a new middle-class ideal depicting childhood as a distinct period of life separate from adult responsibilities. Urban, middle-class couples had fewer children and sent them to school longer. The shift from farm to factory lessened families' dependence on household and agricultural production. Children spent more time in school as education beyond the elementary grades became an important step to white-collar employment.

Despite the growing acceptance of the middle-class definition of childhood, a rising proportion of children in working-class families

Little spinner in Mollahan Cotton Mills, Newberry, South Carolina, December 3, 1908. These and other photographs were used to draw public attention to the exploitation of child laborers, as indicated in the original caption: "Many others as small." (Photo by Lewis W. Hine, Library of Congress)

were taking jobs in the nation's factories, mines, and streets. In 1842, Massachusetts and Connecticut passed the nation's first restrictions on child labor, limiting the workday for children under twelve to ten hours a day, six days a week. In 1884, New York outlawed contract labor of young people living in reform schools. Illinois passed a law in 1893 prohibiting the employment of children under fourteen for more than eight hours a day or at night. By 1889, New York and Colorado had prohibited industrial employment for anyone under fourteen. But all such laws were poorly enforced and failed to cover many working children. Those doing piecework at home, laboring in sharecropping fields, or working as migrant agricultural workers were not counted as child laborers and were not covered by legal protections.

Even with the limitations in existing data, it is clear that the employment of children for wages increased as the nation industrialized. According to the 1870 census, about one in every eight children in America worked for wages. The 1900 count showed that the ratio was one in every six, and the proportion continued to grow through 1910. Reformers pointed to the trends as a threat to the nation's future. They argued that children who were spending so much time on the job were neglecting school, which contributed to high rates of morbidity, mortality, and serious injury and made the youngsters more likely to become dependent adults unable to care for themselves or their families.

In 1907, reformers organized the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) in order to lobby for restrictions on child labor. From 1908 to 1921, the NCLC paid Lewis Hine to take photographs of child laborers that would pull at the nation's heartstrings and create public sympathy for reform legislation. President William Howard Taft signed an act establishing the U.S. Children's Bureau on April 9, 1912. Over the next three decades, the NCLC worked closely with the U.S. Children's Bureau to promote child labor reforms at both the state and federal levels.

The effort faced strong opposition from manufacturers and newspaper editors. In addition, many working-class parents saw little advantage to keeping their children in school instead of sending them to work. Despite such resistance, in 1916 Congress passed the Keating-Owen Act. Just before the law was to go into effect, the U.S. Supreme Court praised the law's intent but declared its method unconstitutional (*Hammer v. Dagenhart,* 1918). In 1924, Congress passed a constitutional amendment outlawing child labor, but by 1932 only six states had voted for ratification of the measure and twenty-four had rejected it.

From 1910 to 1930, state laws making school attendance compulsory contributed to a decline in the percentage of wage-earning children despite the failed effort to win a constitutional amendment. New technologies also made the use of child labor less economical. Although the onset of the Great Depression temporarily reversed this trend, child welfare advocates and labor unions pressured Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration to devise child labor regulations in the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). The NIRA ended, however, when the U.S. Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional on May 27, 1935. Sensing a new attitude in the Supreme Court by the late 1930s, advocates included child labor regulations in the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The new law was very similar to the 1916 Keating-Owen Act, prohibiting the employment of those under fourteen and placing restrictions on workers fourteen through seventeen. In its 1941 decision in *United States v. Darby,* the Supreme Court reversed its earlier *Hammer v. Dagenhart* ruling against child labor regulation as well as its holdings against state and federal regulation of labor standards generally. Reformers understood, however, that even the 1938 FLSA did not protect all children, especially those working in agriculture. Nevertheless, child labor has declined in the United States since its passage. The legal employment of those under fourteen has been eliminated, but older adolescents continue to work for wages, although most do so while attending school. Despite the decline in child labor, more U.S. teens work for wages than in other industrialized nations.

There is no single explanation for the decline in most types of exploitative child labor. A growing emphasis on education, developing attitudes about the inappropriateness of wage labor among children, and smaller families interacted with the growth of technology and social changes to lessen child labor. Poverty is a continuing cause of children's employment throughout the world. As in the past, children from poor minority or immigrant families or those living in agricultural areas remain the most likely to work for wages.

Kriste Lindenmeyer

See also: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Progressive Era and 1920s

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Child Support

Child support is the financial contribution a noncustodial parent is required by law to make for a child's upkeep, once a child support order has been secured by the custodial parent. Federal policy is most interested in child support as an income source for poor, single-mother families.

The United States is unique among industrialized democracies in its emphasis on private solutions for children's poverty. Child support collection, which ties children's economic welfare to income from noncustodial parents, is a major component of the U.S. social welfare system. But child support is generally an inadequate solution to child poverty because when single-parent families are poor, the other parent usually is also poor, and child support is difficult to collect and distribute fairly. In addition, the reliance on child support as a solution to poverty poses significant problems for families. For example, in those instances where the noncustodial parent is abusive or where the noncustodial parent is generous with time and affection but cannot afford to give money, child support policy robs custodial parents of the right to make appropriate decisions for their families.

History of Child Support and Poverty Programs

American child support laws came into existence largely to protect against indigence for children whose fathers divorced or abandoned their mothers. Divorce was relatively rare in colonial America, but the divorce rate increased steadily during the nineteenth century. As both divorce and abandonment increased, courts were willing to impose civil child support obligations on the absent father. The concern about the rising divorce rate coincided with several social developments, including the development of an ideal of childhood in which young children were specially cared for and educated. At the same time, the traditional English rule of favoring fathers in child custody contests gave way to a preference for maternal custody for the child. Divorced or abandoned mothers therefore needed support in order to care for their children, who would take longer to become economically independent.

In the first part of the twentieth century, both state support and child support were governed by state and local law. Family law in each state established a child support claim for custodial parents after divorce. Many states provided "mothers' pensions" for poor single mothers, but the target recipients of these programs were widows. Private charities also provided assistance to mothers considered worthy of such assistance, again usually widows. The possibility that there might be a father who could provide support was not an issue for such charities.

The Great Depression changed the way income assistance was provided for poor single mothers with children. Private charities and local relief programs could not meet the overwhelming needs caused by the Depression. The New Deal's Aid to Dependent Children program (ADC) made federal money available to states that maintained cash-assistance programs for single mothers and their children. Although states imposed many conditions on mothers in exchange for this assistance, state programs did not require mothers to secure paternal child support as a condition of aid. By and large, child support remained something middle-class or wealthy families might receive as a consequence of divorce.

The first link between ADC and child support came in 1950 with the enactment of a provision requiring state welfare agencies to notify local law enforcement agencies whenever aid was provided to a child who had been abandoned by a parent (Section 402[a][11] of the Social Security Act as enacted by Section 321 of Public Law 81–734 [1950]). Referred to as NOLEO (an acronym for "Notify law enforcement officials"), the requirement left it up to the states to follow through on attempts to locate an absent parent or to collect assistance from him. In 1965, Congress allowed states attempting to locate a parent who owed child support to an AFDC child to have access to information from the federal government on that parent's location and employment status. And in 1967, Congress allowed states to obtain from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) the address of an absent parent who owed child support. In addition, states were required to designate an organizational unit to oversee the establishment of paternity and the collection of child support and to cooperate with law enforcement officials in other states (Public Law 90–248).

Despite these requirements, states were erratic in their attempts to collect child support, with some states doing nothing and few making serious efforts. Some states required mothers receiving aid to institute support actions or otherwise cooperate in finding the absent parent. However, under the legal doctrines established in other cases, the fact that there was no federal requirement of cooperation with child support enforcement permitted several courts to rule that state-level cooperation requirements amounted to additional conditions of eligibility not provided for in federal law (*Lascaris v. Shirley,* 420 U.S. 730, 95 S. Ct. 1190, 43 L. Ed. 2d 583 [1975] [per curiam], *aff'g Shirley v. Lavine,* 365 F. Supp. 818 [S.D.N.Y.1973] [three-judge court]).

Linking Child Support and Income Support: Child Support Enforcement Act of 1975 and Beyond

In 1975, Congress passed a massive statutory scheme designed to require mothers who needed public assistance to cooperate in efforts to enforce child support and to require states to enforce child support obligations from absent parents. The Child Support Enforcement Act added to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act an entire section designed to improve collection of child support from absent fathers (Public Law 93–647 [1975], the Social Security Amendments of 1974 creating Part D of Title IV of the Social Security Act, Sections 402[a][25], [26]; Sections 451 *et. seq.*).

The impetus for this congressional action was a fear that federal welfare expenditures were growing too rapidly and that one of the causes of that growth was parents' failure to take primary responsibility for the financial needs of their children. Dissatisfied with state child support enforcement efforts, Congress believed both that children and custodial parents needed help in securing child support and that noncustodial parents should reimburse the government for welfare expenses incurred for children they did not adequately support. Although welfare families were the focus of federal child support enforcement legislation, government assistance in collecting child support proved widely popular, leading Congress to include families not receiving welfare within the scope of the newly enacted Child Support Enforcement Act.

The new Title IV-D imposed a variety of requirements on both the states and recipients. Added were new eligibility requirements mandating that applicants or recipients assign their rights to support to the state and cooperate with the state in establishing paternity and securing support. The act also authorized the federal government to oversee the child support program in the states, to monitor and require reports, and to refer cases for wage garnishment to the IRS. States were required to establish paternity for AFDC recipients and for others who applied for services, to collect child support payments directly and distribute them as specifically directed by statute, to establish a parent locator service, and to cooperate with other states in locating absent parents and securing support. Federal employees who owed child support were subject to wage garnishment.

Title IV-D was a revolutionary effort by the federal government to oversee child support collection. Support for the effort was widespread in Congress, and the law was subsequently expanded and toughened. In 1977, Title IV-D was amended to expand wage garnishment provisions and to include medical support. In 1980, Congress authorized increased federal financial participation in the program in the form of a 90 percent match for child support enforcement–related expenses for welfare families and an authorized match for expenditures on nonwelfare families. In addition, services were expanded for non-AFDC families. In 1984, spousal support was brought within the domain of Title IV-D, and Congress significantly toughened requirements for the states, now requiring such improved enforcement mechanisms as mandatory income withholding, expedited processes, state income tax interceptions, and the bringing of paternity actions up to a child's eighteenth birthday. In addition, improved interstate procedures were required, and the statute made it clear that all services must be available to both non-AFDC and AFDC families. In 1988, the Family Support Act was passed, emphasizing parents' responsibility for their children. Child support enforcement was again expanded, requiring compliance with child support guidelines, setting numerical goals for the establishment of paternity, requiring genetic testing in contested cases, and requiring immediate wage withholding in almost all cases. Notification requirements were also added for families for whom the IV-D system was collecting support.

In 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act repealed AFDC and in its place established the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF replaced the AFDC entitlement program with a block grant to the states. In addition to repealing the federal entitlement to assistance and giving the states broader discretion over program design, TANF placed a time limit on receipt of assistance and imposed strict work requirements on all recipients. Although Congress granted states greater flexibility in administering many aspects of welfare, it also imposed strong federal requirements with respect to child support enforcement. The 1996 welfare law increased federal oversight over child support enforcement and toughened punishments for parents who default. In addition, the 1996 law required states to impose a minimum 25 percent reduction of benefits on TANF families whose mothers failed to cooperate with establishing paternity or collecting child support.

The increase in the federal government's role in child support enforcement was accompanied by increased blaming of absent parents for the problems of poverty and increased calls to punish parents who failed to pay child support. In 1998, Congress enacted the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act, which made it a federal felony, subject to two years in prison, to cross state lines with the intent of evading a child support obligation. In addition, the statute made it a crime to willfully fail to support a child residing in a different state.

Child Support Enforcement: Help for Some Families

Child support enforcement can provide additional income for some families. The attempt to obtain support from absent parents can be effective for families whose absent parent has significant earnings or resources. In that case, children will be far better off with financial help from their father than they would be relying on the state to supply inadequate welfare benefits. Mothers who need public assistance and know that the father could contribute to the support of his children are very interested in securing that support, and their major complaint about the child support enforcement system is that it is not effective enough. The importance of child support to many families is indicated by the lawsuits brought to enforce Title IV-D requirements when custodial parents feel their state is not doing enough to collect support (see *Blessing v. Freestone*, 520 U.S. 329 [1997]). Although there are questions as to whether these suits can be maintained in federal court, the fact that they continue to be brought is an indication of how desperate many families are to receive help in obtaining child support from the absent parent.

It should be noted that child support collections help only those families that do not receive welfare. A welfare recipient for whom child support is collected does not receive any part of it if the child support obligation is less than the welfare grant—unless the state chooses to pass through the child support collections or some part of them to the recipient. Thirty-one states keep all child support collected on behalf of welfare recipients as a kind of reimbursement for welfare. Of the remaining states, all but two pass through no more than fifty dollars to the welfare family.

Although welfare and child support are inextricably linked, the vast majority of collections made by the Title IV-D program are actually on behalf of non-AFDC families. In 1998, of $14,347,000 in child support collected, $11,697,800, or 81.5 percent, was for non-AFDC families (U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means 2000, 538–539). This raises the question of how effective child support enforcement has been in helping the poorest families. On the other hand, for those families that do receive it, child support can be an important income supplement, even serving to keep those families above poverty. For children in all divorced families, child support is between 26 and 29 percent of the family income. For children in poor families not receiving public assistance, child support constitutes 36 percent of income (Roberts 2002, 2). For some families, therefore, child support can make an important difference.

Child Support Enforcement: Harm for Some Families

On the other hand, for some families, the child support enforcement system can cause serious harm. First, the requirement that custodial parents cooperate with child support enforcement is difficult for a woman who may desperately need public aid but who may not be able to identify the father of her child, may not be able to locate him, may not have enough information to satisfy welfare workers in charge of pursuing child support, or may know he cannot pay and not want to risk sending him to jail. Some states have imposed very specific requests for information on applicants for aid, and if applicants cannot provide the information, their applications are denied or the family is otherwise penalized or denied benefits. These policies punish families where the absent parent has disappeared or otherwise abandoned the family. They also punish children born as the result of casual liaisons. In Massachusetts, for example, mothers and children were denied aid if they could not provide the Department of Transitional Aid with the name of the absent father and at least two specified pieces of information about him. In cases where the father had left town without giving the mother any information, these pieces of information were not available, and aid was denied. A lawsuit filed in 1996 required Massachusetts to allow mothers to swear under oath that they had no further information, but until then, many families with no contact with an absent father were denied needed aid. Cases such as this continue to occur in other states, resulting in denials of aid to needy families where custodial parents are doing all they can to cooperate.

For women in violent relationships, cooperation with child support enforcement requirements can create serious danger for themselves and their children. As many as 60 percent of women receiving welfare have been victims of domestic violence as adults (compared to 22 percent of women in the general population), and as many as 30 percent reported abuse within the previous year (Tolman and Raphael 2000, 660). Although the child support law requires states to include a “good cause” exception that excuses cooperation with child support if it is likely to result in harm to the mother or child, the exception is rarely used. In fact, studies of abused and battered women indicate that they are ashamed of having been battered and that they fear disclosing any details of the abuse—fearing both that the abuser will find out and that sharing information with authorities will result in loss of their children to child protective services. In addition, custodial parents asked to cooperate with child support enforcement are sometimes not told they have a right not to cooperate if they can show good cause, and those who do claim good cause sometimes cannot prove it. Several studies have indicated that in relationships where there is domestic violence, child support enforcement activities can trigger further violence. The prevalence of violence in the lives of poor families who need income support and the inadequacy of current protections should lead policymakers to further modify child support cooperation requirements. Applicants' statements that they are afraid to pursue child support should be accepted without the need for further verification, and penalties should never be imposed when fear is a factor in failure to cooperate.

In addition to the problems that cooperation requirements bring for some custodial parents, for many poor families the entire premise of child support collection is flawed. Although most noncustodial fathers are better off than their children, a significant minority are just as poor themselves. The Urban Institute National Survey of America's Families reports that 37 percent of nonresident fathers of poor children are also poor. If the goal of social welfare policy is to give some baseline measure of economic security to poor families with children, it is clear that there are many families for whom this cannot happen through child support. Child support cannot be a substitute for a more comprehensive program of ensuring basic income support for poor families with children.

Sherry Leiwant

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Domestic Violence; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Child Welfare

The term "child welfare" refers to the arrangements a society makes for children whose parents cannot or will not take proper care of them. The public child welfare system in the United States has historically dealt with the needs of poor children. The class structure of child welfare can be traced to the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, which encouraged state intervention in indigent families for social ends while protecting the authority of wealthy parents over their children. Public assistance to indigent families and child welfare services for neglected children are related programs addressing family poverty. Public aid was historically disparaged, and destitute children were indentured and committed to almshouses during the eighteenth century and placed in orphanages by child-savers during the nineteenth century. Progressive reformers, who saw child poverty as a social problem, successfully campaigned for aid for indigent mothers to prevent the need to place their children in orphanages and asylums. Aid to Dependent Children, established in 1935 as part of the New Deal, was also designed to avoid separating poor children from their mothers. The function of child welfare was transformed in subsequent decades to child protection and focused on investigating charges of child maltreatment, rehabilitating guilty parents, and placing their children in foster care.

There is a high and well-established correlation between poverty and cases of child abuse and neglect. Researchers have posited a number of explanations for this association, including the extreme stress caused by economic hardship, the heightened exposure of poor families to government surveillance, and a definition of neglect that includes inadequate provision of food, clothing, shelter, and medical care to children. The number of families in the child welfare system is a function of the U.S. child poverty rate, which, despite its recent decline, is still exceptionally high by international standards. Before World War II, Black children were largely excluded from public and private child welfare services. Destitute or troubled Black children were likely to be labeled "delinquent" and sent to prison. The proportion of nonwhite children in the public child welfare caseloads steadily increased after 1945, however. In 2000, almost half of all children in foster care nationwide were Black.

The federal government abandoned the progressive understanding of child maltreatment as a social problem in the 1970s. In an attempt to secure bipartisan support for government spending on poor children, liberals dissociated

Lewis Hines Exhibit panel. (Library of Congress)

efforts to combat child abuse from unpopular poverty programs. Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974, which considered child maltreatment to be a symptom of parents' mental depravity instead of a symptom of poverty and other societal inequities. The focus of state child welfare agencies shifted from child well-being to child protection. Since then, the number of children receiving child welfare services has declined dramatically because state and federal governments have spent more money on removing children from their families than on providing services to children living at home.

The chief service provided by the public child welfare system is foster care. The foster care population—as well as the proportion of the federal budget devoted to out-of-home care—skyrocketed between 1980 and 2000. The number of children in foster care had climbed to 568,000 by 1999 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2000, 1). One explanation for the shift in services is that contemporary families have more-serious problems, such as HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and homelessness, forcing agencies to direct a larger portion of their resources to foster care. The shift may also be linked to the philosophy of child protection that addresses family problems only after children have already experienced harm.

Federal and state child welfare policies have reflected both family preservationist and child-saving philosophies. In the late 1970s, hearings revealed that federal reimbursement policy created incentives for state child welfare agencies to place children in foster care instead of providing services to intact families. Congress attempted to correct this bias by passing the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, which requires state agencies to make "reasonable efforts" to prevent the need for out-of-home placement and to safely return children in foster care to their parents. Because of the child protection philosophy, the passage of laws that mandate reporting of child abuse, and insufficient funding of family preservation programs, however, the foster care population increased after passage of the 1980 law. The federal child welfare law was amended in 1997 by the Adoption and Safe Families Act in response to criticism that caseworkers were interpreting the "reasonable efforts" mandate to keep maltreated children in dangerous homes and that too few children in foster care were being adopted. The new law directs state authorities to make the health and safety of children in foster care their "paramount concern," establishes swifter timetables for terminating biological parents' rights, and provides financial incentives to states to increase the number of foster children placed in adoptive homes. Although some commentators applaud the emphasis on safety and adoption, others fear that the 1997 law represents an abandonment of efforts to preserve poor families. The passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act on the heels of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act marks the first time in U.S. history that the federal government requires states to protect children's safety but not to provide economic assistance to poor families.

Dorothy E. Roberts

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Child-Saving; Foster Care; Orphanages; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Social Work; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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The Children of Sanchez, *Oscar Lewis*

The Children of Sanchez is best known among historians of poverty as the book in which anthropologist Oscar Lewis first fully articulated his influential theory of the "culture of poverty." Based on ethnographic and life-history research in a *vecinidad*, or "slum tenement," of Mexico

City, the book offers an often-sensationalistic portrait of the day-to-day lives of the Sanchez family, told in the first-person voices of individual family members based on tape-recorded interviews. Although Lewis had begun to develop the "culture of poverty" concept in his 1959 book *Five Families,* it was in the later publication that he elaborated on his earlier observations to present it as a model for understanding poverty in the developing countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa during the post–World War II era. What these developing countries had in common, Lewis argued—and what distinguished his culture of poverty from more-traditional peasant communities—was that they were in the throes of a massive and rapid transition to modern industrial capitalism, leaving a residue of impoverished people at the very margins of economic and social life. Assuming the mantle of their "student and spokesman," Lewis presented theirs as a distinctive way of life, "a design for living which is passed down from generation to generation," characterized not only by the material conditions of poverty and unemployment but, more fatefully, by a deep-seated psychological orientation that—left unaddressed—would render them incapable of adjusting to the demands of modern economic and social life (Lewis 1961, xxiv).

Generated in the context of U.S. efforts to prevent the spread of communism by encouraging capitalism and political democracy in developing nations, Lewis's theory gained greater notoriety in its application to the ghettos and rural "pockets" of concentrated poverty in the United States. Presented in less-scholarly terms in popular books such as Michael Harrington's *Other America* (1962) and Harry Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* (1963), the "culture of poverty" resonated with the notion of poverty as a separate social reality, affecting an isolated minority in a society otherwise characterized by mass prosperity. In reality, as Harrington himself was soon to point out, the experience of poverty was very much part of "mainstream" experience and included substantial numbers of the employed. But what made Lewis's theory controversial among scholars—while adding to its popular appeal—was its designation of what he called psychological "traits" that closely corresponded to widely held stereotypes of social "deviance" among the poor. Based on a combination of observation and deeply flawed psychological tests, Lewis's inventory of psychological traits eventually swelled to a virtual laundry list of behaviors that verged on self-parody, even though Lewis himself was basically sympathetic to the people he wrote about. By the late 1960s, the culture of poverty had been roundly criticized and largely dismissed among scholars and antipoverty activists and was increasingly associated with conservative arguments that whole classes of poor people and poor places were simply beyond social intervention. Nevertheless, and despite the paucity of scholarly evidence supporting it, the basic concept of a socially deviant, psychologically pathological culture continues to exert widespread influence as an explanation for the persistence of poverty and as a "scientific" label for the undeserving poor.

Alice O'Connor

See also: Deserving/Undeserving Poor; *Night Comes to the Cumberlands; The Other America;* Poverty Research; "Underclass"

The economic traits which are most characteristic of the culture of poverty include the constant struggle for survival, unemployment and underemployment, low wages, a miscellany of unskilled occupations, child labor, the absence of savings, a chronic shortage of cash. . . .

Some of the social and psychological characteristics include living in crowded quarters, a lack of privacy, gregariousness, a high incidence of alcoholism, frequent resort to violence in the settlement of quarrels, frequent use of physical violence in the training of children, wife beating, early initiation into sex, free unions of consensual marriages, a relatively high incidence of the abandonment of mothers and *children, a trend toward mother-centered families . . ., a strong predisposition to authoritarianism, and a great emphasis upon family solidarity—an ideal only rarely achieved. Other traits include a strong present time orientation with relatively little ability to defer gratification and plan for the future, a sense of resignation and fatalism based upon the realities of their difficult life situation, . . . and finally, a high tolerance for psychological pathology of all sorts. . . .*

A critical attitude toward some of the values and institutions of the dominant classes, hatred of the police, mistrust of government and those in high position, . . . gives the culture of poverty a counter quality and a potential for being used in political movements aimed against the existing social order. . . .

[T]he material in this book . . . highlights the social, economic, and psychological complexities which have to be faced in any effort to transform and eliminate the culture of poverty from the world. It suggests that basic changes in the attitudes and value systems of the poor must go hand in hand with improvements in the material conditions of living.

Source: Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family* (New York: Random House, 1961), xxvi–xxvii.

Child-Saving

Child-saving—the impulse to mount a variety of reforms in the name of protecting children—has long been recognized as a recurring theme in U.S. social welfare history. However, "child-saving" also has a more specific historical meaning, as the basis of a movement, with roots in the early nineteenth century, to control juvenile crime by establishing special institutions targeting youth considered wayward, delinquent, or criminal.

Rise of the Child-Saving Movement

By the early 1900s, social workers and other reformers had created a new and separate system of justice for youth. Throughout the nineteenth century, special, prisonlike institutions were developed to control the activities of delinquent youth. But it was not until the close of the century that an initiative was taken to rationalize these efforts into a coherent system of juvenile justice, composed of juvenile courts, probation, child guidance clinics, social services, and reformatories. The conventional view of the new juvenile justice system suggests that it was an enlightened effort to alleviate the miseries of urban life and to respond to the needs of poor children. A more critical view suggests that the child-saving movement, as it was called, used benevolent language to disguise a class-based system of punishment.

The child-saving movement was led by wealthy philanthropists who were alarmed by the changes in public life generated by urbanization, industrialization, and the influx of immigrant cultures. Although the child-saving movement, like most reforms of the Progressive Era (1900–1920), drew its most active and visible supporters from middle-class women's groups and from professionals, including social workers, it relied on the political and financial support of ruling elites to implement its visionary plans.

The child-savers created new categories of youthful misbehavior (later known as "status offenses") and sought to extend governmental control, without the safeguards of due process, over a wide range of youthful behavior, including incorrigibility, loitering, disobedience, and disorderly conduct. The child-saving movement minimized the significance of individual rights in the sense that it believed in the maximum use and benign character of governmental intervention. With close links to the prohibitionist movement, the child-savers argued that social progress depended on broad police powers and close supervision of working-class children's daily lives.

Between 1825, when the New York House of Refuge was founded to house juvenile delinquents, and 1899, when the first juvenile court was established in Chicago, the child-saving movement created a separate set of institutions that transformed both the definition and regulation of youth crime. The reformers themselves were convinced that their interventions were "in the best interests of the child," and many immigrant families turned to the child-savers for help in controlling their wayward children. But the new custodial institutions created for youth imposed harsh regimes on their wards: military exercises, severe discipline, and long hours of hard labor.

Moreover, issues of class, race, and gender marked policies of the juvenile justice system. African American youth were placed in segregated reformatories with inferior resources; American Indian youth were forced into boarding schools and stripped of their cultural heritage; campaigns by women's organizations to rescue "wayward girls" meant that young women were disproportionately arrested for running away from home, sexual behavior, and other status offenses; and middle-class delinquents were largely exempt from court referrals and imprisonment. This double standard in the application of juvenile justice policies has permeated public policies regarding the control of delinquency for over 100 years.

Reform of Child-Saving

Between the 1940s and the early 1970s, a new generation of reformers introduced programs in community-based corrections that attempted to correct injustices generated by the child-saving movement. In the 1940s, several states developed separate correctional institutions to deal with young offenders. The model for this development was the California Youth Authority (CYA), which was responsible for supervising the imprisonment of young men and women between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. The focus in the CYA was on the "rehabilitative ideal," which emphasized psychologically oriented programs, such as group therapy and counseling.

In the wake of the civil rights movement and other movements for social change, far-reaching reforms were initiated in education, community development, welfare, public health, and job training. Beginning in the 1960s, the federal government took the initiative in developing a national perspective on juvenile justice, emphasizing prevention and alternatives to incarceration in large institutions. President Lyndon B. Johnson's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (known as the Crime Commission), created in 1965, established the guidelines for this shift in policy and issued a comprehensive assessment of American juvenile justice in 1967. In the mid-1960s, the first federal legislation on juvenile delinquency created such innovative programs as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, the Legal Services Corporation, and Head Start. These programs were later incorporated into President Johnson's War on Poverty.

In 1966, the U.S. Supreme Court required due process rights for juveniles. It found, in the words of Justice Abe Fortas, "that the child receives the worst of both worlds: that he gets neither the protections accorded to adults nor the solicitous care and regenerative treatment postulated for children" (*Kent v. United States*, 383 U.S. 541, 556). In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, in its landmark ruling *In re Gault* (387 U.S. 1), expanded due process rights for juveniles, including the right to counsel and the privilege against self-incrimination.

Demise of Child-Saving

In 1968, a shift to a more punitive, anticrime philosophy was signaled in President Richard M. Nixon's "war on crime" and the passage of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. A nationwide study reported in the early 1970s that, after a long decline in the rate of juvenile incarceration, almost 500,000 juveniles were being processed annually through local jails. Moreover, efforts to reduce the disproportionate imprisonment of youth of color had clearly failed. In 1976, the National Assessment of Juvenile Corrections found that African American youths accounted for 33 percent of the reformatory population in sixteen sample states (Vintner 1976).

In the 1990s, the emphasis on prevention and rehabilitation as public policies for addressing juvenile crime disappeared from public discourse. Since 1992, forty-five states have passed laws making it easier to prosecute juveniles as adults. In addition, more than thirty states have created juvenile boot camps, which emphasize military-style discipline and physical labor, a return to the regime of the nineteenth-century reformatory. Moreover, of twenty-three states that permit the execution of youthful offenders, seven (Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia) have carried out executions since 1976. There have been fourteen such executions in the last twelve years, more than in all other countries combined that permit executions of people who commit capital crimes while under the age of eighteen (Rimer and Bonner 2000, 16).

Anti–child labor poster, "A Child's Creed . . ." Created by Lewis W. Hine. (Library of Congress)

The impact of punitive policies has fallen hardest on children of color. By 1996, African American males accounted for 44 percent of all cases referred from juvenile to criminal courts (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 1999, 130–132). A federal study found that although minority youth constituted about 32 percent of the youth population in the country in 1995, they represented 68 percent of the incarcerated juvenile population (Hsia and Hamparian 1998). By 1997, two-thirds of all incarcerated juveniles were African Americans, Latinos, or American Indians (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 1999, 150, 155, 195). A study by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency found that African American girls had an overall 1 in 188 chance of being incarcerated before their eighteenth birthday, compared to a 1 in 454 chance for Latinas and a 1 in 1,000 chance for white girls (Chesney-Lind and Shelden 1998, 138–139, 158–159).

By the mid-1990s, juvenile court systems in large cities were overwhelmed by huge caseloads and insufficient resources and were under political pressure to emphasize punishment rather than rehabilitation. Chicago now has one of the largest juvenile court systems in the country, with a staff of more than 600 and an annual budget that exceeds $20 million. On any given day, there are between 1,500 and

2,000 cases pending on each judge's docket, which adds up to about 75,000 delinquency, abuse, and neglect cases awaiting disposition. Caseloads in Cook County are twice the national standard, and an average case is dispensed with every twelve minutes. Of the close to 13,000 kids who come through Chicago's detention center each year, the overwhelming majority are poor, African American (80 percent) or Latino (15 percent), and male (90 percent). In the city where the child-saving movement originated, law and order now prevails (Ayers 1997).

Anthony M. Platt

See also: Juvenile Delinquency; Progressive Era and 1920s

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Christian Fundamentalism

A broad category encompassing three different social formations within Protestantism, Christian fundamentalism arose between the late 1800s and the early 1990s. Each of the formations—antimodern fundamentalism, separatist fundamentalism, and the New Christian Right—invoked the claim that the Bible is free of errors in order to authorize particular statements about how society ought to be structured and how one ought to live. Despite that common tactic, the statements advanced by each formation and the corresponding impacts on social welfare policies have differed radically.

Antimodern fundamentalism emerged as a theological position in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. Its leading figures argued for governmental programs to protect citizens from the unjust effects of Social Darwinism and laissez-faire economics. In the 1930s, antimodern fundamentalism retreated from secular public affairs and took on a separatist character. In addition, these fundamentalist leaders launched critiques of communism and the welfare state. In 1942, the National Association of Evangelicals was formed to distinguish evangelical Christians from separatist fundamentalists. The dispute over separatism marks an important distinction between the self-identified fundamentalists and the New Christian Right, which liberal Protestants, academics, and journalists generically characterize as "fundamentalist." New Christian Right fundamentalism criticizes the welfare state, yet its contemporary proponents advocate a "compassionate conservatism" that involves governmental action and "charitable choice," which engages churches and other faith-based groups in government programs.

The first fundamentalist social formation coagulated around theological antimodernist projects among different Protestant denominations in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. "Modernists" suggested that Christian theology must address methods of biblical criticism and Darwinian theories of evolution. The Niagara Bible Conference of 1883, which marked the beginning of the antimodern fundamentalist formation, rejected any appeal to or incorporation of biblical criticism methodologies. Organized by a variety of Baptist and Presbyterian denominations, the conference affirmed five doctrinal points: the inerrancy of scripture, the divinity of Jesus, the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and the bodily resurrection and physical return of Jesus.

The loose coalition of institutions, people, and media that made up this first formation included the Moody Bible Institute, established in Chicago in 1899, and the American Bible League, founded in 1902; the scholars representing the dominant perspective at Princeton's Theological Seminary; and the periodicals *Watchword*, *Truth*, and *Our Hope*. Between 1910 and 1915, a California businessman, Lyman Stewart, financed the publication of twelve pamphlets called *The Fundamentals*. The pamphlets reasserted the doctrinal points from the Niagara Bible Conference; attacked biblical criticism, modernism, and the teachings advanced by Catholics, Christian Scientists, and Mormons; and rejected Darwin's theory of evolution. In 1920, Rev. Curtis Lee Laws, editor of the Baptist publication *Watchman-Examiner*, used the term "fundamentalist" to describe organizations and people who affirmed the basic principles outlined in *The Fundamentals*. He made distinctions not only between fundamentalists and liberal Protestants but also between fundamentalists and other Bible-believing Protestants (such as conservatives, premillennialists, landmarkers).

Unlike the New Christian Right fundamentalism of the late twentieth century, antimodern fundamentalists supported governmental programs designed to protect citizens from economic risks. William Jennings Bryan, one of the more famous antimodern fundamentalists, defeated the incumbent president Grover Cleveland to become the party's presidential nominee at the 1896 Democratic National Convention. Although Bryan lost the presidential race, he led the Democrats to push for antitrust prosecutions, farming subsidies, union protections, a federal income tax, and legislation to limit working hours and provide minimum wages. Bryan grounded his political stance on biblical authority and argued against a laissez-faire economy that encouraged Social Darwinism. Unlike modernist advocates of the Social Gospel movement, Bryan challenged strict separation between church and state by stating that Bible classes should be a mandatory part of public education. In 1925, the World's Christian Fundamentals Organization solicited Bryan to prosecute John T. Scopes for teaching evolution in public schools. Although the prosecution won the legal battle, the fundamentalist position encountered much ridicule from mainstream media.

The 1930s mark the beginning of Christian fundamentalism's second formation, which is characterized primarily by separatism from or lack of participation in allegedly secular public affairs. The networking infrastructure of this formation included a variety of Baptist associations, the Dallas Theological Seminary, Bob Jones University, the Westminster Theological Seminary, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, a number of independent Bible churches and schools, the World Council of Bible Believing Churches, and the Christian Missionary Alliance. In 1941, the separatist fundamentalist Carl McIntire helped establish the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC), which opposed ecumenical bodies like the National Council of Churches. During his radio show, *The Twentieth Century Reformation Hour,* he preached against the alleged dangers of communism and critiqued the welfare state.

In 1942, dissenting fundamentalists formed the National Association of Evangelicals to distinguish themselves from separatist fundamentalists. Evangelical bodies such as the Fuller Seminary, Youth for Christ, and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association focused their attention on preaching "the good news" to the larger public. Despite the large and growing numbers of people who invoked the authority and inerrancy of the Bible, only those who maintained a separatist position (for example, J. Frank Norris, Carl McIntire, Billy Hargus, John Rice, Bob Jones Sr., Bob Jones Jr., and Jerry Falwell) continued to call themselves "fundamentalists." The dispute over separatism signals the beginning of a taxonomic shift in which fundamentalism began to lose its appeal as a term of self-characterization. Academic and popular discourses frequently collapsed the distinctions between fundamentalists and evangelicals.

Before World War II, fundamentalist statements about the role of the family revolved primarily around the importance of child rearing and family prayer. After World War II, both fundamentalists and evangelicals focused more attention on "the family" through critiques of divorce, birth control, abortion, and homosexuality. In 1977, Dr. James Dobson founded the organization Focus on the Family as a response to increasing concern for the American family. Despite the growing emphasis on patriarchal authority and hierarchy, evangelicals maintained ambivalent and varied relationships to feminism as well as to lesbian and gay issues. For example, the Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus (EEWC), formed in the early 1970s, endorsed the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, supported inclusive language in Bible translation and Christian publications, affirmed the ordination of women, criticized discriminatory hiring policies in Christian institutions, and supported different sexual orientations and gender expressions. Dissent over the EEWC's position on homosexuality led to the 1986 formation of Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), whose statement of faith excludes homosexual families from "the patterns God designed for us." One can witness the heterogeneous positions of evangelicals on other family-related issues (such as abortion and child rearing) and social welfare, issues of war and peace, racism, poverty, and violence in quarterly publications of the *Daughters of Sarah,* the "magazine for Christian Feminists."

During the 1960s and 1970s, fundamentalists and evangelicals developed a large television media infrastructure. Self-identified fundamentalist Jerry Falwell televised his weekly Sunday service, the *Old-Time Gospel Hour,* and evangelicals created the Christian Broadcasting Network, Trinity Broadcasting Network, LeSea Broadcasting, and the Praise the Lord Ministry. In 1979, Falwell abandoned his separatist stance and founded an organization for all Bible-believing Protestants, who, he argued, made up a "Moral Majority" of Americans. Liberal Protestants, academics, and journalists referred to the Moral Majority as the New Christian Right or the Religious Right.

The New Christian Right fundamentalist formation campaigned against legalized abortion, homosexuality, and the proposed Equal Rights Amendment while advocating prayer in public schools, increased defense spending, and anticommunist foreign policy. In the 1960s, Falwell had defended segregation and criticized religious leaders who participated in the civil rights movement, but in 1982, he approvingly compared the Moral Majority's influence and strategy to that of the civil rights movement. The Moral Majority strongly supported and influenced Ronald Reagan's presidency. During the late 1980s, mainstream media reported several financial and sexual scandals that indicted leaders of the New Christian Right, and in 1989, Falwell disbanded the Moral Majority, claiming that it was no longer necessary because the Religious Right was solidly in place.

After the 1980s, only the separatist Bible-believing Protestants continued to refer to themselves as fundamentalists. Although the term "fundamentalist" was and is frequently used to characterize Christian and non-Christian groups who reject some tenets of secularism, deployments of the term function primarily at a rhetorical rather than an analytic level. Contemporary descendants of New Christian Right fundamentalists and evangelicals include Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition (1989) and Bill McCartney's Promise Keepers (1990). Both preach the importance of what they call "family values." Unlike Falwell's Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition is not opposed to ecumenical relations with other denominations and religions. The Promise Keepers profess an interest in and attention to racial reconciliation.

Unlike separatist fundamentalism, the New Christian Right formation and its descendants support interactions between church and state. Indeed, they call upon government to codify and enforce their moral values in such policies and initiatives as the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits Medicaid funding for abortions; federally subsidized abstinence-only education; and federally mandated marriage promotion. To advance the role of religious groups in public policy, born-again Christian President George W. Bush's Faith-Based Initiative would permit New Christian Right religious entities, as well as mainline churches, to directly participate in government programs. An expansion of the "charitable choice" provision in welfare law, the Faith-Based Initiative enables religious groups to compete for government grants to deliver social services ranging from job training to fatherhood promotion.

Karen deVries

See also: Charitable Choice; Family Structure; New Right; Philanthropy; Salvation Army; Sexism; Social Gospel; Voluntarism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare State

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Churches

See Black Churches; Catholic Church; Charitable Choice; Missionaries; Protestant Denominations

Citizens' Crusade against Poverty (CCAP)

The Citizens' Crusade against Poverty (CCAP), a national coalition of labor unions, businesses, churches and synagogues, charitable foundations, advocacy groups, and grassroots organizations, advocated for poor people's rights between 1965 and 1968.

The president of the United Auto Workers, Walter Reuther, became the CCAP chairman at its founding in 1965. Leading members of the organization included former Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) staff members Richard Boone and Edgar Cahn, as well as philanthropist Robert L. Choate. The board of directors represented a veritable who's who of civil rights advocates, labor leaders, American Indians, and religious figures.

In 1966, after playing a significant role in developing the War on Poverty's controversial Community Action Program, Richard Boone became the CCAP's executive director and oversaw the expansion of its activities. In addition to publishing the *Citizens' Crusade against Poverty Bulletin*, the organization sponsored conferences on issues related to impoverishment and distributed special pamphlets, such as "New Schools for the Cities: Designs for Equality and Excellence" (1967).

Following the motto "Reform is more frequently a problem of power than of knowledge," Boone directed the Citizens' Crusade toward a series of action programs (Boone 1967, 374). With additional support from churches, the Ford Foundation, the Stern Family Fund, labor unions, and individuals, the CCAP cosponsored the Southern Rural Action Project in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi; a community worker-training program; a grassroots information system to link local self-help groups; and a fund to provide emergency help for local organizations. The Citizens' Crusade advocated on behalf of the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM)—a civil rights affiliated Head Start program that generated tremendous controversy for challenging the South's segregated status quo—when the OEO threatened to cut off further funding for that organization. By 1966, the Citizens' Crusade had become increasingly critical of the War on Poverty's shortcomings and bureaucratization. Other grassroots CCAP activities included developing strategies for training nonprofessionals to work with other members of their own communities.

One of the CCAP's most significant undertakings, a survey conducted between July 1967 and April 1968 by the Citizens' Board of Inquiry into Hunger and Malnutrition, led to the publication of *Hunger USA,* the report of the survey's findings. This study revealed the dramatic problem of starvation and hunger in the United States. The Citizens' Crusade investigated hunger and starvation as statistical categories but probed their political and power dynamics as well. For instance, the study revealed that large amounts of federal subsidies were being distributed to agricultural producers in the very areas where poverty remained most endemic. Indeed, in 1970, one observer credited the CCAP with serving "a unique role in spurring America's most recent rediscovery of hunger" (Brown 1970, 116).

The Citizens' Crusade served an important role in the politics of social policy from 1965 to 1968 by agitating for reform, organizing and training poor people, and conducting investigations into the areas of education, hunger, and economic development. In 1968, the Center for Community Change (CCC), a coalition of nonprofit organizations, absorbed the Citizens' Crusade against Poverty.

Daniel M. Cobb

See also: Antihunger Coalitions; Center for Community Change; Community Development; Community-Based Organizations; War on Poverty

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Citizenship

Citizenship is the status of full membership within a political community. Democratic citizenship confers rights on individuals as well as obligations to promote the well-being of the polity. In the United States, citizenship is understood primarily in political terms—that is, as having the right to vote and the duty to serve on juries. But meaningful membership in a political community also includes civil and, especially, social rights. Civil rights include basic legal guarantees, such as governmental protection of life, liberty, and property, and also each individual's right to equitable and equal treatment by the government. Social rights are the individual's entitlement to basic economic provision as a basis for the exercise of civil and political rights. Social rights include minimal economic security, educational opportunity, health care, housing, and the like. Social rights are weak and undeveloped in the United States, which constrains the governmental response to poverty. As explained by the British social theorist T. H. Marshall (1950), political, civil, and social rights are so intertwined that without public policies promoting greater social and economic equality, citizenship as a whole is severely compromised.

Since at least the mid-nineteenth century, reformers (often predominantly women) have struggled to extend the meaning of citizenship to include access to minimal basic social provision. The idea that economic security is a component of citizenship did not win favor until the New Deal, and even then only for certain favored constituencies and only because they could claim to have "earned" their benefits. The "mothers' pensions" of the Progressive Era were a breakthrough for social provision, but they did not include a concept of rights, either for applicants or for recipients. Likewise, under New Deal social policies, public assistance recipients were not considered to have a "right" to benefits.

Struggles around citizenship in the United States have focused on the progressive incorporation of members of different groups into full voting membership in the polity. One group that did not have to struggle as a group for participatory rights was the white, male working class. This was due to the early-nineteenth-century extension of the franchise to adult white men regardless of their wealth or status as property owners. Some have argued that as a result of "early suffrage" for adult, white, male workers, U.S. worker movements did not develop robust claims linking political equality to economic security. Thus, the constituency most closely associated with the development of social rights in the western European polities becoming industrialized at the same time was not, in the United States, an agent of social democracy.

Despite the democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, even rights to political participation were not automatically enjoyed by all individuals. In the early decades of the U.S. republic, the status of citizen (in the political sense) was reserved for free, white, propertied men—men deemed by their property ownership to be both "independent" and capable of engaging in public service. Although propertyless white men did not have to struggle to win formal political citizenship, deliberate changes in electoral laws needed to be made to incorporate them. Further political democratization did not occur until after the Civil War, when, at least in theory, the Fifteenth Amendment formally extended voting rights to Black males. However, a combination of violence, poll taxes, economic threats, and other exclusionary policies prevented most African Americans (whether male or female) from effectively exercising those rights until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Although some states accorded women the right to vote as early as the final decade of the nineteenth century, women were not guaranteed a right to vote at the national level until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Native American Indians born in the United States were formally admitted to full political citizenship in 1924; Asian immigrants were denied access to citizenship until 1952.

As this brief history suggests, although the ideal of citizenship in the United States is one of inclusion, in reality, formal laws and informal practices have promoted exclusion. A number of dichotomies animated exclusion, beginning with early distinctions between propertyless workers and propertied citizens and including distinctions between workers slave and free, between workers and women, and between women and citizens. These oppositions, in turn, have been overlaid with others, most significantly the oppositions between private and public, deserving and undeserving, and independence and dependence. During virtually the entire course of U.S. history, the inclusion of some has been defined with respect to the exclusion of others.

At least until the early nineteenth century, citizenship was accorded only to those who were defined as "independent," who had the means to participate "unencumbered" in the public realm. Such a definition excluded slaves, wage workers, and white women, who were expected to be dependent on others for their support. Citizenship was also assigned to the public domain, so the private or domestic work of caring for families was not viewed as being in the realm of "citizens." Although this ideology excluded virtually all women from full citizenship rights on the grounds of their dependence, early U.S. political ideology did offer some women an alternative basis for incorporation into the polity. "Republican mothers"—a status reserved for the white wives of citizens and white mothers of future citizens—were valued for their domestic activities, especially for their contribution to the care and education of democracy's next generation. This gendering of citizenship was also deeply racialized. No republican virtue was attributed to the dependency of enslaved women, and even after emancipation, free Black women, Latinas, and many immigrant women were restricted from participating fully in the ideal of female domestic dependence. Most women of color and many southern and eastern European women were expected to work for wages, but at rates that did not allow for self-sufficiency.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, women social reformers actively promoted roles for women in political life—as spokespeople for moral concerns and as advocates for the poor. Concerned to protect those for whom the dislocations of industrial capitalism were especially severe, these reformers were quite successful in winning attention to the needs of women and children both as wage workers and as domestic dependents. Progressive women reformers of the early twentieth century inserted claims for social provision into the larger political agenda and gave currency to the idea that a democratic government sometimes has responsibilities to its citizens. They based their claims on the arguments that women were uniquely vulnerable because they were dependent and that they were uniquely deserving as the domestic mothers of future citizens. When political citizenship finally was granted to (white) women, it was won in part by women reformers, who promised that because women differed from men they would contribute uniquely to the polity.

But both the more prudentialist arguments for women's suffrage and the arguments for state-supported welfare benefits for women and children reinforced the sense that only women could be dependent adults and still merit the status of citizen. Female social reform activists had deliberately used those understandings of women's domesticity and dependence to argue for social welfare measures that women (and later men) would not otherwise have had. Thus, although women attained formal political citizenship rights when they secured the right to vote in 1920, women's citizenship was conceived as being different from men's. Although (primarily white) women had equal voting rights with men, women remained unequal to men in other aspects of citizenship, such as jury duty and obligations for military service. The gendered nature of democratic citizenship in the United States implanted confusing paradoxes at the core of U.S. understandings of citizenship. For certain women, dependence was considered compatible with citizenship. But for legitimately dependent women citizens, social provision was treated as a special need rather than as a component right of citizenship. Because legitimate dependency was understood in racialized gender terms, Black, Latino, and Asian women were effectively excluded from more-generous social welfare provisions aimed at "deserving" women. Meanwhile, programs to address the problems of dependent *men* became virtually impossible to conceive, let alone to enact. As contemporary welfare "reform" policies such as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996) make clear, universal social citizenship rights are far from guaranteed by—

or even recognized as a goal of—U.S. social policies; if anything, the language of "dependence" and "independence" has only come more strongly to the fore, further marginalizing those who cannot support themselves by their own wages or who are not supported by the wages of others with whom they live.

Feminist advocates and scholars have called attention to the fact that no one in existing (or even imaginable) political or social communities is truly independent. They have argued that meaningful political communities must attend to the necessary *interdependencies* of their members. They have noted, furthermore, that relationships of dependence (which certainly characterize families, among other social institutions) are often unequal and that such inequality should not necessarily stand in the way of fully equal citizenship rights. What follows from such an awareness is an argument for a system of social provision that is adequate, generous, and nondemeaning—one that honors the rights of citizenship.

Those who are dependent in society need and deserve to be cared for, but the structures of social provision in the United States operate on the assumption that most of the work of care will be undertaken in families (largely by women) and not for pay; that is, they assume a privatized system of care and social reproduction. If families cannot provide that care themselves, they are expected to hire others who will do so—again, usually women (often recent immigrants), who are also expected to perform this work at very low wages. But those who enable society to function by caring for its dependents (in the form of child care, education, health care, and the like) must be recognized as performing crucial work for the common good. Because this work is socially necessary and important both to the individuals who receive care and to the polity, it ought to be adequately compensated.

In the United States, even when social programs take caregivers' contributions into account, such as in the survivors' insurance program, access to benefits depends on one's familial status and relationships. Women are assumed to be supported by their husbands—by husbands' wages, by husbands' workplace-based pensions, or by husbands' Social Security. Meanwhile, husbands, children, and the elderly are supposed to be able to count on the women in their families to care for them. People who do not fit into the married heterosexual family model are, then, marginalized and left with far inferior benefits (if any at all). Thus, for example, widowed mothers who receive income support through survivors' insurance not only never have to endure intimate surveillance from welfare agencies but also receive far more generous benefits than do single mothers who need welfare. Especially with the new emphasis on marriage promotion, welfare targets poor, unmarried mothers for sexual regulation, to the detriment of their basic civil rights of citizenship. This harms not only unmarried heterosexual mothers but also gays and lesbians who cannot marry, because their "intimacy constellations" are not recognized by state or federal law.

In the twenty-first century, citizenship is highly stratified: Certain groups enjoy firmer political and civil rights in addition to a modicum of social entitlements while other groups are asked to relinquish rights in exchange for economic survival. Poverty, gender, race, culture, and sexuality each affect the experienced reality of citizenship—in its civil and political, as well as its social dimensions. Outright exclusions, such as prohibitions on lesbian and gay marriage and military service throughout the nation or felony disenfranchisement in many states, belie the universal guarantee of political citizenship. The impairment of basic reproductive, parental, and associational rights for poor women who receive social provisions belies the democratization of civil rights in the twentieth century. The persistent distinction between poor people who need social provision and better-off people who are deemed to have "paid" for it through social insurance makes clear that we are far from having achieved a recognition of social rights as an aspect of citizenship in the United States.

Martha Ackelsberg

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Liberalism; Republicanism

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Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88–352) was a landmark law in its prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, or religion in employment, government programs, and public accommodations. The historic legislation occurred in the same political context as the Johnson administration's War on Poverty and was driven primarily by the goal of achieving racial and economic equality.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act was the second major civil rights law in U.S. history, following by 100 years the seminal 1866 Civil Rights Act. Despite the 1866 act's guarantee of "the full and equal benefit of all laws" to all persons, subsequent laws and court decisions made racial discrimination and unequal rights the norm. Of major significance was the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537 [1896]) decision, in which the U.S. Supreme Court established a "separate but equal" doctrine. *Plessy* was not overturned until *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]), when the Court held that segregated schools were inherently unequal and thus unconstitutional.

The milestone 1964 act was a result of the protracted struggle for political and economic redress sought by the civil rights movement, ignited by Rosa Parks's refusal in 1955 to give up her seat to a white person on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus. Civil rights acts were enacted in 1957 and 1960, but they were weak and limited because of southern opposition to the use of federal power to check the states' control of race relations and racial hierarchy. To varying degrees, states in both the North and the South supported or permitted social, political, and economic discrimination, effectively segregating neighborhoods, schools, and employment opportunities. However, discrimination and segregation by law were especially prevalent in the South, where poll taxes, literacy tests, "grandfather" clauses, and Jim Crow laws were common. After a six-month legislative process in which a number of compromises were made in order to gain the support of some southern Democrats, the 1964 Civil Rights Act was enacted by a bipartisan coalition on July 2, 1964.

The goals of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were expansive. Its eleven titles incorporated numerous provisions, such as prohibitions on job and housing discrimination, which had not been addressed in previous civil rights legislation. Title I (and Title VIII) stipulated voting rights protections. Title II prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin in public facilities such as restaurants, theaters, and motels. Title III forbade segregation of public facilities "owned, operated, or managed by or on behalf of any State or subdivision thereof" (Section 301[a]). Title IV required desegregation of public education and gave enforcement authority to the U.S. Department of Justice. Title V established a Civil Rights

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, legislation intended to eliminate racial discrimination in places of public accommodation and in employment. (Phillips Scott/Lyndon B. Johonson Library)

Commission to investigate and hear cases of denial of equal protection in voting, education, housing, public facilities, and employment, among other areas.

Titles VI and VII are especially relevant to antipoverty goals. Title VI barred discrimination because of race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal funds or contracts, including education, training, and welfare. This ban extended to cases where the "primary objective of the Federal financial assistance is to provide employment" (Section 604). The Office of Federal Contract Compliance was established in 1965 in the U.S. Department of Labor to monitor this provision.

Title VII forbade discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin and required equal employment opportunity by employers, employment agencies, and unions with more than twenty-five employees. A 1972 amendment reduced this number to fifteen employees and expanded Title VII coverage to federal, state, and local government employees.

Proponents of Title VII recognized that discrimination was a source of unemployment, underemployment, and low wages for people of color and for women. The provisions of Title VII accordingly prohibited discrimination in all manner of employment decisions, from union apprenticeship programs to hiring, promotion, and firing. By the 1970s, Title VII was understood to also prohibit discrimination in the employment environment, giving rise to proscriptions against racial harassment on the job and, by the 1980s, to sexual harassment, as well.

Title VII set up an administrative agency, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), to enforce its provisions. Initially, the EEOC was empowered only to investigate and negotiate the settlement of unlawful employment practices through conciliation and voluntary compliance. Because the EEOC was perceived to lack force, the Civil Rights Act was amended in 1972 to give the EEOC power to take employers who discriminated to court. In addition, Title VII permitted individuals who filed timely grievances to sue employers directly if the EEOC process did not remedy their discrimination.

Title VII litigation during the 1970s opened up jobs to people of color and women. Not only were most explicit forms of discrimination, such as race- or sex-based job classifications, struck down, but apparently neutral policies that produced discriminatory effects on the basis of race came under judicial purview beginning with *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.* (401 U.S. 424 [1971]). This "disparate impact" framework for gauging discrimination was extended to sex-based discrimination in *Dothard v. Rawlinson* (433 U.S. 321 [1977]). By the late 1970s, attorneys for unions, most notably labor and civil rights lawyer Winn Newman, also began to deploy Title VII to try to close the wage gap.

The 1980s, however, was a period of lax civil rights enforcement and efforts to curtail the scope of Title VII and to overturn some of its legal precedents. Efforts to remedy discrimination, such as affirmative action, were derided and condemned as "reverse discrimination." Conservatives charged that white men were being discriminated against and excluded from jobs and promotions simply because they were not minorities or women. Reagan-era litigation produced judgments that advanced these views by making it more difficult to win disparate impact cases and by questioning the government's authority to create race-conscious remedies absent a showing of intentional discrimination or of verifiable harm to the group(s) that would benefit from the remedy.

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–166), enacted November 21, 1991, was Congress's response to the Supreme Court's decisions of the 1980s weakening Title VII. It sought to confirm the principles of the 1964 act by codifying the disparate impact framework and by allowing victims of discrimination to seek monetary damages from employers. Like the 1964 act, the 1991 act was passed by a Democratic-majority Congress.

Taken as a whole, the 1991 act not only tightened and buttressed the 1964 act's civil rights protections but also provided explicit procedures and mechanisms by which to remedy and compensate victims of employment discrimination. Title I of the 1991 act spelled out remedies for civil rights violations and changed the burden of proof to make it easier for minorities and women to win damages in litigation. Also, disparate impact, not disparate intent, became the legal standard in assessing discrimination complaints involving ostensibly neutral employer policies. The 1991 act also provided for jury trials in conjunction with awarding monetary damages as a remedy for victims of discrimination. Since the 1970s, the 1866 Civil Rights Act (section 1981) had been interpreted to provide monetary damages in race discrimination cases, so the 1991 act was especially helpful to women in sex-based discrimination cases. Until 1991, sex-based discrimination claims, including sexual harassment, were eligible only for equitable relief, such as job reinstatement or back pay. However, the administration of George H. W. Bush insisted on calibrating and capping damages available to plaintiffs in sex-based discrimination cases: a maximum of $50,000 for businesses with 100 or fewer employees (95 percent of all businesses) and a ceiling of $300,000 for those employing over 500 people. As a legal weapon to fight inequality in employment, Title VII plays an important role against the racial and sex/gender distribution of poverty. However, just how strong a weapon Title VII can be depends on individuals' access to the EEOC, lawyers, and the courts and on the willingness of courts to deploy Title VII against discrimination's many iterations and forms.

Cheryl M. Miller

See also: Affirmative Action; Civil Rights Movement; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Racial Segregation; Racism; Slavery; Unemployment; Voting Rights Act, 1965; War on Poverty

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Civil Rights Movement

Between 1955 and 1965, a growing African American mass movement for civil and voting rights focused national attention on racial segregation and poverty, especially in the South. Across the nation, Blacks initiated lawsuits, legislative lobbying campaigns, and militant protest movements for school desegregation, voter registration, and equal access to public accommodations and jobs. Mass activism led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and shaped the political conditions under which President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the War on Poverty and Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964 (although historians still disagree on the degree to which the declaration of War on Poverty was a response to civil rights activism). Two periods saw the twentieth century's greatest declines in Black poverty (measured both in terms of family incomes and in terms of the ratio of Black to white family incomes): the early to middle 1940s and the middle to late 1960s. These periods shared three intertwined elements whose conjunction produced dramatic and lasting changes: mass activism at the grassroots level, a responsive national government committed to antidiscrimination policies, and quickening economic growth that lifted the incomes of nearly all workers (Cross 1987, 431, 501).

In reality, the mid-twentieth-century civil rights movement was only a phase in the ongoing national Black freedom struggle, many of whose activists had long dreamed of economic justice as well as civil and political rights. Critics have alleged that middle-class civil rights leaders failed to identify and attack the structural roots of Black poverty, especially in the ghettos that exploded in violence between 1964 and

1968. The view has validity for the period between 1950 and 1962. But it neglects the cross-class dynamism of the civil rights unionism of the 1940s, and it overlooks the degree to which even "middle-class" leaders of the middle to late 1960s linked civil rights, political empowerment, economic justice, and the quality of life in Black communities. As civil rights struggles broadened to include working-class and poor Blacks, activists fought for decent jobs and housing, adequate welfare, union representation, political power (beyond just voting rights), and an end to institutional racism (in police departments, housing authorities, schools, and even in welfare and antipoverty agencies themselves).

During the New Deal, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League (NUL) lobbied to extend Social Security benefits, unemployment compensation, minimum wages, and collective bargaining protections to agricultural and domestic workers (Blacks disproportionately occupied these poorly paid occupational niches) (Hamilton and Hamilton 1997, ch. 2). By 1941, with the World War II economy rapidly reducing unemployment and poverty among whites, Black trade unionist A. Phillip Randolph organized the March on Washington movement. The threat of mass protest was enough to persuade President Franklin D. Roosevelt to establish a Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1941 to fight discrimination in defense industries. At the same time, leftist interracial unions in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) pushed to integrate shop floors, union halls, and seniority ladders. These unions also pressed for expanded social insurance, minimum wages, full employment, and antidiscrimination legislation. Civil rights unionists swelled the ranks of the NAACP, whose members boosted Black voting dramatically outside the Deep South. Economic growth, mass mobilization, and antidiscrimination policy all combined to lift Black incomes. The ratio of Black to white median incomes rose from 37 percent to 55 percent in the 1940s (Cross 1987, 431).

By the early 1950s, anticommunist efforts had suppressed many of these organizations, stalling the drive to "organize the unorganized," especially in southern industries. Mainstream civil rights organizations narrowed their focus to the extension of voting rights and the integration of schools, transportation, and restaurants. The U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]) inaugurated a twelve-year civil rights era, when dramatic Black protests and violent white resistance filled the nation's newspapers and television screens with dramatic images from the South. Even then, when constitutional protections and issues of "dignity" remained central, activists agitated for jobs and welfare for the poor. At the outset of the famous bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955–1956, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) demanded that the bus company hire Black drivers *before* full desegregation of bus seating. The Welfare Department gave relief to untold numbers of protesters suddenly impoverished by white economic reprisals. The MIA's president, Martin Luther King Jr., went on to found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), coordinating protests in Albany, Georgia (1962), and Birmingham, Alabama (1963). In each case, local leaders demanded employment in the downtown stores along with desegregated service. SCLC also launched Operation Breadbasket in 1962, which staged consumer boycotts to open jobs in specific firms (Jackson 1994, chs. 2–4).

Local organizers formed the core of the mass movement, however. Black students who formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) after the sit-in movement in 1960 became an activist vanguard, raising consciousness about the intersections of racism and poverty. Women such as Ella Baker, Gloria Richardson, and Fannie Lou Hamer inspired the students to embrace a radical idea: Even

Civil rights advocates lead hundreds of thousands of Americans in a march on Washington, D.C., in a multiracial demonstration for equal rights and opportunity in August 1963. (Flip Schulke/Corbis)

the poorest African Americans could lead their own fight for citizenship rights. Moving into the poorest southern rural communities to register voters in 1961, the students saw how closely poverty was related to tools of white oppression: disenfranchisement, violence, and economic reprisals. Locals like Hamer endured beatings, job losses, and evictions from their plantations for simply attempting to register. (Hamer became a full-time organizer for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1963.) By 1965, the SNCC in Mississippi had fostered the Poor People's Corporation (providing credit for local economic projects) and the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union (organizing over 1,000 farm workers to fight for minimum wages, medical coverage, and better working conditions). Hamer founded Freedom Farm, where displaced sharecroppers cooperatively raised their own food. It is no wonder that at the 1963 March on Washington, of all the speakers, SNCC's John Lewis spoke most concretely about violence, powerlessness, and poverty in Mississippi, where Blacks received "starvation wages . . . or no wages at all" (Jackson 1994, chs. 3, 5; Carson 1981, 83, 94, 172).

"What good are integrated restaurants or theaters if Black people cannot afford the meal or the ticket?" was a question being asked across the political spectrum by 1963. A. Philip Randolph—distressed with Black job losses in manufacturing due to "automation"—proposed a March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The march drew 250,000 protesters to the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. Reporters covered King's "I Have a Dream" speech and the nearly unanimous support for President John F. Kennedy's civil rights bill. They scarcely noticed demands for public works employment, for a two-dollar-an-hour minimum wage (extended to domestic workers), and for prohibitions on job discrimination not contained in Kennedy's bill. NAACP lobbying and direct-action protests by SCLC strengthened President Johnson's Civil Rights Act, signed in August 1964. That act outlawed discrimination in public accommodations and incorporated a new Title VII barring employment discrimination, to be enforced by a new Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. President Johnson and President Richard M. Nixon later issued executive orders strengthening enforcement and mandating affirmative action in government agencies and contractors. Finally, in 1965, voting rights protests in Selma, Alabama, again placed pressure on Johnson to sponsor the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Hundreds of civil rights activists became antipoverty warriors after Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act in August 1964. St. Louis Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) activist Ivory Perry used his position in the federally funded Human Development Corporation to organize job protests, rent strikes, welfare rights groups, and a campaign to monitor and prevent poisoning from lead paint in poor children. Independently, Syracuse CORE leader George Wiley went on to form the Poverty Rights Action Center in Washington, D.C., supporting the organization of the National Welfare Rights Organization in 1967. On a larger scale, the NUL, under Whitney M. Young's leadership, won funding for programs such as the National Skills Bank (a referral service) and On-the-Job-Training (an apprenticeship program in private industry). The NUL drew generous federal and foundation support for its programs (from 1965 to 1970, its budget grew eightfold to $14.5 million) (Lipsitz 1988; Jackson 1993). Meanwhile the NAACP lobbied for civil rights enforcement and school desegregation. Herbert Hill's Labor Department filed complaints charging violations of Title VII by government contractors and labor unions. Local chapters protested discrimination at federally sponsored construction sites. The Legal Defense Fund, however, did not shift major resources into the fight against job discrimination until after 1970 (Jaynes and Williams 1989, 185).

Leaders and activists grew increasingly critical of cutbacks in the poverty program, of the Vietnam War and its negative impact on funding, and of congressional restrictions on citizens' participation in poverty programs. Leaders proposed a policy reorientation outstripping what Johnson ever conceived for his War on Poverty. Whitney Young's 1963 Marshall Plan for the Negro and King's 1964 Bill of Rights for the Disadvantaged both anticipated in scope A. Philip Randolph's 1966 Freedom Budget for All Americans, which was endorsed by all major civil rights groups. The Freedom Budget called for a tenfold increase in antipoverty outlays: $185 billion over ten years for public works, income support, and new housing construction designed "to wipe out the slum ghetto" (Jackson 1994, ch. 6; Hamilton and Hamilton 1997, 147–153).

By 1966, a third summer of urban violence underscored to many critics that rights groups had not effectively organized working-class and poor Blacks around issues important to *them*. In response, King and the SCLC mobilized several thousand Chicago Blacks to end "slum colonialism" in the summer, staging a series of "open-housing" marches in white suburbs. Yet lacking the "nonviolent army" they had expected and without support from Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley or President Johnson, King failed to realize his dream of an enforceable local agreement and a national civil rights act with open-housing provisions. Congress only passed the Fair Housing Act of 1968 after dozens of riots followed King's assassination in April 1968.

Conservatives blamed criminals and socially outcast poor people for the riots, but surveys found that young Black men arrested for "rioting" were no less educated than nonrioters. And they were protesting against grievances broadly

"Where Do We Go from Here?" Martin Luther King Jr., presidential address to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Atlanta, August 16, 1967

We must develop a program that will drive the nation to a guaranteed annual income. Now, early in this century this proposal would have been greeted with ridicule and denunciation, as destructive of initiative and responsibility. At that time economic status was considered the measure of the individual's ability and talents. And, in the thinking of that day, the absence of worldly goods indicated a want of industrious habits and moral fiber. We've come a long way in our understanding of human motivation and of the blind operation of our economic system. Now we realize that dislocation in the market operations of our economy and the prevalence of discrimination thrust people into idleness and bind them in constant or frequent unemployment against their will. Today the poor are less often dismissed, I hope, from our consciences by being branded as inferior or incompetent. We also know that no matter how dynamically the economy develops and expands, it does not eliminate all poverty.

. . . the movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of American society. . . . We are called upon to help the discouraged beggars in life's marketplace. But one day we must come to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. . . . You begin to ask the question, "Who owns the oil?" You begin to ask the question, "Who owns the iron ore?" You begin to ask the question, "Why is it that people have to pay water bills in a world that is two-thirds water?"

Source: From *I Have a Dream: Writings and Speeches That Changed the World,* ed. James M. Washington (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, a division of HarperCollins, 1992), 170, 173, 177.

shared in their communities: against police brutality; against inadequate jobs, housing, education, and welfare; and in general, against unresponsive "power structures." The Black Panther Party, begun in an Oakland, California, antipoverty office in 1966, combined revolutionary rhetoric, confrontations with police, advocacy of national "full employment" policies, and local services like programs to provide free breakfasts for children and screening for sickle-cell anemia. Economic nationalists such as Floyd McKissick of CORE increasingly turned to strategies of "Black capitalism" supported by foundations and the Nixon administration. Community development corporations involved activists in housing rehabilitation or social service programming around issues as diverse as lead paint removal and adult literacy. Campaigns for "fair lending" and national legislation garnered funds for some neighborhood revitalization (Fisher 1994, 182).

The 1968 Poor People's March on Washington embodied King's final dream of using mass multiracial demonstrations to compel the government to provide "jobs or income now." King reached out to organize rural and urban poor, welfare recipients, the working poor, and the unemployed. Leadership conflicts and episodes of violence in Resurrection City, a tent city built by 3,000 poor people on the Mall in Washington, D.C., after King's assassination, garnered most press attention. Yet an interracial coalition of activists did advance proposals for jobs programs, expanded income support, an end to hunger, and the empowerment of the poor in the War on Poverty. Unfortunately, the Poor People's March faced a lame-duck president and a Congress more determined to pass repressive legislation than to extend the welfare state. Activists went back to their communities with little more than a modest expansion in the food stamp program. The welfare rights movement fought on through the early 1970s, but Black activism waned along with white-majority support for civil rights (Jackson 1994, ch. 8).

The civil rights acts and the war on poverty were unable to eradicate racism and poverty, yet they did help raise Black incomes and improve the quality of life in Black communities. Between 1964 and 1969, tax cuts and military spending pushed unemployment to historic lows, and tight labor markets, job training programs, and antidiscrimination policy spelled economic gains for Blacks. The Black middle class grew substantially; yet especially as incomes polarized and the economy slowed in the 1970s and 1980s, continued discrimination in employment and housing, persistent school segregation, and the "feminization of poverty" worsened the fortunes of the bottom third of Black America. Still, between 1959 and 1969, Black poverty rates had declined from 55 percent to 34 percent; unemployment dipped from 10 percent to 6.2 percent; and the ratio of Black to white median income rose from 52 percent to 61 percent. None of this eradicated racism: Black unemployment rates were consistently double those of whites, and census undercounts masked a much larger "subemployment" rate (including the unemployed, part-time workers, and workers no longer looking for work) that especially affected Black youth, whose official unemployment rates actually rose during the decade. The rising economic tide, it seemed, lifted boats that already occupied privileged positions higher than others. White poverty declined by 40 percent in the 1960s, whereas Black poverty declined 25 percent. The percent of the poverty population that was Black therefore increased from 25.1 percent in 1959 to 32.1 percent in 1973 (the year the nation's poverty rate hit its historic low at 11.1 percent) (Brimmer 1974, 148–150; Levy 1998, 27, 34, 96, 176).

Exacerbating these problems was the growing gap between family incomes in poorer cities and wealthier suburbs, up from 12 percent in 1959 to 21 percent in 1985. A similar tale can be told of diverging Black fortunes in housing. Working and middle-class Blacks took up new housing opportunities under the Fair Housing Act of 1968, leaving older central cities poorer. By 1990, indices of segregation nationwide had declined only slightly (Levy 1998, 143; Farley 1996, 51, 55–58; Jaynes and Williams 1989, 90).

Black communities and incomes benefited from political empowerment, but in limited ways. In 1965, 280 Blacks held elected office nationwide (31 percent of them in the South). After the Voting Rights Act, the number more than quintupled, to 1,469 in 1970 (48 percent in the South) and more than quadrupled again by 1985 to 6,016 (63 percent in the South). James Button has shown that in six southern cities, Black political power translated into improved police and fire protection, paved streets, and Black employment in public works and recreation. Though far from achieving equality (especially as professionals and managers), Blacks made dramatic progress in private employment as a result of the civil rights movement. Button's survey of employers in the six southern cities revealed that before 1960, only 12 percent had hired any Blacks, but that by the late 1970s, the proportion of employers who had hired Blacks had jumped to 81 percent. Still, only 31 percent of Black-majority cities in the entire South had Black mayors by 1985. Even in the North, where 70 percent of the Black-majority cities had Black mayors in 1985, the resources those mayors could devote to services and employment were shrinking, as federal aid dried up and tax bases shrank because of business relocation and middle-class flight. Grassroots activists also complained of a "new patronage system . . . a spoils system for the [Black] middle and upper classes" that limited public benefits to the poor (Jaynes and Williams 1989, 238–239, 251; Button 1989, 143, 148–151, 186–187).

Yet the combination of popular and government activism had indeed spelled dramatic gains in the 1960s. As a recent review of the economic literature concludes, the combined effects of desegregation in jobs and schooling, the rise in voter participation, federal enforcement efforts, antipoverty programs, and a relatively robust economy were substantial, though they cannot be disentangled by standard econometric tests. "With the greatest relative black improvement coming in the South, which was the target of a comprehensive Federal effort to dismantle segregation in schooling, voting, accommodations and employment, the inference is buttressed that Federal civil rights policy was the major contributor to the sustained improvement in black economic status that began in 1965," the study concluded (Donohue and Heckman 1991, 1641). Mass activism and civil rights advocacy had made this revolution possible (Donohue and Heckman 1991, 1641, 1629).

Thomas F. Jackson

See also: Affirmative Action; African American Migration; African Americans; Black Panther Party; Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Community Development; Community Organizing; Highlander; Kerner Commission Report; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); National Urban League; Operation Breadbasket; Poor People's Campaign; Racial Segregation; Racism; Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing; Tenant Organizing; Voting Rights Act, 1965; War on Poverty; Welfare Rights Movement

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Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

In November 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president of the United States, in large part because he promised active government solutions to the widespread unemployment and poverty ravaging the nation during the

Great Depression. During what would later be called "the Hundred Days," Roosevelt introduced several measures to help alleviate the immediate suffering Americans were experiencing. One of them was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Calling the Seventy-third Congress into emergency session on March 9, 1933, FDR proposed to recruit and train thousands of unemployed young men to combat the destruction and erosion of the nation's natural resources. With this program, he hoped not only to pump money into the moribund economy but also to save two of the nation's precious resources—its young men and its land—from going to waste. Congress approved of the program immediately, sending the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) Act to the president's desk for his signature on March 31. Until the demise of the CCC in 1942, over 3 million men worked on its various conservation projects, including reforestation, forest protection, soil-erosion prevention, flood control, wildlife restoration, and public range and park development.

FDR wasted no time getting the program under way and appointed Robert Fechner as the CCC's director. The logistics of mobilizing 250,000 young men who hailed mainly from the East to work in camps located mostly in the West were difficult, requiring the involvement of the armed forces. The influence of the armed forces could be seen in the program's regimented management style. Men wore uniforms and were expected to address their superiors with deference, as in, "Yes, sir!" But other government departments were involved in the administration of the CCC as well: The Departments of Agriculture and Interior were responsible for planning and coordinating the work the CCC would perform, and the Department of Labor handled the processing and selection of applicants.

Applicants were required to be unmarried men aged eighteen to twenty-five who came from families on government relief. Exceptions were made for men with special skills or experience and for veterans of the Spanish American War and World War I. The men worked forty hours a week and earned thirty dollars a month in addition to free room, board, and clothing. They were only allowed to keep five dollars for themselves, and the rest was sent directly to their families. The initial enrollment period was six months, but men were eligible to reenlist for up to two years. Many men learned trades and skills that renewed their confidence during the hard times and gave them a competitive advantage when they returned to the labor market.

The CCC was perhaps the most popular of the New Deal programs approved during the Roosevelt administration. It created much-needed jobs for young men and produced tangible results. CCC workers planted over 3 billion trees from 1933 to 1942, erected nearly 3,500 fire towers, laid down 97,000 miles of fire roads, and devoted millions of man-days to fighting fires, floods, and soil erosion. At its peak in 1935–1936, over 500,000 men were enrolled in the CCC at one time, operating in 2,650 camps in every state across the country. Hoping to balance the budget during an election year, FDR introduced a budget to Congress that drastically reduced the amount of funds allocated to the popular program. Members of Congress were deluged with letters of protest, and under the weight of public opinion, they were forced to reject the president's proposal.

The program's popularity would continue until the late 1930s, when unemployment began to decline and the country began focusing its attention on the looming threat of Nazism across the ocean. In 1942, Congress defunded the program after a review committee concluded that the CCC, designed as a temporary relief program, was no longer necessary, especially as the country had to marshal its limited resources for the war effort.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: Great Depression and New Deal; Public Works Administration; Relief; Works Progress Administration (WPA)

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Classism

The term "classism" refers to the network of attitudes, assumptions, beliefs, behaviors, and institutional practices that maintain and legitimatize class-based power differences that privilege middle- and higher-income groups at the expense of the poor and working classes. It is made up of three independent but related dimensions: prejudice (that is, negative attitudes toward the poor and working classes), stereotypes (that is, widely shared, socially sanctioned beliefs about the poor and working classes), and discriminatory behaviors that distance, avoid, or exclude poor or working-class persons.

Rooted in socially constructed assumptions about deservingness and deviance, classist stereotypes characterize the poor as lazy, unable to defer gratification, lacking respect for or interest in education, and unwilling to work. These beliefs make middle-class experiences normative and confer on poor and working-class persons the status of devalued "other." Classist stereotypes intersect with sexist and racist beliefs, further stigmatizing low-income women and poor people of color. Such intersections are evident in stereotypes of poor women, particularly welfare recipients, as sexually available, amoral, permissive mothers and of poor men of color as irresponsible fathers, criminals, and members of a menacing "underclass." Classist stereotypes also underlie individualistic attributions for poverty, which emphasize personal causes of poverty (such as lack of motivation, poor work ethic) rather than structural explanations (for example, discrimination, low wages).

Like other forms of discrimination (such as sexism or racism), classist discrimination occurs on both the interpersonal and institutional levels, ranging from subtle or covert to blatant or overt. Both interpersonal and institutional classism create and maintain a climate of hostility for poor and working-class persons. Interpersonal classism includes face-to-face behaviors that distance or derogate low-income individuals, such as avoiding cross-class interactions, labeling (with such terms as "white trash," "welfare queens"), and treating the poor as inferior. Institutional classism refers to the marginalization of poor and working-class individuals within social institutions. Examples include limited access to high-quality health care, affordable safe housing, legal representation, well-equipped schools, and employment in the primary labor market. Classist assumptions and discriminatory practices are also embedded in policies that seek to regulate the behaviors of public assistance recipients by making the receipt of funds contingent on compliance with program rules and that focus on changing poor people rather than poverty conditions. Penalties that reduce or eliminate benefits to recipients who do not fulfill work requirements and "family cap" regulations that deny additional benefits to women who have another child while receiving welfare are examples of two such penalties.

Heather E. Bullock

See also: Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Poor Whites; Racism; Sexism; "Underclass"

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See Regulating the Poor; War on Poverty; Welfare Rights Movement

Committee on Economic Security

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Great Depression and New Deal; Social Security Act of 1935; Unemployment Insurance

Communist Party

From the early 1930s until the early 1950s, the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) was an importance influence in American society, in labor and various protest movements, in cultural and artistic life, in many state governments, and even for a short time in national politics. Particularly during the 1930s, the CPUSA was the major organizer of poor people, the unemployed, and African Americans. Yet the CPUSA is hardly uncontroversial. On the one hand, from the early 1920s until the late 1950s, it was the dominant left-wing group in the United States, highly interracial and ethnically diverse, the most militant and successful of trade union organizers, and the foremost fighter for equality for African Americans, women, and other minorities, as well as the leading proponent in the struggle of the unemployed, poor people, students, and others. On the other hand, it was an unabashed, uncritical apologist for the brutal crimes of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union, and it was an unrelenting, sometimes repressive, critic of others on the left.

History of the CP

The U.S. Communist Party was born in 1919 out of the left wing of the U.S. Socialist Party (SP) when the entrenched SP leadership refused to allow the left-wing majority to take control democratically of the organization. Losing most of its more dynamic members, refusing to support the 1917 Russian Revolution led by V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, and revealing a lack of commitment to democracy among its own members, the SP virtually died at this time. In September 1919, two communist parties were formed. The larger, the Communist Party of America (CPA), had approximately 24,000 members. The other group, the Communist Labor Party (CLP), with approximately 10,000 members, was led by John Reed (the hero of Warren Beattie's film *Reds*), a journalist who wrote *Ten Days That Shook the World,* a popular, heroic account of the Russian Revolution of 1917. In 1921, the Communist International (CI) forced the two parties to merge. In 1929, the party changed its name to the Communist Party of the United States of America.

The 1920s were a difficult time for all radical groups, and the Communist Party was no exception. Membership stabilized at around 10,000, reaching a low point of around 7,500 in 1930. Nevertheless, in the 1920s, the CP engaged in numerous activities, its members gained valuable experience, and the party itself achieved the prestige and roots that would allow it to make dramatic gains during the 1930s. CP members led a large textile strike in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1926, and another in Gastonia, North Carolina, in 1929. The Communists were also involved in the key defense cases of the day, including that of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian American anarchists who were executed in 1927 for supposedly committing a bank robbery and double murder.

The CP's activities allowed it to recruit leading radicals from virtually every left-wing milieu. Many Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) members joined the party, including "Big Bill" Haywood, the most prominent IWW leader of the day. The CP recruited Black socialists, and important activists from Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association, some of whom were taken aback at the commitment to Black rights by many of the CP's white members. In the 1930s, prominent intellectuals flocked to the CP. Few gravitated toward the SP, for as John Dos Passos explained in 1932, "[b]ecoming a Socialist right now would have just about the same effect on anybody as drinking a bottle of near-beer." None of the attraction of the CP at this time was based on its support for liberal Democratic Party politicians or for any watered-down version of radical politics. The result of the activities of the CP during the 1920s is described by James Cannon, one of the party's leaders until his 1928 expulsion for Trotskyism:

> This Communist Party held the line of class struggle and revolutionary doctrine in that long, ten-year period of boom, prosperity and conservatism before the crash of 1929. It was in that period—fighting for revolutionary ideas against a conservative environment . . . , refusing to compromise the principle of class independence—that the Communist Party gathered and prepared its cadres for the great upsurge of the thirties. (Cannon 1971, 92)
>
> Despite its reduced membership, the Communist Party entered the thirties—the period of the greatest radical revival—as the dominating center of American radicalism. It had no serious contenders. (Cannon 1971, 93–94)

The 1930s

In the fall of 1929, the stock market crashed, and the U.S. economy ground to a halt, with many industries, including the automobile, mining, and textile industries, virtually collapsing. Official jobless estimates went from 492,000 in October 1929 to over 4 million in January 1930. CP mass activity and membership growth both skyrocketed.

The earliest mass activity took place among the unemployed. The largest unemployed organization of the early 1930s was the CP-led Unemployed Councils, concentrated in large cities throughout the country. Protests by the unemployed, often massive and militant, began immediately with the onset of the Depression. On March 6, 1930, over 1 million people demonstrated across the country under CP leadership. Concerted activity by the unemployed seems to have touched virtually every part of the land. The South, the West, the Northeast, the Midwest—all were affected. In large cities, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Seattle, Toledo, and many more, large-scale activity by and organization of the unemployed took place. Records show activity in small and medium towns, including Indianapolis and Terra Haute, Indiana; Lewiston, Maine; Camden, New Jersey; Ashtabula and Warren, Ohio; Charlestown and Fairmont, West Virginia; Racine, Wisconsin; and even in small towns in Mississippi.

Some of the activities of the unemployed organizations were on a large scale. In New York City, for example, in late January 1930, 50,000 people attended the funeral of a Communist Party activist killed by the police. A similar funeral in Detroit in 1932 for four party activists killed by the police at a protest march on Ford's River Rouge plant was attended by 20 thousand–40 thousand people: "Above the coffin was a large red banner with Lenin's picture" (Klehr 1984, 33, 59). Perhaps the high point of such activity was in Chicago. In one incident in 1931, 500 people in a Chicago southside African American neighborhood brought back furniture to the home of a recently evicted widow.

The police returned and opened fire; three people lay dead. The coffins were viewed, again under an enormous portrait of Lenin. The funeral procession, with 60 thousand participants and 50 thousand cheering onlookers, was led by workers carrying Communist banners: "Within days, 2,500 applications for the Unemployed Councils and 500 for the Party were filled out" (Klehr 1984, 322–323). Even in cities in the Deep South, including Atlanta, Birmingham, and New Orleans, racially integrated mobilizations of the unemployed took place.

What most distinguished the CP during the 1930s from other radical groups was its position and commitment to the fight against Black oppression. No previous largely white U.S. radical group had focused attention on the plight of Blacks. The CP's efforts in the battle for Black liberation even penetrated into its extensive immigrant membership. As Mark Naison notes: "Not only Jews felt moved by the Party's position: Finnish, Polish, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, and Slavic Communists became passionate exponents of the Party's position on the Negro Question" (1983, 43). One result of the CP position was to place special emphasis on organizing African Americans in the South, leading the CP to publicize and fight against the lynching of Blacks there. In 1931, the CP took the initiative in a case that was to gain it major political leadership among Blacks throughout the whole country: the case of the Scottsboro boys, nine Black youths seized on a freight train in rural Alabama and accused of raping two white girls who had been riding with them.

The CP's most massive successes, however, were undoubtedly within the labor movement, especially the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Had it not been for its conciliatory tactics toward more-conservative CIO leaders, the CP would have had the early leadership of the auto union and would have had greater influence in the steel, oil, and rubber industries, in which it played a leading role in organizing.

The Decline of the CP

After World War II ended in 1945, the influence of the CP began to decline. There are two primary reasons why the CP declined and disappeared so ignominiously. First, after 1935, the CP never regained an anticapitalist, radical, social transformatory perspective. Despite certain periods of renewed militance, largely dictated by the exigencies of Soviet foreign policy, its perspective remained largely reformist. This approach robbed it of its ability to attract the most militant and radical youth and workers. During the 1950s, for example, it trailed in the wake of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In the 1960s, it was unprepared to support, much less lead, either the radicals in the civil rights movement or the student and antiwar movements. Yet the mild social democratic domestic politics to which the CP aspired, epitomized by its antimonopoly perspective (an alliance of all "progressive" forces, including the more democratically inclined capitalists) required a greater allegiance to the U.S. ruling class than its Soviet ties would permit. Thus, it was not spared increased repression when Soviet and U.S. aims came into conflict. The nature of its Soviet ties also led it to squander its moral capital as either a domestic radical or reformist organization.

The Impact of the CP

The CP was not by and large an electoral party and should not be evaluated as such. Nevertheless, it did, at its height, have an important electoral impact. In Connecticut, Oregon, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Ohio, it was a significant force in the influential labor party politics there, as well as in later left politics within these states' Democratic Parties. It also had substantial influence within the Democratic Parties of California and Wisconsin. In Minnesota, for a time, the CP and its popular-front allies controlled the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the dominant political party in the state. In New

York State, it had significant control of the American Labor Party, which controlled the swing vote between the Democrats and Republicans in the state. New York City had two Communist city councilmen, Benjamin Davis Jr. and Pete Cacchione, along with other political supporters on the city council. Its support in New York City was significant enough that it had an alliance with Governor Herbert Lehman, who returned the favor by vetoing a legislative bill that would have banned the CP. It had two firm congressional supporters, Vito Marcantonio from New York and John Bernard from Minnesota, along with a close alliance with Harlem congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr.

Support for the CP was widespread among artists, entertainers, and intellectuals, from Hollywood personalities to Nelson Algren, Leonard Bernstein, Harold Cruse, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Josephine Herbst, Granville Hicks, Langston Hughes, Doris Lessing, Paul Robeson, Pete Seeger, Upton Sinclair, Richard Wright, José Yglesias, and many more. Among sports figures, not only did the CP have the support of boxers Joe Louis and Henry Gibson, Brooklyn Dodger second baseman Jackie Robinson, and Negro League star Josh Gibson, but New York Yankees third baseman Red Rolfe and Chicago Cubs star Rip Collins wrote regular sports columns in the *Daily Worker*. Many prominent African American entertainers and musicians attended or performed at CP functions at one time or another. Among them were Count Basie, Cab Calloway, Miles Davis, Roy Eldridge, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton, W. C. Handy, Coleman Hawkins, Billy Holiday, Lena Horne, Leadbelly, Charlie Parker, Art Tatum, Chick Webb, Josh White, Mary Lou Williams, and Teddy Wilson.

This support was based on the work that the CP had accomplished. The party organized African Americans, exposed and fought against the many manifestations of white supremacy at a time when it was not popular to do so, and won large numbers of whites to support these struggles. The CP had a large number of talented Black leaders and was, by all accounts, racially egalitarian in its own organization. According to enthusiastic reports in the Black press, the CP was the main organization to force these issues into the public consciousness. It and the African American workers whom it often organized were the impetus for making issues of race central to the perspective of the CIO. Finally, it was CP organizers who provided the main shock troops in the organizing of industrial unions. All these good deeds coincided with the party's subordination to the foreign policy dictates of Moscow, its slavish submission on central issues, including its apologies for the crimes of Stalin, and its failure to maintain its original anticapitalist perspective after the mid-1930s. Thus, the Communist Party of the United States of America provides key lessons for future radical movements of what to do as well as what not to do.

Michael Goldfield

See also: Great Depression and New Deal; Progressive Era and 1920s; Socialist Party; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Community Action Program

See Community Development; Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations; War on Poverty

Community Chests

Community Chests served as fund-raising organizations for voluntary health, recreation, and welfare agencies for hundreds of communities in the United States from the 1920s through the 1960s. By the 1960s and 1970s, most had been renamed as local United Way organizations. Founded initially to reduce the dizzying array of appeals from charitable groups to local businessmen, Community Chests sought agreements by local charities to forgo individual fund-raising efforts and instead to receive a portion of a single community-wide fund-raising effort conducted by the Community Chest. Control over disbursing funds often gave Community Chests a deeply influential role in the activities of the organizations they funded. Community Chest agencies at midcentury generally represented the most popular and least controversial elements of the voluntary sector.

Although a number of cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries experimented with the idea of "federated financing," it was World War I that spurred the Community Chest movement. After the war, local organizations to coordinate multiple appeals for foreign relief were converted by local elites into Community Chests for local agencies; the number of Community Chests swelled from 17 in 1917 to 80 in 1922 to 335 in 1929 (Borst 1930, 95). Local charities gained generally higher revenues in exchange for Community Chest supervision of agency budgets, giving Community Chests deep influence over agency program and staffing. In most places, the conservative orientation of Community Chests guaranteed that only groups that focused on well-accepted service provision, rather than on advocacy or even service to stigmatized groups, would be funded.

The primary beneficiaries of Community Chests prior to the New Deal were organizations providing financial assistance to the poor, but those organizations were strained by the Great Depression. Though Community Chests raised a record $101 million in 1932, they could not meet the needs of the unemployed and were overshadowed by federal intervention in welfare in the New Deal. Though diminished in scope, Community Chests capitalized on public welfare to shift their dollars to such nonwelfare programs as the Boy Scouts, YMCAs, and family counseling programs. World War II again stimulated efforts to organize and consolidate charity campaigns, and the Community Chest movement emerged from the war with 797 chests raising $197 million in 1947 (United Way of America 1977, 108). The stability of the Community Chests was augmented by the increasingly routinized contributions from major corporations and their employees, particularly with the help of labor unions in the postwar period.

In the postwar period, despite gradually expanding coffers, Community Chests encountered several major challenges. First, by the 1950s, they were facing competing appeals from a number of major national health associations that lobbied for funds for research for heart disease, tuberculosis, and other causes. Donor dissatisfaction with multiple appeals spurred a second wave of federation between Community Chests and health agencies, resulting in "United

Funds" and, by the 1970s, the United Way. United Fund practices were protested in the late 1960s by groups and organizations that had been generally excluded from membership, particularly minority groups and women's organizations. Such protests liberalized United Way policies somewhat, but they also spurred the organization of "alternative" federations of voluntary organizations made up of underrepresented groups. In 2000–2001, over 1,400 United Way organizations raised $3.91 billion (United Way of America 2001).

Andrew Morris

See also: Philanthropy; Voluntarism

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Community Development

"Community development" is a term that came into common use in the 1960s to describe multifaceted economic and social improvement initiatives, located in neighborhoods and areas of disproportionate poverty, both urban and rural, and based on the idea that community or "place-based" investments were vital components of an overarching strategy to combat poverty. These initiatives had their roots in the settlement house movement of the Progressive Era, in some New Deal programs, in neighborhood-based juvenile delinquency prevention programs, and in numerous other neighborhood institutions. However, in their urban application in the 1960s, they were more deeply grounded as a response to racial segregation and in ideas of resident self-determination. In their rural and small-city applications, community development activities emanated from a realization that broader economic changes had injured or left behind geographical areas of significant size. Federal policies in the 1960s encouraged multidimensional and comprehensive approaches to reviving these areas. These approaches often took the form of "community development corporations" (CDCs), especially in urban settings. There are some 2,000 CDCs in existence now, although most are small and limit their work to the construction or rehabilitation of low-income housing. Federal support for place-based efforts has proceeded by fits and starts since the 1960s, with most innovation occurring as a result of support from private foundations. During the 1980s, particular emphasis was placed on combining social services with economic development and with an overarching aim of "community building"; as of 2001, roughly fifty schemes around the country could be described as "comprehensive community initiatives" (CCIs). Currently, leaders in the field are focusing on ways to connect inner-city initiatives to the regional economy, to "smart growth" projects, and to outside political and economic actors, and they are also focusing on approaches to comprehensiveness that build out from entities like youth programs and community health centers rather than on such traditional core activities as housing and commercial development.

The place- or community-based approach to fighting poverty has historically evolved against a backdrop of economic restructuring, migration, and public policy and the attendant political struggles that have shaped and reshaped the fortunes of affected communities. Of particular importance in the emergence of community development in the 1960s were the Great Migrations between 1890 and the 1960s, which brought millions of African Americans from the rural South to the nation's cities, as well as large numbers of whites from declining mining and agricultural areas and places from which industry had relocated. Pervasive forces of segregation, both official and customary (including widespread violence), confined African Americans of all economic strata to inner-city neighborhoods. Previous generations of immigrants who had initially settled in similar situations had moved out as their economic circumstances improved. In contrast, even with the impetus of the civil rights movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the demographics of the disproportionately Black inner city did not change. At the same time, the chronic problems of left-behind rural areas, most prominently Appalachia, began to attract increasing public notice.

Public policy had a strong effect in setting the stage and creating the need for community development, reinforcing and supporting private discrimination. The federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation worked in tandem with bankers and real estate brokers to prevent African Americans from purchasing homes not only in white neighborhoods but in their own neighborhoods as well. The Federal Housing Administration, the Veterans Administration, and private lending institutions were explicitly discriminatory in their lending policies. Decisions regarding locations for public housing under the Housing Act of 1937 reinforced segregation. In the 1950s, urban renewal and siting decisions for interstate highways destroyed stable Black neighborhoods and consequently weakened community ties.

As the 1960s began, seeds of change had been planted. The civil rights movement was under way. Its focus was primarily on state-mandated segregation in the South, but in the African American community in general a broader impatience was developing that would erupt into urban violence before long. Poverty was inching its way into public focus. The Ford Foundation began a multisite initiative known as the Gray Areas program, which was premised on providing education and work skills to young people in poor communities and on developing the capacity of local bureaucracies that were supposed to serve low-income people. This program attracted the attention of the administration of newly elected President John F. Kennedy, which at the time was developing its own initiative against juvenile delinquency, with Attorney General Robert Kennedy as point person. This in turn led to a federal-Ford partnership to sponsor Mobilization for Youth (MFY) on the Lower East Side in New York City. MFY developed the idea that comprehensive community-based services, legal aid, and education would help prevent juvenile delinquency and in addition emphasized organizing local residents to demand more-responsive public policies. The Gray Areas program and MFY became the models for what emerged under President Lyndon B. Johnson as the Community Action Program (CAP), which became a signature program of his officially declared War on Poverty and was administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity. The CAP provided a framework of employment and legitimacy within which inner-city neighborhood leaders could press for change in and concerning their communities. Each of these items was a building block toward the set of activities in urban settings that came to be known as community development.

Seeds of change had been planted on the rural side as well. In 1956, Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois began pressing for legislation to address depressed areas left in the lurch by industrial relocation and changes in mining and agricultural economics. These efforts eventuated in the Area Redevelopment Act of 1961 and the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965.

The racial unrest of the mid-1960s was a catalyst in the emergence of the first initiatives and policies that reflected the contemporary idea of urban community development. The violence in the Watts neighborhood of Los

Angeles, which occurred less than a month after President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law, was pivotal. Policymakers in the newly created federal U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development began conceptualizing a design for multifaceted initiatives directed at improving the conditions of life on a neighborhood-wide basis, the outcome of which was the Model Cities program enacted in 1966. Originally proposed as a small number of demonstrations, each generously funded, the program as it emerged from Congress was highly diluted and spread the funding in small doses among dozens of places. It never came close to achieving its promise.

Senator Robert Kennedy, seeking his own way to make a difference, took the lead in initiating the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation in a low-income part of Brooklyn in New York City. The ambitious "Bed-Stuy" effort aimed to harness public and private funding to attract new plants from outside and otherwise stimulate new economic activity, rehabilitate housing, make the neighborhood safer, and in general create a more cohesive community. Analogous models already existed, such as the Watts Labor Community Action Committee in Los Angeles and the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago, but Kennedy's highly visible foray attracted greater attention. Kennedy and his New York senatorial colleague, Republican Jacob Javits, succeeded in attaching to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1966 a new Special Impact Program (SIP) to provide federal funds for neighborhood-based community development schemes. A key difference between Model Cities and the Special Impact Program was that the funding for the former went through the city government whereas the funds for SIP went directly from Washington to the community development corporation in the neighborhood.

As these urban efforts were taking shape, rural community development was also receiving attention, most prominently through the 1965 legislation that was specially directed at the Appalachian region. The theory was that extra federal investment in roads and other infrastructure would help attract and retain business, which would in turn contribute to jobs and economic stability. At the same time, states and localities around the country offered and have continued to offer tax abatements and other incentives to attract manufacturing and other economic activity, and some communities have in fact been winners in this beggar-thy-neighbor sweepstakes. By the 1990s, favored strategies to promote rural economic development included attracting a prison and, in Indian communities, establishing a casino.

Inner-city community revitalization has always confronted the dilemma that focusing on separate development could be taken to mean acceptance of exclusion from the larger society—"gilding" the ghetto, according to critics, rather than "dispersing" it through integration. In reality, however, investing in segregated communities more often represented a response to rather than an acceptance of segregated conditions. Thus, some Black leaders, espousing the idea of "Black power," advocated an active strategy of separatism and self-sufficiency as a counterforce to the prevailing economic power of the white establishment. Others turned to the task of attracting outside investment and nurturing local enterprise as a way of making a virtue of necessity, in effect seeking to combat the walls of segregation by making urban areas more desirable places to live.

Despite expressions of enthusiasm in the outside world, funding for community development—especially federal funding—did not keep pace with its initial promise and before long began to drop off. Federal funding was greatly reduced during the Richard M. Nixon's presidency, with SIP nearly disappearing and Model Cities being changed into the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), under which mayors had the discretion to decide where to spend the funds with little oversight from Washington. Modest federal support for low-income housing remained available, and CDCs that focused on the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing grew in number (although, on balance, the nation's supply of affordable housing has diminished steadily for more than two decades).

Even more fundamentally, social conditions in inner-city neighborhoods grew worse. Notwithstanding the racial backlash, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and related changes in federal policies on housing financing opened up places outside the inner city to African Americans who could afford to leave. Equally important, jobs and industry as well as housing opportunities had been steadily shifting to the suburbs. Thus, while the large growth in the Black middle class in the 1960s gave more African Americans the wherewithal to move, rising joblessness and the widespread destruction in inner-city neighborhoods in the riots made it less attractive to stay. Many who could afford to move did so. Many of the business-, professional-, and working-class residents who had sustained economic stability in neighborhoods left. Discrimination in the housing and housing finance markets was far from eliminated, but enough change occurred to enable substantial out-migration (although not necessarily to integrated neighborhoods).

Through the 1970s and 1980s, deterioration in the living conditions in inner cities far outpaced the achievements of CDCs and other community development activities. Although not all of the nonpoor departed, the ensuing concentration of poverty was enough to tip the neighborhoods in dangerously synergistic ways. Crime and violence went up, births to unmarried teens shot up, high school completion dropped, and drug and alcohol use increased (especially in the 1980s). Communities that had been reasonably healthy lost cohesion, and their political capacity to demand adequate services, let alone investment, grew weaker. The economic deterioration in the inner city was made worse by the structural changes occurring in the economy generally, with higher-paying jobs disappearing to deindustrialization and ground being lost by everyone at the lower end of the labor market. Minorities living in areas of concentrated poverty were hit worst of all.

Political responses targeted at the inner city during the 1970s were mostly pallid. President Jimmy Carter offered the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) program, but its approach was primarily a downtown-development strategy, and its main promise to low-income residents was the possibility of work (generally low-wage work) in the hotels and other facilities created with UDAG funds. On the other hand, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, signed by President Gerald Ford in 1975, and the Community Reinvestment Act, signed by President Carter in 1977, were important spurs to more-responsive action by financial institutions. By the 1980s, federal urban policy had turned to what some characterized as active disinvestment; substantial budget cuts were accompanied by policies that both encouraged increased industrial relocation and globalization and favored suburban development. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush and some in Congress talked about enterprise zones that would offer tax incentives for job creation in distressed neighborhoods, but federal legislation to create such incentives was not enacted during those presidencies. Income maintenance in various forms remained available, but little was offered in the way of school improvement, assistance with transition to the job market, economic development, or job creation.

Despite the increasing hardship, some CDCs persevered and grew throughout the period. In the Central Ward of Newark, New Jersey, the New Community Corporation, which was founded in the 1960s, grew to have an annual budget of more than $100 million and more than 1,400 employees. Bethel New Life in Chicago, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston, and the more recently created

Community Building in Partnership in Baltimore have received national attention.

National foundations, seeking to fill the void in federal policy during the 1980s, undertook a new wave of activities. The Ford, Rockefeller, and Annie E. Casey Foundations all put substantial funding into multicity initiatives, with varying degrees of success. One of the most interesting foundation thrusts occurred in the South Bronx in New York City. To help in that very blighted area, the Surdna Foundation created the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP), which served as a highly effective go-between to help a number of CDCs get resources and connections in the outside world. Much of the South Bronx has been transformed as a result of the work of those CDCs and the CCRP.

New entrants joined the scene. Long-standing community organizers like the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) turned some of their energy to bricks and mortar. A highly publicized example is Project Nehemiah, which began as an endeavor by two dozen churches in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Project Nehemiah produced about 2,200 affordable single family homes in a very distressed part of the city. It stimulated federal legislation, which in turn helped others build thousands of units of Nehemiah homes around the country.

During the 1990s, organizations with a base in activities besides housing and economic development began to branch out to generate a new wave of comprehensive community-building efforts. Rheedlen Centers for Children, located in Harlem in New York City, began as a program for truants, grew into a set of after-school programs, and is now a community institution (renamed the Harlem Children's Zone) with activities radiating out from school buildings to make streets safer and to establish violence-free zones. Many community health and mental health centers, drug treatment programs, and human service providers have found themselves becoming more comprehensive and more rooted in and connected to the community as they have seen the need to respond to as many of the needs as possible of those who come in the door to partake of the primary activity of the organization.

President Bill Clinton brought federal policy back into the community development world in the 1990s, although with nowhere near the success that adherents had hoped for. The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) program was enacted in 1993 with a guaranteed ten-year appropriation of $1 billion. This sum was to fund six urban empowerment zones with $100 million each and three rural empowerment zones with $40 million each; the remaining $280 million was to be divided among ninety-five enterprise communities (two-thirds urban and one-third rural), which would therefore receive slightly under $3 million each. Firms newly locating in or expanding in EZ and EC areas would also receive tax advantages, with the incentives for EZ zones being more generous than those for the EC zones. Applicants were to engage in a widely collaborative planning process, and awards were to be based on the quality of the planning process as well as the quality of the plan. Plans were to be broadly conceived; permissible activities included almost anything that would improve the quality of life for residents or assist them in improving their economic and social status.

As with Model Cities, the funds were spread too thin. The six urban zones could have as many as 250,000 people each, subdivided into three separate portions of the city. Each subzone could thus be larger than a typical neighborhood, and the ten-year life of the program meant that each subzone would receive an average of $3.33 million annually in grant funds, in addition to the value of the tax incentives. Further, because the target areas did not have to coincide with the home bases of existing organizations, there was no natural role for any particular group or groups.

This, coupled with the large role assigned to the mayors and governors, caused the planning and implementation process to become highly politicized. By the end of the decade, it was clear that the accomplishments of the overall program, although tangible, did not add up to a consistently positive pattern among all of the participating localities.

The challenges to the community development field were quite different in 2000 from what they had been in 1990. The economics of central cities had improved markedly over the decade, in significant part because the economy of the nation as a whole improved so much. Business and professional people tired of long commutes, and young couples wanting to avoid commuting in the first place, began buying and renovating homes in central cities, often in low-income neighborhoods. Neighborhoods such as Harlem in New York City, 47th Street in Chicago, and U Street in Washington, D.C., took on a very different look. Mayors began making decisions about amenities and infrastructure designed to support the burgeoning process of gentrification. Magnet schools began to appear in gentrifying neighborhoods.

These trends were good for urban tax bases but were not especially good for low-income people, who were often forced out of neighborhoods in which they had resided for a long time. At the same time, many units of high-rise public housing were demolished in a number of cities, and little organized effort was made to help people relocate. The combined effects produced more dislocation than at any time since the days of urban renewal in the 1950s. And all of this occurred at a time when the supply of affordable housing was becoming more constricted than ever, with rents in most urban areas skyrocketing to a point where even families with full-time workers found it impossible to both pay the rent and eat.

Many of those dislocated from the inner cities reappeared in now-deteriorating inner-ring suburbs. Here they joined many representatives of another key phenomenon of recent years: the large-scale immigration that has created an unprecedented diversity in a nation that already prided itself on being a haven for people seeking a better life. Our nation is more multiracial, multiethnic, and multicultural than ever. This is both an opportunity and a challenge.

A final set of developments that affects the agenda for community development inheres in the welfare changes of 1996 and their effect on low-income communities. As of 2003, it was at least true that many people formerly on welfare had jobs of some kind, but it was also true that many people had lost their cash assistance or had been refused help when they applied for it and had no work either. The result was that those at the bottom of the income scale were actually worse off than they had been before the welfare law was enacted, and these people disproportionately resided in the distressed neighborhoods that had been the focus of community development activities.

These developments and trends all affect the agenda for community development as the new century gets under way.

Those working on community development in distressed inner-city neighborhoods must contend with the process of gentrification. The challenges are to attract people of higher incomes and to hold on to residents with rising incomes who are tempted to move away, while not displacing longtime low-income residents. Reestablishing a mixture of incomes in a currently distressed neighborhood is an important goal but one that is not easy to accomplish. If there is to be a new stability, the conditions that reflect the neighborhood's distress must be improved. The neighborhood must be safe, schools must be improved, trash must be collected, and streets must be maintained. Even then, the easier course for those with power to make and impose decisions, whether collectively or through the market, will be to force low-income people out.

Gentrification is just one of the forces from outside the neighborhood that have to be confronted. These forces include what might be called "structural racism": all of the factors that bring about a disproportionate racial impact with regard to employment, education, housing, health care, law enforcement, administration of public benefits, and more. Urban distressed neighborhoods cannot be fixed in a vacuum. Outside forces played a critical role in creating and perpetuating these neighborhoods' distress, and a greater focus on the continuing operation of those forces is essential. People should have a genuine choice about where they live and work. Those who work on reviving distressed neighborhoods should consider their responsibility to help promote that genuineness of choice at the same time as they continue to create a greater sense of community in their own space.

In many cities, though not all, major improvements in employment levels cannot be achieved without attending to the fact that so many of the existing jobs are situated in suburban areas. With the greater emphasis on work that has emanated from the 1996 welfare legislation, community development actors who wish to be comprehensive need to consider undertaking activities that help people get and keep jobs in the regional economy. Helping establish or actually operating child care and transportation services and taking action to combat race discrimination in the job market are increasingly recognized as part of the community development mission, as is a more regional perspective.

Meanwhile, the venue for community development work may well be changing. Inner-ring suburbs are changing rapidly, and unless care is taken, many will shortly replicate the current problems of inner-city neighborhoods.

Even more fundamentally, the changing "face" of America due to the growing numbers of immigrants from the countries of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean includes a changing face of poverty and near-poverty. Hispanics constituted a disproportionate part of the population of distressed neighborhoods even in 1990, and the 2000 census revealed further diversification of the minority populations in poor neighborhoods. All who are living in circumstances that call for a comprehensive community development agenda need to find ways to cooperate and collaborate rather than compete.

Finally, renewed attention to funding streams, both public and private, is essential if progress is to be made. The more comprehensive an organization's approach to the task of community development, the more sources of funding it will need to tap to do its work. A continued effort to create a simplified and responsive federal funding stream remains in order, as is intensified action to create new private funding institutions dedicated to the work, and to attract more attention from existing financial institutions.

Peter Edelman

See also: African American Migration; Community-Based Organizations; Housing Policy; Racial Segregation; Rural Poverty; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal; War on Poverty

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Community Organizing

Community organizing is the strategic and tactical processes through which residents of a geographically and socially delimited area are brought together to exert pressure in the pursuit of what they perceive to be their immediate or long-term collective interests. Community organizing against poverty requires strategies aimed at eradicating political impoverishment as well as economic deprivation.

Community organizing strategies vary in their assumptions about both the need for a permanent organizational structure and, when such entities are deemed necessary, the degree to which they should be organized or structured. They could involve, for example, simple ad hoc mobilization of area residents for a brief protest against police brutality or against specific actions by a slum landlord or an unresponsive local school principal. Or the primary goal might be the establishment of a powerful and permanent community organization that will represent a wide range of both immediate and long-term community interests. Community interests could range from such basic goods as needed traffic stop signs or adequate playgrounds and recreational facilities, to responsive city services like police protection, trash pickup, and public assistance, to ambitious economic development projects and initiatives to build affordable housing.

Community organizing was a popular strategy for addressing various needs of the poor (especially the urban poor) throughout the twentieth century, but the number of community organizations proliferated beginning in the 1960s. Yet if there is one name that is emblematic of community organizing in the United States, it is that of Saul Alinsky, whose ideas had been implanted decades earlier, during the Depression-ravaged 1930s. During the 1940s, Alinsky helped earn his reputation as a grassroots community organizer through effective challenges to what he saw as the elitism and paternalism of settlement house workers. Alinsky's community organization approach was heavily influenced by his work with the Chicago Area Project anti–juvenile delinquency program that was established by Clifford Shaw under the auspices of the Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research in the 1930s. Its model of community action stressed the involvement of area residents and the cultivation of indigenous leadership but focused primarily on changing individuals rather than the social structures that contribute to poverty in urban America.

While working with the Chicago Area Project, Alinsky began organizing the families, churches, and other neighborhood organizations of stockyard workers into the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council (BYNC), the prototype for his brand of militant community organizing. One of the early reform targets of the BYNC was the community organization strategy of area settlement house workers and social workers. Their approach was limited, largely to the coordination of the activities of area social agency heads. In contrast, Alinsky's strategy emphasized the development of indigenous leadership and the use of conflict tactics to force community change.

In 1940, Alinsky founded the Industrial Areas Foundation as a nonprofit group to organize residents to address the many social problems plaguing their older, working-class neighborhoods in highly industrialized regions of the United States. Alinsky's local BYNC and his national Industrial Areas Foundation initiated an important movement for participatory democracy and self-determination among inner-city residents. In Alinsky's highly replicable model of community organizing, professional organizers should organize communities so as to maximize indigenous leadership and to build an independent and self-sustaining base of community power for area residents. The irony of Alinsky's approach and contribution to community organizing is that despite his emphasis on the building of people's organizations based on indigenous leadership, it was Alinsky more than anyone else who was responsible for the growth of community organization as a profession, run, of course, by professionals.

In the 1960s, the Woodlawn Organization (TWO), a community organizing group advised by Alinsky, quickly became one of the largest, most effective, and best-known community organizations serving an African American community. Its growth was accelerated in 1960 by a major urban renewal battle between the University of Chicago and the adjoining Woodlawn community when, without bothering to consult Woodlawn's largely low-income, African American residents, the university announced plans to clear a mile-long, block-wide strip of the Woodlawn community for its South Campus.

Like the BYNC, TWO was not a single organization. Instead, it was organized as an umbrella for many already-existing community organizations. TWO offered a replicable model of community organization for low-income African American urban communities throughout the United States that was far more independent than programs developed under the financial sponsorship of private foundations or the federal government. With the assistance of professional community organization consultants, organizations like TWO were organized by indigenous leaders for area residents, to establish a permanent, locally run organizational base through which to pursue what the residents determined to be their community interests.

A major reason for the proliferation of community organizations in the 1960s was the support received from the federally funded community action programs during the War on Poverty. The earliest of the project precursors to those community action programs, and the one generally regarded as the most influential, was the Mobilization for Youth (MFY) project on Manhattan's increasingly Puerto Rican and African American Lower East Side. Organizers in MFY and other projects, like the Harlem Youth Opportunity Unlimited project—also initiated in New York City before the War on Poverty—tested the potential and the limits of community action as a strategy for changing the power structures of low-income urban communities.

The dominant theoretical guideposts for MFY, and later for the War on Poverty, were provided by Richard Cloward's and Lloyd Ohlin's (1960) "opportunity theory." Opportunity theory legitimized the establishment of a wide range of community-based social programs through its assumption that juvenile delinquency could be reduced if the opportunities available to inner-city youth were expanded. MFY's community organization strategy challenged settlement houses in at least two major ways that paralleled previous conflicts between Alinsky organizations and settlement houses. First, MFY's community organization strategy called for the sponsorship of grassroots organizations that were homogeneous in both class and ethnicity. Second, it assumed that conflict (for example, through social protest) was a legitimate and viable mechanism of institutional reform. Furthermore, those who held to the tenets of opportunity theory believed that if projects like MFY were to be viable, they must include community organization mechanisms that were effective in ensuring that local institutions were responsive to the needs of area residents.

MFY supported numerous protests and other community actions, especially those associated with the civil rights movement. Its staff participated in the 1963 March on Washington and in Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign, supported local African American and Puerto Rican leaders in efforts to develop a police department civilian-review board, and sponsored voter registration campaigns for low-income residents. They also organized community residents on behalf of welfare rights and affordable housing.

During the 1960s, welfare rights campaigns, tenant associations, and neighborhood safety groups emerged in cities throughout the United States in response to the immediate survival needs of residents in poor urban neighborhoods. For example, Johnnie Tillmon, who became a leader in the National Welfare Rights Organization, helped found the Aid to Needy Children (ANC) Mothers Anonymous of Watts, one of the first welfare rights groups in the country. The ANC program provided welfare assistance to poor mothers and their children. ANC Mothers Anonymous and other grassroots community groups were organized by local residents and focused on advocating for their rights at the local level. Welfare rights organizing developed on a national scale when former university professor George Wiley and other welfare rights workers established the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) in 1966. In doing so, Wiley was influenced by Frances Fox Piven's and Richard Cloward's (1977) call for "A Strategy to End Poverty" that originally appeared in the *Nation* in 1966. Unfortunately, the gender, race, and class politics within the NWRO contributed to the shift away from grassroots organizing on the part of the national leadership. For example, Guida West reports that "conflicts over male dominance . . . gradually surfaced and led to fragmentation" of the NWRO (1981, 367).

A contemporary group that carries on the work of community organizing in working-class neighborhoods is the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). According to ACORN (2002), there are 500 ACORN chapters in forty U.S. cities. It was established in 1970 as the Arkansas Community Organization for Reform Now to determine if the NWRO could expand its membership base beyond poor, mostly African American women receiving public assistance. Although ACORN has been described as a neo-Alinsky organization, it differs from Alinsky-style organizations in important ways. For example, ACORN's organizational strategy and tactics were modeled after the work of Alinsky's coworker, Fred Ross. Where Alinsky aimed to organize existing institutions in urban areas (for example, churches and recreational facilities) into a super organization of organizations, Ross learned from organizing low-income Mexican Americans in the more rural Southwest that issues important to area residents could best be identified and addressed through meetings held in their homes. Consequently, those methods became known as the "house meeting, issue organizing approach" (Boyte 1980, 94).

ACORN's goal is not to build a powerful community organization but, instead, to place the power directly in the hands of "the people." The organization views inequality in the distribution of power to be its ultimate issue, and it assumes that power inequality cannot be addressed merely at the local community level. With its commitment to addressing issues of concern to a wide range of citizens, ACORN's multi-issue approach grew into a multistate and later a national organization that employed not only pressure politics but also electoral politics.

By drawing most of its financial resources from its family membership dues and from door-to-door solicitations, ACORN has been able to maintain a great deal of autonomy. However, there are also limitations to its model of community organization. For example, ACORN's extreme pragmatism and need to appease a broad-based constituency reduces its effectiveness in addressing socially divisive issues like racism, sexism, and class exploitation. Although ACORN has been credited with providing organizational opportunities and empowerment for working-class women, there is also a tendency for its day-to-day decision making and operations to be dominated by its more middle-class staff rather than by its members.

Community organizing can build effective power bases for increasing the access of poor people to social welfare and other economic resources at the local level and in some cases beyond. Although community organizing alone cannot produce fundamental changes in the class, gender, and racial structures that are ultimately responsible for the high rates of poverty and economic inequality in the United States, it can provide some relief and reform for those who need it most.

Noel A. Cazenave and Nancy A. Naples

See also: Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN); Living-Wage Campaigns; Poor People's Campaign; Tenant Organizing; War on Poverty; Welfare Rights Movement

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Community-Based Organizations

Community-based organizations are instruments through which residents of particular geographic areas work together to preserve or improve local conditions. For much of the history of the United States, American citizens and immigrants have organized themselves privately on the local level to serve their own interests, often in response to gaps in public services. Among the most common forms of community-based organizations are improvement associations, settlement houses, neighborhood councils, block clubs, community development corporations, and coalitions of organizations patterned according to the teachings of organizer and theorist Saul Alinsky. These groups have pursued such goals as material provision for residents, infrastructure improvements, government services, and political influence. Community-based organizations have varied enormously in their scale, structure, relationship with other established institutions, and activities. Some have counted only a city block their area of concern; others have been coalitions encompassing entire metropolitan regions. Participants have organized some groups spontaneously, and large civic organizations and the federal government have sponsored the creation of others. Some organizations purposefully sought publicity for their activities; other groups, ephemeral and inwardly focused, have escaped public attention.

Urban political structures in the nineteenth century encouraged neighboring property owners to cooperate with one another. Home owners who wanted such communal amenities as sidewalks and sewers extended into their neighborhoods had to petition their city council to provide them; they also promised to pay for the improvements through a special assessment. In order to guarantee sufficient funds for expensive local infrastructure projects, property owners were required to secure commitments from a majority of their neighbors. Collecting such petitions was usually the single goal of the individuals who arranged them, but insofar as the requests brought neighbors together for the purpose of improving the area, these efforts set the stage for the emergence later in the century of more-permanent groups. Poor and working-class people also pooled their resources to provide for each other's needs in emergencies. Fraternal organizations and lodges created life insurance and medical service funds to provide members with services they could not afford individually. Some of these organizations were primarily oriented to such social services, but others provided members with social activities, entertainment, and camaraderie.

In the era before the creation of the federal safety net, private charities provided for some of the material needs of poor people. Reformers mistrustful of the condescension of elite charities toward their clients established settlement houses, where they lived as "residents" among the people they hoped to serve. Settlement houses offered a broad array of direct services and legislative programs to buffer poor urbanites from the ravages of the industrial economy. They also provided gathering spaces where local residents could pursue cultural activities. The most famous American settlement, Chicago's Hull House, provided facilities for immigrant artisans to pursue their native arts and crafts, forums in which residents could perform and view theatrical and musical entertainments, and opportunities for political education. In the early twentieth century, some settlements founded community centers that focused more directly on channeling the energies of local residents toward neighborhood betterment. Settlement houses did not disappear with the rise of new styles of community-based organizing, but they did sometimes change their focus and structure. The Hull House complex, for example, was destroyed in the early 1960s to make way for the campus of the University of Illinois, but it continued to exist in the form of several distinct "Jane Addams Centers" scattered throughout the city.

Although settlement houses and other philanthropic organizations provided services directly to needy residents, another strand of urban activism sought to stimulate organizations that would provide solutions to a broad array of problems that residents perceived in their neighborhoods. Nineteenth-century organizations of property owners who paid for infrastructure evolved into local "improvement associations" of residents who hoped to keep their neighborhoods clean and orderly in order to enhance their living conditions and property values. Such organizations sponsored local sanitation and beautification campaigns and petitioned elected officials for physical improvements such as street lighting and parks, as well as for better service from police and fire departments. Improvement associations in white neighborhoods often included the preservation of racial homogeneity in their mandates, actively seeking to prevent nonwhites from taking up residence in the area. Related community groups, with more narrowly conceived interests, sponsored the adoption of racially restrictive covenants, so that members of minority groups, such as African Americans, Asians, and Jews, could be legally prevented from living in the area, except as resident domestic servants.

Civic groups with an interest in the working class and the poor realized that the middle and upper classes were not alone in their interest in promoting desirable neighborhoods. Local branches of the National Urban League, an African American organization dedicated to helping southern migrants adjust to city life, urged the formation of block clubs to build community in the urban setting. As early as 1920, the Pittsburgh Urban League sponsored a block club in the predominantly working-class, African American Hill District. In the 1920s and again after World War II, the Chicago Urban League staff pounded the pavement to encourage African Americans to create block clubs and to knit those organizations into regional federations. In Cincinnati between 1917 and 1920, Wilbur C. Phillips experimented with a "social unit plan" to help service providers and recipients coordinate children's health care and identify other community needs. Similarly, citywide civic organizations around the nation fostered the development of local community councils to plan for their areas' general improvement or to address specific problems such as juvenile delinquency.

Alinsky, usually regarded as the father of community organizing, transformed such ad hoc practices by establishing a philosophy, a method, and a profession. He gained his initial organizing experience in Chicago, where in the late 1930s he helped Joseph Meegan found the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council. In his 1946 call to arms, *Reveille for Radicals*, Alinsky described how ordinary people could challenge establishment institutions by forming "people's organizations" that concentrated individuals' disparate energies into a single group. The key to Alinsky's approach was that the people must organize and act on their own behalf rather than allowing others to represent their interests. Alinsky argued against conciliation, urging activists not to shrink from using conflict tactics to exercise political power and demand change.

Alinsky translated his philosophy into action through the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), established in 1940 to hone and disseminate the techniques of community organizing, in part by maintaining a core staff of organizers for hire by nascent community groups. The IAF trained a cadre of professional community organizers for whom creating new organizations was more important than individually addressing the interests of particular neighborhoods. The organizer's job was to cultivate local leadership skills, so that neighborhoods could sustain their activities indefinitely on their own. IAF staff successfully organized new, highly effective, publicity-oriented groups in Chicago, Rochester, and other cities. IAF-trained groups often found themselves battling community groups that fronted for other institutions and powerful political interests, as when the Woodlawn Organization (TWO) in Chicago challenged urban renewal plans—supported by the University of Chicago and the business/middle-class-oriented Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference—that threatened to displace Black residents and institutions in the neighborhood. Large, Alinsky-style groups often encouraged the creation of new, smaller groups as a means of fostering locally driven improvement and also of bolstering their own base of support. Some potential groups found IAF's terms too restrictive and expensive and sought alternative routes to community organization. Adopting the pieces of Alinsky's dicta that suited their needs, new community organizations flourished around the country in the 1960s and 1970s, without Alinsky's imprimatur but inspired by his principles.

The movement to help otherwise politically disempowered groups of people to help themselves through community organizing gained momentum in the 1960s, drawing additional inspiration from Michael Harrington's *Other America* (1962) and the southern civil rights movement, which emphasized that the absence of political organization and power were significant dimensions of poverty. An array of new programs sought to promote the engagement of poor people in civic and political affairs, on the theory that participation itself could solve local problems. In 1963, members of Students for a Democratic Society formed the Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP) to build community organizations in urban areas. About 300 participants, principally college students or recent graduates, fanned out in cities like Cleveland and Newark over the next several years, hoping to build an interracial social movement among the poor. President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty required the "maximum feasible participation" of poor people in its local administrative bodies. Federally funded community action agencies also hired residents as paraprofessional staff members. These approaches were by no means limited to urban areas; U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone (D-Minnesota) documented the labors of residents of a Minnesota county in his book *How the Rural Poor Got Power* (1978). Many community organizations used their newfound power to lobby local government officials. Community organizations called for the installation of stop signs, traffic lights, and playgrounds and for better service from sanitation, welfare, and education authorities. Other groups challenged elected officials, calling for an end to police brutality and to urban renewal projects that threatened their neighborhoods with highway building or downtown business and high-end, luxury development plans. Perhaps most famously, residents of the area around Love Canal, New York, challenged the state's handling of a local toxic site. Although occasionally successful in winning particular remedies, these efforts were insufficient to undo poverty in neighborhoods that were becoming increasingly vulnerable as traditional sources of working-class jobs left for suburban areas and overseas.

Many local activists realized that greater community-mindedness, by itself, could do little to address the effects of deindustrialization and economic restructuring on neighborhoods that relied on the proximity of stable, high-paying, working-class jobs. New federal programs in the 1970s, most notably the Community Development Block Grant, provided monies with which city mayors could target particular neighborhoods for improvement and better services. Community organizations created community development corporations (CDCs) to coordinate efforts to attract grants from the government and private sources. CDCs aimed to fix the housing stock, attract commercial and manufacturing jobs, and create medical and child care services within the neighborhood. In contrast to Alinsky-inspired efforts, which encouraged residents to challenge political structures, CDCs tended to focus their energies on enterprises to revitalize local economies. Existing community organizations, such as Bethel New Life in Chicago, also reorganized their missions to take advantage of the new opportunities for bricks and mortar and for economic improvement in their areas. Complementing the efforts of formal CDCs and community organizations were the ongoing and often informal and invisible operations conducted by networks of poor people (primarily women) to meet their own needs collectively by providing child care, food, cash, and other forms of mutual assistance.

The late twentieth century witnessed new trends in the practice of community-based organizing in the United States. First, local community organizations linked themselves into regional and even national networks of groups. The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) has branches around the country. The IAF, on the principle that the influence of allied groups can aid in providing pressure for the interests of particular constituents, has been developing regional networks of organizations. For example, in 1997, IAF launched United Power for Action and Justice, a group that covers the whole of the metropolitan Chicago area. Second, community organizations have distanced themselves from Alinsky's philosophy of conflict. Rather than deploying abrasive and spectacular protests against centers of power, "relational organizing" emphasizes building up networks of personal connections. The shift to more-cordial relationships also allowed for the easier integration of religious groups, whose ethical mandates included behaving in a neighborly fashion, into organizing efforts. Finally, the "community building" approach to revitalizing poor neighborhoods has sought to draw on the existing skills of residents and local institutions instead of conceptualizing such areas as a list of problems to be solved.

Amanda I. Seligman

See also: Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN); Civil Rights Movement; Community Development; Community Organizing; Hull House; Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); Mutual Aid; National Urban League; New Left; *The Other America;* Settlement Houses; Tenant Organizing; Urban Renewal; War on Poverty

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Contingent Work

Contingent work is an employment arrangement where the employee/employer relationship is understood from the outset to be of limited duration. The terms "contingent work" and "nonstandard work" are often used interchangeably. Contingent work relationships are understood to be of limited duration, while nonstandard work includes part-time work and all employment relationships that are not regular, full-time employment.

Contingent and nonstandard employment arrangements have become increasingly important as a result of a series of economic pressures. Profit pressures on companies, driven largely by increased competition and improved technology, have given rise to contract work and temporary employment as strategies for reducing labor costs. The growth in these forms of contingent employment have provided further evidence of dual labor markets: one labor market with a core of stable jobs that are well insulated from economic volatility and peripheral jobs that are more exposed to economic volatility. Contingent work has also resulted from the reduced importance of firm-specific skills, that is, skills acquired on the job. Firm-specific skills raise employee productivity and provide some measure of security for workers since an employer cannot hire a similarly skilled worker from outside the firm. Some researchers have argued that the reduction in firm-specific skills has allowed firms to convert more jobs into contingent jobs. At the same time, the number of women in the labor force, particularly mothers, has increased demand for flexible work schedules. Although many of the contingent arrangements do not offer real flexibility, part-time work provides reduced schedules that allow both women and men to care for family responsibilities. Overall, however, there is only limited evidence that increases in contingent employment have been driven by workers' needs for flexibility, as opposed to employer practices.

Demographics of the Contingent Labor Force

In 2001, 31.0 percent of women worked in nonstandard employment, compared to 22.8 percent of men. These shares are virtually unchanged since 1995 (the first data available) (Kalleberg et al. 1997). The least remunerative types of nonstandard work—part-time, temporary, and on-call jobs—continue to be dominated by women. Overall, women are considerably overrepresented in nonstandard work arrangements: In 2001, 54.5 percent of nonstandard workers were women, compared with 46.9 percent of all workers (author's calculations from the February 2001 Current Population Survey). Economy-wide, more than one in seven U.S. workers is employed in a contingent job; including part-time work in the calculation raises the share of the nonstandard employment to more than one in four workers. Contingent work, however, encompasses heterogeneous groups of workers. Contingent and nonstandard employment can be split, broadly, into two classifications: employment arrangements that are entrepreneurial and employment arrangements that are obligated to an employer. Entrepreneurial arrangements typically include self-employment, independent contracting, and contract company workers and comprise approximately one-fourth of the contingent workforce. Workers in these arrangements tend to be more skilled and better educated and to receive higher compensation. In contrast, the majority of contingent workers (73 percent) are in obligated arrangements, in which an employee works for a single employer for a limited time or under a reduced schedule. These arrangements include part-time or temporary help and on-call/day laborers. Workers in these arrangements tend to be less skilled and lower paid.

Compensation in Contingent Work

Compensation for the obligated arrangements is considerably less than compensation for the entrepreneurial arrangements. For example, in 1999, average hourly wages ranged between $10.84 (temporary help) and $13.19 (on-call/day laborers) for the obligated arrangements. By contrast, average hourly wages for the self-employed were $17.68 and for contract company workers were $19.09. Full-time workers received $15.83 per hour in 1999. (All figures are the author's analysis of the February 1999 Current Population Survey.) Contingent workers also experienced considerable differences in nonwage compensation such as health insurance and pension coverage. As of 2001, workers in temporary help, on-call/day laborers, and part-time employment had very low levels of health insurance coverage; their overall coverage rates were 46.9 percent, 69.1 percent, and 76.6 percent respectively, as compared to 88.2 percent for workers in regular full-time employment (these figures include coverage of any sort). Pension coverage shows a similar pattern. For low-wage workers, the bottom of the earnings distribution is overrepresented with workers in contingent arrangements. More than 22 percent of part-time workers and 17 percent of on-call/day laborers earn less than $5.50 per hour. By contrast, only 4.5 percent of regular, full-time workers earned below that amount (author's analysis of February 1999 Current Population Survey data).

Preferences for Work Arrangements

Among analysts and researchers of nonstandard employment, there is a long-standing debate about the extent to which these work arrangements reflect workers' demands for work/life balance versus employers' efforts to reduce costs. Two nonwork factors play an important role in this debate: being simultaneously enrolled in school and employed, and having young children.

Many workers use nonstandard employment to enable them to enroll in school. However, the majority of eighteen-to-twenty-four-year-old nonstandard workers are not enrolled in school. Part-time workers, especially males, are the most likely among nonstandard workers to be enrolled in school, and the self-employed (including self-employed independent contractors) are the least likely. But overall, only 13.2 percent of women and 13.7 percent of men are *both* employed in nonstandard arrangements and enrolled in school.

Proponents of nonstandard arrangements also point to the benefits of nonstandard work in balancing work with family responsibilities. For the most part, these family responsibilities fall on women, yet women between the ages of eighteen and forty-five with children under six years old do not show a strong preference for nonstandard employment. Overall, they are about 8 percentage points more likely to choose nonstandard employment than are women without children under six. Most of that share comprises women who work in part-time jobs. This preference should perhaps not be surprising, since the needs of parents with young children typically involve dependable schedules, like those provided by regular part-time work, rather than schedules that vary from week to week with only limited control by the worker, such as those often offered in temporary jobs or self-employment.

The percentage of women workers in nonstandard arrangements who prefer standard employment remained relatively constant between 1999 and 2001. Women working part-time hours showed a small decrease (from 18.0 percent to 17.4 percent) in their preference for a full-time job; the drop was larger among men (from 27.1 percent to 23.4 percent). For the first time since the Contingent Work Survey has been conducted, more than half (50.4 percent) of all women in temporary jobs say they prefer their current work arrangement. Men working at temporary help agencies were the least satisfied with their work arrangement. Overall, temporary help and on-call work were the arrangements that workers liked least, but less than half of all women in these arrangements wanted a regular full-time job.

Workers at the bottom of the skills distribution are likely to enter the labor force through temporary help, part-time, and on-call/day labor employment. These forms of work provide access to the labor market but very little job security and only limited opportunity for advancement. Still, there are instances where workers use these job experiences to secure higher-paying jobs in the future. Nevertheless, the current emphasis on placing workers in jobs rather than in education or training programs may mean placing them in low-paying contingent work that does not lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Jeffrey B. Wenger

See also: Day Labor; Domestic Work; Labor Markets; Unemployment

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Contract with America

See New Right

Convict Labor

Convict labor is the institutional employment of prisoners in public or private enterprise.

In contrast to other forms of forced labor, convict labor has been persistently defended as a reform measure that rehabilitates the prisoner's work discipline or "ethic," making him or her eligible for the freedom and citizenship of a liberal democracy and useful to a capitalist economy. In reality, convict labor has historically meant the exploitation of the un- or semiskilled poor and the racially stigmatized. Although convict labor has often succeeded as a disciplinary tool against prisoners and against organized labor, it has generally failed to reintegrate prisoners into the market economy and civil society.

Convict labor has been at the core of the U.S. prison system since its inception. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, incarceration in a penitentiary increasingly replaced the tradition of corporal punishment for the poor that had come to be the norm in the young republic. In Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary (1790), prisoners ate, slept, and worked isolated in single cells. Under New York's "congregate" system at Auburn Prison (1823), convicts inhabited separate cells but ate and worked together under a strict rule of silence. Whereas Pennsylvania's system proved costly to the state

Chain gang of convicts engaged in road work. Pitt County, North Carolina, 1910. The inmates were quartered in the wagons shown in the picture. Wagons were equipped with bunks and moved from place to place as convict labor was utilized. The central figure in the picture is J. Z. McLawhon, who was at that time county superintendent of chain gangs. The dogs are bloodhounds used for running down any convict attempting escape. (Library of Congress)

and harmful to the prisoners' sanity, New York's penitentiaries developed more productive prison workshops modeled after innovations in the emerging factory system. Hats, tools, shoes, and other products of convict labor were either reserved for state use—particularly in time of war—or were sold to private merchants on a piece-price basis. Auburn became the model for America's penal institutions because it united the intention of turning convicts into "useful" participants in a market society with a businesslike pursuit of profit.

Mechanics and craftsmen protested the use of convict labor from the very beginning. They hailed labor as the foundation of social mobility and citizenship, to be reserved for the free and "virtuous poor." But the growing opposition of "free labor" against the state monopoly on convict labor only resulted in the growing involvement of private contractors who used convicts as a cheap and easily disciplined labor pool that could replace organized workers.

With the breakdown of chattel slavery in the South following the Civil War, convict labor became the new institution of social discipline and economic exploitation, since the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1863) still permitted slavery as "a punishment for crime." At first, the introduction of "Black Codes," officially instituting separate systems and standards of criminal justice for Blacks and whites in the South, led to a sharp rise in the number of African American prisoners. Subsequently, the Jim Crow legal system continued to provide a racially defined prison labor force. Wardens sold their convicts' labor per day, offering discounts on the old and infirm. This "lease system" allowed private firms to exploit the "slaves of the state" and encouraged them to feed and dress them as poorly as they pleased. Often the lease system was worse than slavery, since the lessee had no interest in the prisoners' welfare or survival. African American convicts worked and died on the plantations of Louisiana and Mississippi but also in railroad construction and in iron and coal mines in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee, where they were also used as strikebreakers. Less deadly but no less exploitative was the work in the growing manufacturing industry in the Jim Crow South.

Beginning in the 1890s, progressive reformers initiated a gradual shift from the exploitation of convict labor for private profit to the use of prisoners in public works. Southern states abolished the lease system between 1894 (Mississippi) and 1927 (Alabama) and instead worked prisoners on farms and in chain gangs in road construction and in other public projects. Similarly, the piece-price contracts between state prisons and private companies in industrial production gradually declined from the early 1880s until World War II, pushed by the growing labor movement's complaints about unfair competition as well as by manufacturers who could increasingly rely on a sufficient labor pool outside the prison walls.

Federal restrictions on convict labor culminated in the Sumners-Ashurst Act of 1940, which prohibited the interstate commerce in convict-made goods for private use, regardless of state law. Five years earlier, the New Deal administration had created the Prison Industries Reorganization Administration (PIRA) to restructure the state and federal prison systems for the employment of convicts in production for government agencies. Although the demands of World War II created a temporary flurry of activity, institutional limitations, the defensive stand of labor unions, and lackluster inmate participation in often-monotonous and poorly paid work projects made it difficult for convict labor to compete with ever more efficient free enterprise even for government contracts.

In the 1970s, prison administrators worked on a renewed expansion of convict labor in order to defuse the riot-inducing tensions that arose with the confinement and forced immobility of thousands of convicts in the nation's "big houses." The Free Venture Model of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and the 1979 Prison Industry Enhancement Act (PIEA) reintroduced convict labor for private enterprise at minimum wages, from which the institution deducts room and board, victim's compensation, and family support. At the same time, the prison population has rapidly increased, mainly because of longer sentences for nonviolent or low-level offenses like drug use or graffiti spraying. Thus, convict labor in the 1980s and 1990s has been just one element in a prison-industrial complex that has expanded parallel to the disinvestment in poor communities and public infrastructure. Incarceration in contemporary America thus underwrites not just the employment of prisoners as an immobile, cheap, low-skill labor force but also their profitable warehousing, which maintains rather than alleviates poverty and racial discrepancies.

Volker Janssen

See also: Crime Policy; Indentured Servitude; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Slavery

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Coxey's Army

In 1894, in the midst of a severe economic depression, at least 1,000 people tried to take part in the first in a long tradition of popularly organized marches on Washington, D.C., on behalf of social and economic justice. Jacob Coxey, a businessman and social reformer from Ohio, and Carl Browne, a labor activist from California, led a group of almost 500 men who arrived in the capital in late April. On May 1, the entire group marched to the Capitol building, where Browne's and Coxey's actions resulted in their arrest and imprisonment for trespassing on the grounds of the Capitol. Related police action had already taken place at the state and local level in partially successful attempts to prevent more marchers from reaching Washington to join the protest army. The goal of the march was to attack the rampant unemployment that directly affected many of the marchers. The marchers put forth a comprehensive plan that asked the federal government to issue no-interest bonds worth $500 million to towns, cities, and counties. The money was to be used for public works projects such as road building and other improvements, and the projects would also serve to employ thousands of unemployed workers. Under the plan, workers would be guaranteed a minimum wage of $1.50 a day, almost 80 percent above the norm (Hoffman 1970, 219, 257). In short, the proposal was for a massive program of federal deficit spending that would end the economic depression by employing thousands of workers and expanding the money supply. It was a proposal that received no serious congressional or presidential attention, but Coxey's and Browne's unique method of marching directly to Washington to demand change captured the imagination of many supporters of reform. At the same time, their methods caused great alarm among those within the traditional political system.

The debate that surrounded Coxey's Army and its demands mirrored many other debates about how to respond to poverty and unemployment in the United States. Like more-moderate reformers, Coxey and Browne clearly believed that direct relief payments to workers were inappropriate; they wanted help in the form of jobs. But unlike many reformers, they also wanted these jobs to establish a minimum wage for workers—an idea that was unacceptable to the majority of legislators in the United States. And like some economic reformers with a national dimension to their thinking, they understood that federal policy—especially deficit spending and a looser money supply—could have a fundamental effect on the broader economy of the nation. Again, however, most politicians of the time believed that the appropriate response to economic crisis was for governments to spend less, since their revenues were less.

In mobilizing the poor to demand changes, Coxey and Browne had many counterparts in the vibrant labor and social reform culture of the late 1880s and 1890s. Yet their method of demanding change by going directly to the nation's capital was unique and untested. Thus, the arrest of the leaders in Washington, the use of police measures by state and local officials to prevent other groups from joining them, and the dismissal of their demands by national leaders were not surprising. In the wake of Coxey's Army, gradual changes in both national policy and political culture would make their demands seem less exceptional. Perhaps most significant, their method of protest—the march on Washington—would be memorably and effectively embraced in subsequent decades by veterans, by civil rights activists, and by a broad coalition of poor people's advocates, all demanding significant changes in federal government social policy.

Lucy G. Barber

See also: Bonus Army; Civil Rights Movement; Economic Depression; Federalism; Minimum Wage; Poor People's Campaign; Relief; Unemployment

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Crime Policy

Crime disproportionately harms the poor and hampers antipoverty strategies. But efforts to combat crime often perpetuate rather than alleviate poverty. In 2001, the rate of violent crime suffered by those with an income under $15,000 was more than twice that of those with an income over $50,000 (Rennison 2002, 5). Yet proactive policing, mass incarceration, and legal restrictions on ex-offender activity also exacerbate the poverty of offenders, their families, and even their neighborhoods.

Traditionally, men, the young, members of racial and ethnic minorities, and the poor have most often been victims of crime. Although victimization rates declined in the 1990s for all income groups, the poor benefited least from these reductions (Thacher 2003, 29). Women also benefited less. Nearly one-third of all crimes affecting women are committed by intimate partners or family members, compared to less than 10 percent for men (Rennison 2002, 1). Thus, reductions in crime, unless targeted at family violence, do less to protect women.

Crime is concentrated in neighborhoods that suffer from other economic and social problems. Early scholars posited a direct link between poverty, social disorganization, and crime. More-recent research has focused on the institutional and individual factors that accompany social disinvestment and in turn help foster crime. Neighborhoods with high crime rates are then caught in a vicious cycle: Crime makes it hard to attract the home owners, business investments, schools, or public amenities that could help residents move out of poverty (DiIulio 1989).

Many crime policies, therefore, target poor neighborhoods. In one approach, police respond aggressively to small crimes in the expectation that maintaining order will deter more-serious crimes. In another, police use data to help them focus their efforts on "hot spots" where multiple crimes occur. These approaches can also be combined in community policing, in which police collaborate with local residents to identify priorities and build relationships in the neighborhood. But aggressive police activity can also lead to mistakes that fall most heavily on the poor as innocent people in crime-prone areas are subject to additional scrutiny and sometimes mistaken accusations. Thus, residents in areas of concentrated disadvantage, who are usually people of color, are highly cynical about legal fairness and police behavior even though they condemn deviance and violence at higher rates than do whites (Sampson and Bartusch 1998).

Imprisonment, the most widely used crime policy, also has a dual quality. Prison keeps criminals off the streets, and incarceration rates, largely stable through most of the early twentieth century, have risen rapidly since the 1970s. But these prisoners are overwhelmingly poor. In 1991, a survey of state prisoners showed that 53 percent had had an income of under $10,000 a year before they entered prison. Yet 67 percent had been working, 55 percent of them full-time, in the month before their arrest (Beck et al. 1993, 3). Most prisoners are also people of color. In 2001, 44.5 percent of all inmates were Black, and 17.4 percent were Latino (Harrison and Beck 2002, 12). Men made up 93.4 percent of the prison population, but the number of female prisoners increased by 36 percent between 1995 and 2001 (Harrison and Beck 2002, 1).

It has been predicted that over a quarter (28.5 percent) of all Black men in the United States will serve a prison sentence in their lifetime, compared to 16 percent of Hispanic men but only 4.4 percent of white men (Bonczar and Beck 1997, 1). These disparate life chances are linked to three major policy changes: the increased use of incarceration, reductions in the sentencing discretion of judges, and the abolition of parole. Drug laws, which now routinely carry a prison sentence, have been applied disproportionately to drugs that minority groups use and sell. Racial disparities in the charges brought for similar offenses, combined with long minimum sentences, cause the burden of sentencing changes to fall upon Blacks. The abolition of parole prevents many offenders from reducing their sentences for good behavior and for participation in rehabilitation programs (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and Leadership Conference Education Fund 2000).

Poor communities also suffer from incarceration and from the legal restrictions imposed upon ex-offenders. Within neighborhoods, incarceration can remove criminals from their likely victims, but it can also disrupt informal networks that enforce social control. Communities that experience high rates of incarceration are also communities to which ex-prisoners return and pose a heavy financial and social burden. Ex-offenders have difficulty finding employment, they are often prohibited by law from living in public housing or receiving assistance from benefit programs, they can destabilize family arrangements that were established in their absence, and they add to the stigma that poor neighborhoods already experience (Clear, Rose, and Ryder 2001).

Ann Chih Lin

See also: Classism; Convict Labor; Domestic Violence; Juvenile Delinquency; Picturing Poverty (II); Racism

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"Culture of Poverty"

See The Children of Sanchez; Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Poverty Research; "Underclass"

D

The Dangerous Classes of New York, *Charles Loring Brace*

In 1853, Charles Loring Brace helped found the Children's Aid Society in New York, a group dedicated to child welfare in the city. Nineteen years later, he published *The Dangerous Classes of New York,* a study of the lives of poor children and an assessment of the work of the society. As the title suggests, Brace believed that "the class of a large city most dangerous to its property, its morals and its political life, are the ignorant, destitute, untrained, and abandoned youth" (Brace 1872, ii).

The book detailed the problems of crime, prostitution, alcoholism, overcrowding, and homelessness and argued that difficult living conditions and neglectful parenting were the primary causes of youthful indolence and violence. Yet Brace firmly believed that wayward children could rise above their circumstances with proper education and the good example of middle-class reformers. In this vein, he insisted that charitable giving must be coupled with instruction in industriousness and self-reliance. He supported industrial education and almshouses for the homeless, but he especially favored placing orphans, or children from families deemed irresponsible (sometimes because of religious or cultural differences; immigrant and Catholic parents were those most likely to be found "unworthy"), with "respectable," especially rural, families. Brace and other society members advocated sending children to farm families in the West, and over 20,000 children left New York for the western states on "orphan trains" between 1853 and the 1930s. Some found loving families; others were separated from their own families and lived more like servants than adopted children.

The passage below demonstrates Brace's distrust of relief, his faith that children could be "saved" from pauperism through the discipline of work, and his belief that in order to be truly successful, charity must improve the character of its recipients—while keeping a sharp eye on the bottom line.

Sarah Case

See also: Child Labor; Child Welfare; Child-Saving; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Homelessness; Immigrants and Immigration; Urban Poverty

[The Children's Aid Society] has always sought to encourage the principle of Self-help in its beneficiaries, and has aimed much more at promoting this than merely relieving suffering. All its branches, its Industrial Schools, Lodging-houses, and Emigration [removal to the West], aim to make the children of the poor better able to take care of themselves; to give them such a training that they shall be ashamed of begging, and of idle, dependent habits, and to place them where their associates are self-respecting and

industrious. . . . [W]e have taken advantage of the immense demand for labor through our rural districts. . . . Through this demand we have been enabled to accomplish our best results, with remarkable economy. We have been saved the vast expense of Asylums, and have put our destitute children in the child's natural place—with a family. Our Lodging-houses also have avoided the danger attending such places of shelter, of becoming homes for vagrant boys and girls. They have continually passed their little subjects along to the country, or to places of work, often forcing them to leave the house. In requiring the small payments for lodging and meals, they put the beneficiaries in an independent position, and check the habits and spirit of pauperism. . . . The Industrial Schools, in like manner, are seminaries of industry and teachers of order and self-help.

Source: Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York, and Twenty Years' Work among Them* (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1872), 441–442.

Day Labor

Day labor is a type of temporary employment that is distinguished by impermanence of employment, hazards in or undesirability of the work, the absence of fringe and other typical workplace benefits (such as breaks or safety equipment), and the daily search for employment.

Two types of day labor industries exist: informal and formal. Informal day labor is characterized by workers who congregate in open-air, curbside, or otherwise visible markets, such as empty lots, street corners, parking lots, designated public spaces, or the storefronts of home-improvement establishments, to solicit temporary daily work. Soliciting work in this manner is an increasingly visible part of the urban landscape, and the practice is growing in the United States and worldwide in countries and regions such as Mexico, Japan, and South America. Several important characteristics identify the informal day labor industry and its participants: The market is highly visible, with large hiring sites spread throughout metropolitan Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and other cities in the Southwest, the South, and the Northwest. Most day laborers are male, foreign-born, recently arrived, and unauthorized, and most have low levels of education and a poor command of English. As a result, the workers in this industry are highly vulnerable and exploited. The informal day labor market primarily provides temporary job opportunities that last from one to three days in the broadly defined construction industry, which includes home refurbishment, landscaping, roofing, and painting. In some regions, it also provides limited light industrial and factory work.

The formal day labor industry is tied to for-profit temporary staffing agencies or "hiring halls" and primarily places workers in manual work assignments at or around minimum wage. These temp agencies or hiring halls are less ubiquitous than informal sites, and they are located in enclosed hiring halls with boarded windows or other neighborhood-based establishments. As in the informal day labor market, many of the participants are undocumented recent immigrants and have low levels of education. However, the workers in formal day labor are more diverse than those in the informal market and also include nonimmigrants, women, and a substantial homeless population. Participants in this market are similarly vulnerable and exploited, as is evidenced by low wages, infrequent employment, workplace injuries, and such ancillary employment charges such as check cashing fees for payroll and costly transportation charges to get to the work site. The formal day labor markets, in addition to construction work, also offer temporary employment in light industrial work, factory work, loading and unloading, and warehouse work.

Both informal day labor and formal day labor are unstable, neither provides benefits or workplace protections, and both pay poorly and are

Day laborers pick broccoli in Salinas, California. Day laborers earn low wages near, and often below, the minimum wage rate and are generally paid in cash at the end of the workday. (Morton Beebe/Corbis)

characterized by such workplace abuses as instances of nonpayment, lack of regular breaks, and hazardous work.

The practice of men and women gathering in public settings in search of work dates back to at least medieval times, when the feudal city was originally a place of trade. In England during the 1100s, workers assembled at daily or weekly markets to be hired. Statutes regulated the opening of public markets in merchant towns and required agricultural workers (foremen, plowmen, carters, shepherds, swineherds, dairymen, and mowers) to appear with tools to be hired in a "common place and not privately" (Mund 1948, 106). In the United States, during the early to middle 1800s, day laborers recruited from construction crews worked for the track repairmen of railroad companies. Casual laborers (often off from construction jobs) worked in a variety of unskilled positions (brakemen, track repairmen, stevedores at depots, emergency firemen, snow clearers, mechanic's assistants). Some of these workers were recent immigrants, Chinese and Mexicans in the West and Germans and Irish in the East. Between 1788 and 1830, hundreds of day laborers ("stand-ups," as they were known then) worked along the waterfront, and more than half of New York City's male Irish workers were day laborers. In 1834, a "place was set aside on city streets in New York where those seeking work could meet with those who wanted workers" (Mund 1948, 96). This exchange worked for both men and women, with employment for women (primarily African American) concentrated in the domestic labor market sector.

The growth and development of day labor in the United States and elsewhere has very real implications for thousands of workers and their employers. In its simplest form, day labor provides a distinct service to employers who wish to forgo traditional forms of hiring workers and who prefer not to undertake the time-consuming and costly activities associated with providing "regular" employment. The gains to employers from hiring day laborers are clear: Day laborers are easy to find, plentiful, and relatively inexpensive to hire. Employers are spared the liability costs and paperwork associated with providing benefits and observing fair labor standards. A subcontractor needing help to finish a project can easily hire a day laborer for several hours or several days to tidy up, remove debris, clean the site for inspection, or do other types of unskilled and skilled tasks. Similarly, a home owner wishing to move from one home to another or to uproot a tree in his or her backyard need not hire an expensive contractor for such seemingly simple but labor-intensive jobs. The existence of the day labor market also makes it easy for employers to circumvent paying the higher rates that a non–day laborer on a job or project would normally get, and, more generally, to avoid creating more permanent jobs in favor of the cheaper alternative.

Day labor also has some potential benefits for workers, who would not otherwise be employed. In addition, day laborers get paid in cash (usually untaxed), can walk away from a dangerous or particularly dirty job, and can negotiate a wage for a fair day of work. For some day laborers, this occupation provides a flexible alternative to a regularly scheduled job, autonomy from a difficult employer, and the opportunity to learn different skills. However, such potential benefits should not outweigh the reality that day labor plays on the vulnerabilities of unorganized and otherwise marginalized workers and can be effectively used to undermine labor protections for workers more generally.

Abel Valenzuela Jr.

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Bracero Program; Contingent Work; Domestic Work; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Immigrants and Immigration; Informal Economy; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing

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Debt

Debt is incurred when a person receives money or goods in exchange for a promise to repay the amount borrowed plus interest. People borrow for many reasons. They borrow to pay for an education, to start a business, or to move to a place where there are greater opportunities. They borrow to improve their current well-being by obtaining consumer goods. Sometimes people are forced to borrow to meet immediate needs, such as medical services, rent, or food. Borrowing is an exchange that can benefit both borrowers and lenders, but the possibility that the borrower might not repay the debt can make it difficult to achieve this mutual benefit. Individuals who find it difficult to convince lenders that they will repay the debt find it difficult to borrow. People with low incomes and few assets have a particularly difficult time convincing lenders they will repay debts. Historically, this has made it difficult for poor people to borrow, a significant problem in an economy in which access to credit has become increasingly important for achieving upward mobility and higher standards of living. It has also made them more vulnerable to shady creditors charging exorbitantly high interest rates. For these and other reasons, policies affecting the repayment of debts have been at the center of many public policy debates throughout American history.

The Poor Pay More

The interest on a debt is the sum of two parts. The first part represents the value of the money to the lender and would be the interest rate charged to someone who, in the lender's view, is completely certain to repay the debt. The second part is a risk premium that covers the costs of trying to ensure repayment and the losses when a borrower does not pay. The more likely it seems to the lender that the borrower will not be willing or able to repay the debt, the greater the risk premium.

Because they find it difficult to convince lenders that they will be willing and able to repay their debts, poor borrowers pay higher risk premiums. Borrowers sometimes try to reduce the risk for lenders by offering collateral. If the debt is not paid, the lender can claim the collateral. Poor households typically do not have the kinds of assets, such as real estate, that banks accept as collateral. Lenders attempt to lower risk by screening debt applicants and by spending time and money collecting delinquent debts. The costs of screening, such as charges for obtaining a credit report, tend not to vary a great deal with the size of the debt. Because the loans that the poor seek are often small, the costs of screening are large relative to the size of the debt. When a borrower does not pay, the lender can turn to such legal remedies as garnishment of wages to collect the debt, but poor households often find that their wages do not provide much security to a lender.

Poor people often find that it is not possible to obtain a debt through formal credit markets at any price. Banks and other lenders in the formal credit market are not willing to increase the interest rate too much because the consequent increase in the size of the debt payments makes it more likely the debtor will default. The inability to obtain credit through the formal credit market leads the poor to turn to "fringe banks," such as pawnshops, check cashing outlets, or loan sharks. Over the course of American history, the access of the poor to formal credit markets has increased, but many of the poor still have to turn to fringe banking.

Fringe Banking

The use of fringe banking to obtain credit has been prevalent throughout American history. During the colonial period, a large number of people who came to the American colonies came as indentured laborers. A laborer who signed an indenture contract was required to work for the owner of the contract for a specified number of years. The indenture was only for a specific period of time, for instance seven years, but the owner of the contract did have extensive rights to control the behavior of the servant. People were willing to accept such an arrangement because of their lack of access to formal credit. Moving to America was regarded as an opportunity for improvement, but the cost of transportation was greater than the average person could afford. There were no banks that would lend a large sum of money to a poor person to migrate across an ocean. A legally binding indenture contract enabled the borrower to use his or her future labor as collateral.

Debt peonage in the South after the Civil War illustrates another side of alternative credit markets, a side in which debt became a burden rather than an opportunity. African Americans were emancipated, but having few assets, they had to turn to country stores for credit to purchase necessities. The interest rate on a loan at a southern country store could be as much as 70 percent. Borrowers who could not pay their debts after harvest were often required to commit the next year's crop (that is, a crop lien) as collateral. The combination of high interest rates and crop liens were often enough to create long-term indebtedness to the store owner, a situation that came to be referred to as "debt peonage."

During the twentieth century, access to formal credit markets expanded. Part of the increase is attributable to credit market innovations that enabled low-income households to obtain loans at reasonable rates more easily. Finance companies were created to facilitate the purchase of durable consumer goods (such as cars, large appliances, or furniture) on installment plans. Because the durable goods acted as collateral for the debt, African Americans appear to have experienced less discrimination in finding installment loans than in finding other types of consumer credit. In addition, a coalition of small lenders and the Russell Sage Foundation drafted a Uniform Small Loan Law that many states enacted. The law provided for licensing of small lenders and allowed them to charge higher interest rates than most usury laws had allowed.

It may seem that a usury law that sets maximum interest rates should benefit the poor, but usury laws can have just the opposite effect. Because the costs of lending to the poor are high relative to the amounts borrowed, conventional lenders typically do not find small debts profitable. In the absence of a legal small-debt market, poor borrowers have to turn to unregulated lenders. The Uniform Small Loan Law raised legal interest rates on small debts, but it made it possible to obtain these debts from legitimate businesses.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a continued opening of credit markets. Part of this expansion was the result of continued innovation, such as the introduction of credit cards. Another part of the opening of credit markets was due to changes in public policy. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974 were enacted to reduce discrimination in credit markets. Although there is evidence that discrimination against women has declined, considerable evidence suggests that racial discrimination still exists in credit markets, especially mortgage markets.

Although lenders in formal credit markets have continued to expand their services, many poor borrowers still have to resort to fringe banks. Despite charging interest rates that are often higher than 200 percent, pawnshops thrived during the 1980s and 1990s, as did check cashing outlets and rent-to-own stores. The increased dependence of poor households on fringe banking was caused by reduced access to the formal banking system due to increased fees for small accounts, the closing of branches in low-income communities, and decreases in the real incomes of poor households.

Debt and Public Policy

Conflicts over policies affecting debt have been a staple of American politics. Public policy influences the relationship between lenders and borrowers in several ways. The law determines when borrowers can have their debts discharged. The law also determines the means that lenders can use to try to enforce repayment.

Public policy toward borrowers was a controversial topic in the years immediately following the American Revolution. Conflicts between Federalists and Anti-Federalists over the adoption of the Constitution were, in part, conflicts over debt. States were prohibited from impairing the obligation of contracts, which was interpreted as barring them from passing any legislation that would discharge a debt incurred before the legislation was passed.

In general, law in early America supported strict enforcement of debt contracts. Imprisonment for debt was not uncommon, though within debtors' prisons, the rich and the poor were often treated differently. Some wealthy borrowers went to prison rather than turn over their assets to lenders. In debtors' prison, the wealthy sometimes lived in private quarters with their own furnishings.

Class differences also appeared in the first federal debt relief law, the Bankruptcy Act of 1800. The law enabled insolvent debtors to obtain a discharge of their debts, but proceedings had to be initiated by a creditor who was owed at least $1,000. The law provided no relief to poor borrowers who owed small sums.

As the economy developed, attitudes toward debt and insolvency evolved. Many people came to believe that macroeconomic forces such as financial crises and deflation were often more responsible for economic failure than was individual behavior. Changes in attitudes toward borrowers led to changes in public policy. Most states ended imprisonment for debt. During the series of financial crises that struck the United States at roughly ten-year intervals during the nineteenth century, states passed moratoriums on debt repayments and stay laws to protect destitute debtors from legal action by creditors. States also enacted homestead laws declaring that all or part of a person's home or farm could not be taken to pay his or her debts and exemption laws specifying other assets that could not be taken.

The 1898 Bankruptcy Act marked an important turning point for many borrowers. Although the law was primarily the result of lobbying by associations of manufacturers and wholesalers, it enabled any insolvent borrower to file for bankruptcy and receive a discharge of his or her debts. The Bankruptcy Act was extensively amended by the Chandler Act in 1938. With the expansion of consumer credit in the 1920s, there was a rapid expansion in the number of bankruptcy cases filed by wage earners. Studies suggested that many people would have preferred to pay off all or part of their debts if they could have done so over a longer period of time. After the Chandler Act, bankruptcy offered two alternatives for insolvent borrowers. In Chapter 7 cases, debtors turn their nonexempt assets over to the court and receive a discharge of most of their debts. In Chapter 13 cases, borrowers propose a plan to pay all or part of their debts over time. Although the introduction of Chapter 13 was intended as a benefit to bankrupt wage earners, the vast majority of consumers have chosen to use Chapter 7 and receive an immediate discharge.

The number of bankruptcy cases rose from 226,476 in 1979 to over 1 million in 1996. The rapid increase in bankruptcy cases gave rise to intense lobbying by the credit industry to amend the bankruptcy law. The National Consumer Bankruptcy Coalition, composed of VISA, Mastercard, the American Bankers Association, and other creditor associations, began lobbying for bankruptcy legislation in 1997. Ironically, their efforts have focused on making borrowers pay off more of their debts by forcing them into Chapter 13, which was originally intended as an option to benefit bankrupt wage earners. Proponents of the revision argue that the increases in bankruptcy are due to an overly generous bankruptcy law and the declining social stigma of bankruptcy. Opponents of the revision cite overly aggressive marketing of consumer credit and unstable incomes as the causes of increased bankruptcy. They suggest that the revision would actually turn the federal government into a collection agency for creditors. The future of public policy toward poor borrowers will probably depend on the outcome of this ongoing debate over bankruptcy law.

Bradley A. Hansen

See also: Capitalism; Community-Based Organizations; Housing Policy; Indentured Servitude

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Dependency

There are many forms of dependency, but "welfare dependency" in particular has received much attention in Western societies, especially in recent years in the United States. Agitation for reform of the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 in England beginning in the late eighteenth century was grounded in good part on arguments by Thomas Malthus and others regarding the deleterious moral and economic effects of relief to the poor. Malthus helped develop what Albert Hirschman and others in the twentieth century have called the "perversity thesis"—that is, the idea that aid to the poor was actually bad because it led them to give up trying to adhere to social standards regarding work and family. This sort of thinking quickly made its way across the Atlantic, and it has been an enduring presence in debates about public assistance in the United States for over 200 years.

More than any other idea, the perversity thesis has influenced welfare policy discourse in the United States. The welfare reforms of the 1990s are a dramatic example of the enduring legacy of the perversity thesis. By the 1990s, welfare dependency had come to be seen in significant policy circles as replacing poverty as the key social welfare issue. Influential arguments such as those by Charles Murray in his 1984 book *Losing Ground* had laid the basis for suggesting that only with the abolition of welfare would it be possible to even contemplate the eradication of poverty. Bill Clinton successfully campaigned for the presidency in 1992 promising to "end welfare as we know it." He then in 1996 felt obligated to sign the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act so that he could campaign for reelection claiming he had kept his promise. The law's preamble stressed the need to attack welfare dependency as a root cause of many of the most serious social ills afflicting the nation. The law abolished the sixty-one-year-old cash assistance program Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and replaced it with a block grant program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), giving states the option to run their welfare programs largely as they saw fit as long as they reduced welfare dependency and put recipients to work according to specified quotas. The 1996 law placed time limits on the receipt of federally funded benefits, capping such benefits after five years. It allowed states to set even stricter time limits, which a number of states in fact did. The welfare rolls were slashed at an unprecedented rate. All this took place in the name of ridding society of the scourge of welfare dependency.

The analysis used to identify welfare dependency as a root cause for social ills has been consistently questioned by scholars, activists, concerned citizens, and numerous other observers. Yet welfare dependency has proven to have a powerful rhetorical appeal, suggesting personal irresponsibility, freeloading, and failure to adhere to basic work and family values. Focusing on welfare receipt as a form of dependency facilitates likening it to other questionable forms of dependency, and in particular to drug dependencies. Welfare dependency has historically been denigrated in various ways; it has sometimes been criminalized, sometimes medicalized, and often both at the same time. Other dependencies, such as being dependent on a male breadwinner in a traditional two-parent family, are not denigrated. Single mothers who rely on welfare are seen as needing to be weaned from a bad form of dependency whereas women who are dependent upon a male in a traditional marriage are not. The underlying assumption that distinguishes these two forms of dependency has to do with who is practicing personal responsibility according to ascendant work and family norms in a market-centered society. Rarely is this assumption challenged, and as a result, welfare dependency continues to be articulated in welfare policy discourse as a fundamental problem rather than as a necessary aid to families adversely affected by prevailing social and economic relations.

Sanford F. Schram

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Malthusianism; Poor Laws; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Deserving/ Undeserving Poor

Since the early nineteenth century, the mainstream public discourse on poverty has distinguished between the "deserving" poor, who are poor through no fault of their own, and the "undeserving" poor, whose poverty seems to derive chiefly from low work motivations, moral failings, or "dependency" on charity. Such distinctions rest on the assumption that poverty is a matter of personal responsibility (rather than the product of power relationships and political economic structures) and can be overcome by some sort of personal transformation (Katz 1989, 7). Laden with racial and gendered meanings, the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor has been integrally linked to the moral valuation of wage labor, military service, and nuclear family life. In both rhetoric and public policy, women and racial minorities have been substantially excluded from the ranks of the deserving poor.

The racial and gendered meanings of the deserving and undeserving poor have been inextricably linked to the evolution of U.S. social welfare policy. The public discourse has portrayed programs serving large numbers of white males—such as Old Age Insurance (OAI) (commonly known as Social Security), veterans' pensions, work relief, and job training—as helping deserving recipients by rewarding and encouraging wage labor and military service. Programs such as OAI are generally understood to be contributory and universal, providing entitlements, not handouts. By contrast, the recipients of means-tested relief programs (who are disproportionately female and nonwhite) are considered undeserving and are required to provide proof, sometimes extensive, of their ongoing need, worthiness, and willingness to obey certain behavioral rules in order to receive assistance. Relief programs such as general assistance and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are portrayed as antithetical to the

American work and family ethic, easily taken advantage of by those who seek to avoid full-time employment or nuclear family life.

Public perceptions of the deserving and undeserving poor have changed considerably over the course of American history. In the seventeenth century, when there was widespread scarcity, the public generally viewed poverty as inescapable and divinely sanctioned. Poor people received pity and assistance; their poverty was not interpreted as a sign of weakness or moral failure. Indeed, poverty was thought to provide an opportunity for those who were divinely ordained to be affluent to fulfill their charitable obligations. Poor-relief policies in the early colonies were based on British poor laws from the Elizabethan era. Local governments had an obligation to provide resources (either through the provision of "outdoor" [in-home, or noninstitutional] relief or "indoor" [institutional, in poorhouses or similar institutions] relief) to poor members of their communities but not to visitors, who were sent back to their place of origin.

The idea that one could distinguish between the deserving and undeserving poor took shape in the nineteenth century and was closely linked to rising rates of immigration and urbanization and to the growth of a capitalist-industrial economy. As the costs of poor relief increased and poverty became more visible, communities began to distinguish between those considered genuinely needy because they were incapable of work due to old age, sickness, or disability, and the able-bodied, who were considered capable of work and thus undeserving of assistance. Women who were sexually active outside of marriage were also placed under the rubric of the undeserving.

In the early nineteenth century, the public discourse on poverty also began to judge and classify the poor according to their reliance on government assistance. Critics of poor relief charged that government assistance produced the undeserving poor by undermining recipients' work ethic, encouraging them to idleness, and destroying their character. In the second half of the nineteenth century, public criticism of relief increased and contributed to a wholesale scaling back of relief provisions. In many cities, public officials either drastically reduced the value of their relief grants or abolished them altogether. White middle-class proponents of scientific charity, organized in charity organization societies (COSs), began to play an increased role in the administration of poverty assistance. COS leaders, such as Josephine Shaw Lowell, argued that private agencies could best address the behavioral roots of poverty and advocated screening and investigating the poor to separate the worthy from the unworthy.

The late nineteenth century also marked the emergence of Civil War pensions, the first federal government social provision for recipients considered deserving. The provision of pensions to Union veterans received considerable public support, and public authorities did not screen recipients for need or morality. By contrast, the relief provided to freed slaves by the Freedmen's Bureau was criticized for encouraging idleness and inspired considerable debate about just which Blacks were "deserving" of assistance.

In the 1890s, poverty intensified, and it became increasingly clear to public authorities that private charity could not solve the problem. In response to campaigns by white middle-class women, states began to institute programs to grant pensions to single mothers. Known as mothers' aid or mothers' pensions, these programs tried to free their recipients from the stigma of relief by instituting strict screening practices and eligibility requirements intended to ensure that only deserving women received assistance. Program administrators primarily provided assistance to desperately poor white widows. They classified deserted, separated, and unmarried mothers as ineligible for assistance, refused to help those who had assets of nearly any kind, and discriminated against immigrants and African Americans.

During the Great Depression, the extent of poverty throughout the nation made the idea that poverty resulted from moral failings increasingly untenable. The federal government provided citizens with relief, but "the dole" continued to elicit criticism for encouraging idleness. In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt described relief as "a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit" (Katz 1986, 226). To decrease the number of people dependent on relief, New Deal policymakers created new groups of deserving recipients of government assistance by establishing new social welfare programs linked to wage work. The public job programs created by the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps provided large numbers of able-bodied white men with jobs and thus received considerable public support for helping the deserving poor in the spirit of the American work ethic.

The Social Security Act (SSA) of 1935 created the Aid to the Blind program and in 1954 added Aid to the Disabled. Recipients of these programs were regarded as deserving because blindness and disabilities were considered faultless, well-defined, and unalterable causes of poverty. The SSA also created OAI, unemployment insurance (UI), and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC). To ensure that the primarily white urban male recipients of OAI and UI did not get branded as undeserving, the designers of these programs made them universal (not means or morals tested), funded them through designated payroll taxes, and emphasized that the programs were contributory and offered earned benefits rather than relief.

Architects of the ADC program (renamed AFDC in 1962) also tried to ensure that the single mothers and children who benefited from the program did not get identified as undeserving. Yet they did this in ways that ultimately contributed to the stigmatization of ADC recipients: States were permitted to police and regulate recipients through strict moral and financial requirements, to refuse assistance to certain recipients who would then have to accept very low-waged work without it, to provide only meager amounts of financial assistance, and to subject women to home visits from caseworkers who disqualified lone mothers who were found to be involved with men. The 1939 Social Security Act Amendments further facilitated the stigmatization of ADC recipients as undeserving when they created a separate policy for widowed mothers whose husbands had been covered under the Social Security system. The Survivors' Insurance program offered more generous benefits, without intimate surveillance and regulation, to these widows and children, deeming them deserving in comparison to ADC mothers who were divorced, never-married, or married to men whose jobs were not covered by Social Security.

Over the course of the 1940s and 1950s, the public discourse on poverty began to single out ADC as a grant for the undeserving poor. In the 1930s and early 1940s, politicians and journalists in northern cities described the program as "child aid"—a grant for innocent poor children—and the ADC program commanded a fair amount of public support. However, in the late 1940s and 1950s, with the civil rights movement becoming a significant political force and facing escalating postwar migration of African Americans to northern cities, conservative politicians and journalists began to claim that welfare grants in these cities encouraged Blacks to migrate. By the 1960s, the mainstream public discourse on ADC focused almost exclusively on African American recipients and on mothers rather than children, describing these women as profoundly undeserving of government financial support. Many media reports portrayed ADC recipients as promiscuous, lazy, unmarried Black women who abused alcohol and neglected their children.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, some left-wing academics and liberal social critics inadvertently fueled the public discourse on the undeserving poor through studies that focused on the behavioral roots of poverty. In 1959, anthropologist Oscar Lewis distinguished what he called a "culture of poverty" from economic deprivation, crystallizing an image that had a profound impact on poverty discourse and policies. Lewis argued that the culture of poverty was a way of life, passed down from generation to generation, characterized by powerlessness, apathy, promiscuity, and marital dissolution. The notion of a culture of poverty (popularized by the publication of antipoverty activist Michael Harrington's *Other America*) influenced the liberal architects of the Great Society programs of the 1960s. Rather than address larger political economic issues, they tried to equip the poor with skills, empowerment, and physical well-being through programs providing health care, education, job training, and services. Such programs did not create jobs, redistribute wealth, cure racism, or address sexism. In addition, because many programs were based on the idea that poverty was cultural, they reinforced the notion that poverty was the product of behaviors and attitudes and hence the fault of the poor.

The lack of integrated political or macroeconomic analyses in mainstream liberal approaches to fighting poverty made them vulnerable to appropriation by conservatives, who used the idea of a culture of poverty to provide a description of the undeserving poor. In the 1980s, conservatives, most notably Charles Murray in his book *Losing Ground,* furthered their attack on the poor by arguing that the welfare system itself (particularly AFDC) rewarded and produced the behaviors of the undeserving poor. Substituting the image of a "culture of welfare" for the "culture of poverty," conservatives argued that welfare was a way of life passed down from generation to generation. In this view, AFDC discouraged poor people from seeking employment and forming nuclear families while rewarding them for so-called promiscuous behavior. With the increased acceptance and incidence of white middle-class women's employment, critics of AFDC also began to condemn female welfare recipients for not holding jobs.

In the 1980s, the public discourse on poverty began to focus on the urban "underclass," a term often used as a euphemism for the undeserving poor. The "underclass" is a moral category covering the poor who fail to conform to the behavioral and attitudinal norms of mainstream middle-class society. Rhetorically separating the undeserving poor from the deserving "working poor," the "underclass" usually refers to African Americans living in inner cities. Much important liberal scholarship on the "underclass," most notably the work of sociologist William Julius Wilson, has located its roots in the spatial isolation and chronic unemployment of African American men. However, the public discourse tends to obscure such analyses: Women of the "underclass" are often described as promiscuous welfare recipients or prostitutes; the men are usually described as willfully flouting the American work ethic by hanging out on street corners and engaging in drug selling and other criminal activities instead of seeking employment.

Throughout U.S. history, the notion of the undeserving poor has been challenged. For instance, the social survey movement of the early-twentieth-century Progressive Era emphasized the ways that unemployment, low wages, and labor exploitation contributed to poverty. Similarly, in more recent years, left-wing academics and social critics have focused on power relationships and political and economic structures. Poor people have also been strident critics of both the discourses and the public policies that promote ideas about the undeserving poor. They have formed welfare rights organizations and campaigns for living wages, and they have engaged in protests against police brutality and racial profiling. However, because discourses about the undeserving poor have been so integrally linked to powerful and highly charged ideas about race and gender, the work ethic, the marital family, and Anglo-Saxon morality, they have held remarkable cultural power. Indeed, the notion of the undeserving "underclass" drove the movement to end welfare during the 1990s, culminating in the elimination of AFDC in 1996.

Lisa Levenstein

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); *The Children of Sanchez;* Dependency; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; *Losing Ground;* Means Testing and Universalism; Public Opinion; *Public Relief and Private Charity;* Racism; Relief; Self-Reliance; Sexism; Social Security Act of 1935; "Underclass"; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement; Work Ethic

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Devolution

See Federalism

Dillingham Commission

In 1907, the Dillingham Commission was organized and given the task of conducting the most extensive study of immigration patterns in U.S. history. Named after its chairman, Republican Senator William Paul Dillingham of Vermont, the committee was the result of Progressives' demands that the social sciences be applied to determine the best manner of addressing what was increasingly being seen as an immigration crisis. The great waves of immigrants pouring into the United States by the early 1900s alarmed many Americans who blamed immigrant communities for bringing poverty, illiteracy, prostitution, crime, poor morals, and low wages to cities like Boston, Chicago, and New York. The Dillingham Commission's findings supported the restrictionist posture that such biases had presaged; major immigration policy recommendations included literacy tests for prospective immigrants, higher immigration taxes, and quotas to regulate how many individuals could come to the United States from each country.

Such recommendations were based largely on the committee's conclusion that the national origins and character of the immigrant population had shifted. They identified three main waves of immigration to the country. The first, from 1815 to 1860, was composed of roughly 5 million immigrants, mostly of English, Irish, German, and other northwestern European nationalities. The second wave, from 1865 to 1890, grew to 10 million, still largely of northwestern European origin. However, the third wave, from 1890 to 1914, was distinctly different. It included 15 million immigrants, many of them Italian, Jewish, Turkish, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, Greek, and Lithuanian. The Dillingham Commission considered such southeastern European immigrants far less desirable than their northwestern European predecessors and closely associated this demographic shift with the rise in strikes, unemployment, crime, and other evidence of social unrest that accompanied late-nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization. Couched in the language of unbiased social science, the committee's 1911 final report provided official sanction for a host of discriminatory, anti-immigrant policies that followed, such as those aimed against Japanese immigration (also "undesirable") to the West Coast of the United States. It introduced the concept of restrictive quotas based on national origins, although these would not be implemented until the 1920s. The report also reinforced prevailing stereotypes of the "new" immigrants based on its findings during an extended tour of Europe. For example, the Dillingham Commission compiled a directory of immigrant groups that is riddled with culturally biased descriptions and highly racialized imagery. Slavs were characterized as possessing fanaticism "in religion," as being "[careless] as to the business virtues of punctuality and often honesty," and as indulging in "periods of besotted drunkenness . . . [and] unexpected cruelty," while southern Italians were described as "excitable, impulsive, impracticable . . . [and having] little adaptability to highly organized society" (U.S. Immigration Commission 1911, 82–83, 129).

Some of the Dillingham Commission's early proposals were defeated. Dillingham's first campaign at the conclusion of the committee's study demanded implementation of literacy tests for potential immigrants, a measure passed by Congress but then vetoed by President William Howard Taft in 1912. However, the growing nativism of the early twentieth century allowed Dillingham to gain congressional support for a similar bill in 1917. When President Woodrow Wilson vetoed the bill, Congress overrode his veto. This victory for Dillingham was followed by another: In 1921, the first national-origin quota system for immigration was enacted. This crucial turning point was the culmination of the work of the Dillingham Commission and its report, and it would leave the ugly scar of restrictionism motivated by racial stereotyping on U.S. immigration policy for decades to come.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy

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Disability

Disability and poverty have been linked in complex ways throughout American history. Disability rights activists argue that this linkage has more to do with societal attitudes and government policies toward people with disabilities than with the physical, mental, or emotional conditions that constitute any individual's particular disability. One-quarter of children with disabilities currently live in poverty, as do approximately one-third of working-age adults with disabilities (Kaye 1997, 73). Direct and indirect discrimination in education, job training, and employment contribute to the fact that of the 10 percent of American adults with a work disability—"a limitation in the amount or kind of work they are able to perform, due to a chronic condition or impairment" (LaPlante et al. 1996, 1)—two-thirds do not participate in the labor force. Despite some improvement, physical, communication, and architectural barriers continue to limit access to workplaces more than a decade after the 1990 passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Inadequate, restrictive, and contradictory government policies further contribute to disabled people's poverty rates. Gender and age discrimination compound the cascading effect of widespread prejudice against people with disabilities. The cumulative effects of poverty, conversely, contribute to high rates of disability among poor people in the United States; substandard living and work conditions, along with poor-quality health care, often lead to the impairments that make up a disability.

To the extent that income correlates with education, disabled people are at a disadvantage. Far fewer disabled than nondisabled people complete either high school or college. Despite legislation mandating the fullest possible inclusion of disabled children in mainstream public school classrooms, disabled children continue to receive substandard instruction, often in segregated classrooms. Physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers still impede their full participation. People with disabilities thus frequently enter the job market lacking competitive skills and training (Kaye 1997, 74).

Employed disabled adults work disproportionately at part-time and low-wage jobs. It is less common now than it was historically for disabled adults to work in "sheltered workshops," or segregated workplaces where people with disabilities perform unskilled labor, often on a piecework basis (Shapiro 1994, 143). In the competitive job market, disabled workers face prejudice from employers and other barriers to full workplace participation. Although the ADA and other legislation are attempts to eradicate such discrimination, it persists in all sectors of the labor market. From hirings to promotions to firings, employers' and coworkers' attitudes and behavior hinder disabled people's work experience. Moreover, basic compliance with the transportation and physical access mandates of the ADA lags, leaving workplaces largely inaccessible to many.

Those without paid employment must rely upon the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) income-maintenance programs, whose benefits fail to raise many families out of poverty. Of working-age disabled adults who do not work, nearly 40 percent live in poverty. A poverty rate of 11.4 percent among elderly disabled people contrasts with a 6.5 percent rate for those without disabilities (Kaye 1997, 18). Women with disabilities, who face combined prejudices based on gender and disability in both the labor and marriage markets, are especially likely to live in poverty. Of women receiving SSI, 52.7 percent fall below the poverty line (Kaye 1997, 18). For single disabled mothers of young children, the rate is 72.9 percent (LaPlante 1996, 3). Yet many people with disabilities cannot afford to abandon the welfare system for the job market, because even a meager earned income will cause them to lose valuable health care and personal assistance benefits. Disability activists have argued for decades that the economic betterment of people with disabilities requires ridding the social welfare system of such "work disincentives" while increasing income subsidies dramatically.

Much disability activism has focused on economic justice. In 1934, the League for the Physically Handicapped, a New York group with 300 disabled members, staged a sit-in at the Washington, D.C., offices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), demanding jobs and antidiscrimination protection from the WPA (Shapiro 1994, 64). Just as league members demanded "Jobs, Not Tin Cups," disabled people today profess a sincere desire to work; a 1994 Harris poll found that 79 percent of disabled adults without jobs wanted to be working (Kaye 1997, 24). Since the 1970s, disability rights activists have fought against direct discrimination in employment while also demanding full access to venues of education, training, and employment. They have opposed public policy that keeps people with disabilities both poor and dependent. Thus, the disability rights agenda has included battles for accessible transportation and buildings, basic prerequisites to participation in the labor force. Activists push for workplace accommodations such as Braille signs and text telephones, the absence of which make workplaces inaccessible to thousands of blind and deaf workers. They want rational government policies that support efforts to live in the community rather than in nursing homes or other institutions, where lifelong dependency supplants independent living and wage earning. Recognizing the importance of passing and enforcing such legislation as the ADA, they also see that the fight to end prejudice and discrimination against people with disabilities must be fought at every level of society, including the ideological and the cultural.

Lauri Umansky

See also: Disability Policy; Supplemental Security Income

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Disability Policy

The United States, in the words of the historian Edward Berkowitz, "has no disability policy" (1987, 1). Instead, it has knit together three types of disability policy—income-maintenance programs, rehabilitation programs, and antidiscrimination programs—that sprang from three different and sometimes conflicting sources: retirement policy, welfare policy, and civil rights policy. The extent of governmental powers and funding, moreover, are equally complex, consisting of various combinations of state and federal funds, national grants, tax policy, and private agreements with employers and insurance carriers.

The three income-maintenance programs are workers' compensation, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Workers' compensation constituted the first national program for workers in the United States, and it was one of the country's earliest social policies. Beginning in 1911 in Wisconsin and New Jersey, workers' compensation programs were aimed at workers who had been injured on the job. By 1949, all the states and the District of Columbia had created their own programs. Workers' compensation removed money, medical care, and other services to injured workers from the hands of employers, the courts, and the community. Before this program, an employee's only recourse for receiving financial compensation for his or her medical costs was to sue an employer.

Workers' compensation is a state-federal program that is funded by employers' taking out workers' compensation insurance with private companies. After an individual reports an injury, a company doctor determines whether the injury is work related. If it is, the workers' compensation insurance pays for recovery. Once the individual reaches what is known as "maximum medical improvement," a payment schedule indicates the amount of compensation he or she will receive for a permanent disability or a permanent partial disability. Schedules essentially list a price for the loss of every body part or a life. Initially only amputations of extremities (fingers, hands, toes, and feet) and limbs (arms and legs) were listed, but by 1915, loss of vision and hearing were included on most schedules. In the 1920s, moreover, schedules included permanent partial disabilities. Industrial diseases, such as those that result from exposure to asbestos, are largely absent from the schedules. The one notable exception is black lung disease, which had its own compensation program established in 1969.

In light of its complicated state-federal structure and its private funding from insurance companies, workers' compensation has been resistant to most reform. Nonetheless, one wave of national reform occurred in the 1970s because benefits had not kept up with inflation throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Another wave of reform happened on a state-by-state basis in the mid-1980s after costs (primarily medical) escalated at a rate far beyond that of inflation. By the mid-1990s, employer costs had dropped, and costs stayed constant for the rest of the decade, since thirty-four states had enacted legislation between 1991 and 1994 that was designed to diminish the cost of job injuries by, among other things, reducing the number of workplace injuries.

The second income-maintenance program is SSDI. Unlike workers' compensation, this federally funded disability insurance program does not require any causal connection between a particular job or workplace and the disability. A person's benefits depend on how long he or she has worked. Coverage is almost universal, with 95 percent of all jobs covered. Instituted by an amendment to the Social Security Act in 1956, SSDI serves approximately 4.5 million people. Social Security was one of the cornerstones of the New Deal, and funding for all Social Security programs is based on the principle of social insurance. What is more, SSDI is financed by a payroll tax on employers and employees rather than by private insurance.

Over time, SSDI has become more inclusive. Originally created for workers over fifty, in 1960 the Social Security Act was amended to make anyone with a work history eligible. It also gives benefits to widows and widowers over age forty-nine. In 1980, President Ronald Reagan instituted reforms to remove people from the SSDI rolls. All those with nonpermanent disabilities were required to be reevaluated every three years. But Reagan's reforms generated opposition. By 1984, amendments that included a "medical improvement standard" partially undid the Reagan reforms. This standard stipulates that benefits will continue for beneficiaries who have medical conditions that have not improved and who remain out of work or who have a small income or wages.

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 constitutes the most recent reform. This legislation allowed former SSDI recipients to keep receiving Medicare health benefits for eight and one-half years after starting a job. Except for legally blind people (who could earn up to $1,100), a former SSDI recipient could not earn more than $700 per month (these allowances were subsequently raised to $1,350 per month for legally blind and $810 per month for disabled people) from "substantial gainful employment" and continue to qualify for transitional Medicare (U.S. Social Security Administration 2004).

Although under SSDI, applicants can have no dispute with employers, who themselves have no monetary incentive to contest their claims, legal contests do occur with the disability determination services. SSDI is run by the states but regulated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and officials in these services determine eligibility. Numerous opportunities for appeal are available if someone is denied benefits. The first appeal is brought before a federal administrative law judge; such judges have more discretion than a state disability examiner, who is not bound to follow the strict procedures contained in the Program Operating Manuel System. Most people now hire lawyers to help them through the eligibility process, particularly during an appeal. In fact, eligibility varies greatly from state to state and from year to year. For instance, in a one-year period, Alaska denied SSDI benefits to 63 percent of all applicants, whereas Iowa denied them to only 36 percent.

Unlike SSDI, which is a right if someone has made the requisite amount of contributions, SSI, the third income-maintenance program, is considered a welfare policy. Created in 1972, SSI became operational in 1974 to provide aid to the aged, the blind, and the disabled. Like other welfare programs, eligibility for SSI is based on a means test. Applicants must prove that they are indigent. If a person is ineligible for SSDI due to an insufficient work history, Social Security officials will advise him or her to file for SSI. Approximately 5.2 million people receive SSI on grounds of disability. When the program became operational in 1974, approximately 40 percent of recipients were blind or disabled; by 1997, this figure had almost doubled, with 79 percent of recipients being blind or disabled. From 1965 until the early 1980s, SSI also paid for the institutional care of severely disabled people. In 1981, under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, the federal government established the Home and Community Based Care Waiver Program. This program allows states to pay for home- and community-based care if the program is "cost neutral," that is, if the average costs under the waiver are equal to or less than the cost of services without the waiver.

Vocational rehabilitation constitutes another part of disability policy. Vocational rehabilitation, however, is by far the smallest program in terms of expenditures. Although private programs were created as early as the mid-nineteenth century for the poor and the disabled, the federal government started rehabilitating veterans only during World War I. In 1920, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act was passed, creating a program for all citizens, although it was not until 1954 that the program was fully funded and formed. Operated by the states with federal funding, vocational rehabilitation gives people with disabilities the chance to meet counselors who help them find educational opportunities and provide equipment and medical services that might make them employable.

In the 1970s, vocational rehabilitation became the statutory basis for the rights orientation in current disability policy. In 1973, the program was amended by the Rehabilitation Act, which included Section 504 prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities by any agency or organization that receives public funds, such as a university. Section 504 became a blueprint for disability rights advocates, and in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, extending rights to people with disabilities in the private sector. Approximately 55 million people with physical and mental impairments are covered by this legislation.

The ADA contains four substantive titles protecting people from discrimination in the workplace, in programs that provide governmental services or benefits, and in private places of public accommodation such as stores, offices, and restaurants. It also mandates that interstate or intrastate telephone services make provisions to enable hearing- and speech-impaired individuals to communicate with hearing people. The ADA stipulates that disabled people must be given reasonable accommodations in the workplace and that such state and local government services as mass transit, public education, or public accommodations must be accessible to disabled people. The public accommodations provisions, however, do not mandate that the modifications must place disabled people in the same situation as people without disabilities. For instance, a restaurant need not provide a menu written in Braille as long as a waiter will read the menu aloud to a person with vision problems.

Recourse against discriminatory action by employers or in such facilities as transportation systems or service establishments, whether public or privately owned, is found in the federal courts. Disabled people may sue a prospective or an existing employer either for discriminatory treatment during the hiring process or for not furnishing reasonable accommodations. People may also sue a state government or a private establishment if a public accommodation, such as a tax office or dentist, is not accessible. Moreover, the public accommodations provisions allow courts to enjoin practices that do not accommodate disabilities—for example, if a builder fails to include a ramp to a building.

A decade after its enactment in 1992, people with disabilities who thought the new law would protect them from discrimination have become disenchanted with the federal courts' interpretation of certain aspects of this civil rights law. In the employment context, the most heavily litigated section of disability law, federal courts have decided in employers' favor in 80 to 90 percent of all suits (O'Brien 2001, 14). In a series of cases about employment, moreover, the Supreme Court has rendered such a narrow interpretation of the provisions that few people qualify for coverage under the ADA. The disability rights extended under the governmental services and public accommodations provisions in Titles II and III have been more successful in protecting people with disabilities, with 70 percent (O'Brien 2004, 22) and 46 percent (O'Brien 2001, 18–19) of the cases favoring defendants, respectively.

Ruth O'Brien

See also: Disability; Social Security Act of 1935

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Disasters

Disaster relief programs established key cultural and political precedents for the American welfare state, including the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor. As Michele Landis has shown (1998, 1999), several of the first federal assistance efforts—such as a congressional subsidy of $20,000 to residents of Alexandria, Virginia, who had lost property in a fire in 1827, and sixteen payments to traders whose merchandise had been damaged or destroyed before delivery between 1799 and 1801—compensated Americans who could not be held accountable for their plight. Often presidents acted independently to provide emergency aid for citizens or groups they believed to be deprived for reasons beyond their control. Yet Congress and the Executive Office consistently denied funds to parties who appeared to be responsible for their own condition, including merchants who lost goods while traveling in waters known to contain pirates.

Early disaster relief also favored property owners and businesses. In the late eighteenth century, individuals and private parties made the first requests for state assistance. But between 1800 and 1825, businesses and property holders organized into class-based interest groups for the purpose of securing political support. The federal government established a new bureaucratic apparatus to manage and adjudicate emerging requests for public relief from catastrophic events. It made few accommodations to address the everyday deprivation of the unemployed, who—in the minds of most political officials—had authored their own misfortunes. By the early nineteenth century, then, the government had established an institutional structure that legitimated assistance to the advantaged while marginalizing the destitute.

The rhetoric of disaster has played an enduring and significant role in American welfare politics, and it was particularly crucial during the contentious debates over the legitimacy and constitutionality of the New Deal. In their battles with laissez-faire conservatives, advocates for expanded public unemployment insurance and social security programs represented the Depression as a national catastrophe that deserved traditional forms of disaster relief. When Franklin D. Roosevelt, congressional leaders, and government attorneys defended their call for public assistance, they told "the history of disaster relief . . . in order to show how the New Deal was consistent with this precedent for federal assistance and thus legitimate" (Landis 1999, 273). As Senator Robert La Follette argued in Congress, "Will the Senator from Delaware explain, if he can, what difference it makes to a citizen of the United States if he is homeless, without food or clothing in the dead of winter, whether it is the result of flood, or whether it is due to an economic catastrophe over which he had no control? I see no distinction" (quoted in Landis 1999, 257). This reasoning helped convince Congress, the courts, and the public, paving the way for the introduction of new social protection programs for Americans whose misery was "undeserved."

If the New Deal broadened the meaning of disaster, the Disaster Relief Act of 1950 established new parameters for federal policy responses to extreme environmental events. The original Disaster Relief Act (Public Law 81–875) legislation granted limited benefits to state and local governments for "alleviating suffering and damage resulting from a major peacetime disaster." The program's initial budget of $5 million was too small to provide much help, but the act established legal and political mechanisms that states and Congress would quickly use to expand the scope and increase the costs of disaster relief. Between 1950 and 1980, Congress passed fourteen additional acts, including the sweeping disaster relief acts of 1970 and 1974. During the 1970s, spending on direct assistance for disaster victims approached $4 billion, but the criteria for eligibility remained vague, and the Executive Office used its own discretion in determining what constituted a national disaster.

In 1979, the government created the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to oversee the emerging assistance programs. FEMA expanded the scope of disaster relief even further, extending its reach into risk management by creating subsidized insurance programs and construction projects to support private development in regions with known vulnerability to hazardous weather, such as coastal Florida and California (see Steinberg 2000). Since the early 1980s, states have increased the number of requests for federal assistance, and presidents have largely complied. The average number of disasters declared by the White House rose from twenty-five in 1984–1988, to thirty-three in 1988–1992, and to forty-five in 1993–1997. Yet Congress has not provided sufficient funds for disaster relief, and in addition to the regular FEMA budget, financing comes from supplemental appropriations that take dollars away from other programs. Between 1992 and 1998, special disaster appropriations ranged between $2 billion and $8.2 billion annually. But the federal government compiles no systematic data on disaster spending, and the twenty-six departments and agencies administered by FEMA operate with little accountability (see Platt 1999, ch. 1).

There are means tests for most individual-level disaster relief programs and rigid caps on others. (Individual and family grants, for example, are capped at roughly $14,000.) But public assistance from FEMA has no such restrictions, and "affluent communities covered by declarations may receive 75 percent and 100 percent of their recovery costs from the federal government, even if they carry or could afford to carry disaster insurance" (Platt 1999, 17). The poor are doubly disadvantaged because the funds used to compensate the disaster victims who lost expensive property are often taken directly out of social protection programs targeting "the truly disadvantaged." In 1995, for example, Congress cut funds for low-income housing, job training, and home energy assistance to pay for a $6 billion bill that largely funded the state and property owners who suffered damage in the Northridge (California) earthquake (Steinberg 2000, 193). The initial compensation plans for victims of the September 11, 2001, disaster also allocated far greater benefits to the affluent. Using actuarial standards that determined economic losses based on expected future earnings, the administrators of the Victims Compensation Fund offered benefits ranging from $400,000 to more than $4 million, depending on the salaries of the victims.

None of these programs provide assistance for the most deadly of the so-called natural disasters in the United States: heat waves. Although political officials and the media are most interested in the property damage inflicted by earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods, during a typical year heat waves kill more Americans than all these disasters *combined* (see Klinenberg 2002). A disaster policy designed to save lives and provide social protection would focus on reducing human vulnerability to extreme events and addressing the everyday crises that make exogenous forces so dangerous. It would also limit private development in areas with known disaster risks. But in the United States, insuring private property has always been a greater political priority, and—as in other areas of social policy—disaster policies that protect the vulnerable remain in short supply.

Eric Klinenberg and Elif Kale-Lostuvali

See also: Epidemic Disease

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Discrimination

See Ageism; Classism; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Heteronormativity; Homophobia; Racial Segregation; Racism; Sexism

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence and women's poverty are undeniably linked. Each year, approximately 1.5 million women in the United States are physically or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000, 9). Domestic violence survivors face a pattern of psychological assault and physical and sexual coercion by their intimate partners. Although survivors face a number of barriers to escaping abuse, poverty is among the most formidable. This is true for survivors for whom leaving the abuser means giving up economic security and for those already trapped in poverty. As many as 60 percent of women on welfare report having been a victim of intimate violence at some point in their adult lives, and as many as 30 percent report having been the victim of abuse within the preceding year (Tolman and Raphael 2000, "Prevalence" section).

Abusers retain control over survivors by ensuring the survivors' economic dependency or instability. Although most domestic violence survivors report that they engage in wage work or that they want to work, some are prohibited from working by their abuser. Others are denied access to economic resources, including checking accounts or credit cards. Many abusers interfere with work, education, or training through phone calls, harassment, or threats of violence at the workplace. Twenty-five to fifty percent of survivors report having lost a job due to abuse (Tolman and Raphael 2000, table 3). This economic insecurity is compounded for survivors who, because of race, ethnicity, disability, and the like, face discriminatory barriers to reemployment.

Despite the economic risks involved, most domestic violence survivors attempt to flee the abuse. Means of escape differ among women. Some go to family. Others go to domestic violence shelters, which provide only temporary accommodation. In addition, domestic violence is a primary cause of homelessness (U.S. Conference of Mayors 2000), a plight that poses significant barriers to survivors' workforce participation.

Assistance for survivors is often crafted to accommodate the model of a white woman survivor and fails to incorporate the experience or meet the needs of many immigrant women, women of color, lesbians, gay men, or disabled or drug- or alcohol-addicted survivors. Because these survivors fail to fit the model, they are more vulnerable to discriminatory state action, such as being perceived as violent and thus subject to mandatory arrest laws or not having an interpreter's assistance in response to 911 calls. These survivors are frequently unable to access formal channels of assistance.

Many domestic violence survivors depend on welfare to provide the economic support necessary to escape the violence. Certain requirements of the welfare law present potential problems for domestic violence survivors. These include (1) the requirement that welfare recipients engage in a work activity within two years, (2) the requirement that they establish paternity and cooperate with child support enforcement, and (3) the five-year lifetime limit on welfare receipt (42 U.S.C. 601[a]). Access to benefits is available to battered immigrant women only on a limited basis (8 U.S.C. 1641[c]), and eligibility requirements make it difficult for most immigrant survivors to qualify.

The work requirements of the welfare program established in 1996 (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF]) can expose survivors to more violence and can make it difficult to maintain eligibility for welfare. Recipients who are currently experiencing abuse report that their abuser sabotages work efforts by increasing the violence before a big event such as an exam or interview, refusing to provide transportation or child care at the last minute, or inflicting guilt on the survivor for leaving the children (Lyon 2000, 5). States need to adapt to the needs of survivors by waiving work requirements where necessary and by making work requirements more flexible to assist survivors in overcoming barriers to sustained employment and economic security.

Paternity establishment and child support enforcement requirements may also be dangerous. Recent studies of welfare recipients indicate that many survivors want child support regulations to be enforced against the abuser (Tolman and Raphael 2000, "Child Support" section). Doing so can be dangerous either for the survivor or for the child. Court proceedings increase batterers' access to the mother and child and can be used by the abuser as a vehicle for continued harassment. Moreover, child support enforcement opens up the issue of visitation and custody, threatening the safety and security of the child. Although some survivors may need waivers from the entire process, others may need the state to institute policies and procedures (such as excusing her from court visits, protecting contact information, and ensuring that abusers are not granted unsafe visitation or custody) so that survivors can safely take advantage of pending child support reforms, which will aid welfare recipients in achieving economic security.

Domestic violence survivors are remarkably resilient. Nevertheless, survival can be a long, hard process. Survivors may take longer than five years to free themselves from the abuse and its effects. They may cycle between wage work and welfare, may need to overcome post-traumatic stress, and may need to deal with other violence-related problems. Moreover, domestic violence is linked to increased incidence of drug and alcohol abuse, which can create barriers to work, education, and training and can even threaten welfare eligibility. Hence, the five-year lifetime limit on welfare eligibility threatens survivors' physical, psychic, and economic security.

A Family Violence Option was put into the 1996 welfare law to provide states with the opportunity to waive welfare requirements that make escaping domestic violence more difficult or that unfairly penalize current or former survivors (42 U.S.C. 607[a][7][A][iii]). Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Family Violence Option, and ten states have similar domestic violence policies. The Family Violence Option is, however, just a state option, administered at a state's discretion. But even if the Family Violence Option was mandatory for states, survivors who are reluctant to expose intimate partners to the criminal justice system would not benefit. The challenge for survivors under the TANF welfare regime is to win implementation policies that provide full disclosure of available waivers and services while respecting survivors who do not wish to reveal their abuse to the government. Once informed, survivors must be free to choose what they decide will work best for them, and that choice must be honored and carried out in such a manner as to protect their safety and confidentiality. Only then will survivors be empowered to attain economic self-sufficiency and a life free from violence.

Jacqueline K. Payne

See also: Feminisms; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Domestic Work

Domestic work encompasses the wide range of labor required to meet the day-to-day needs of households, tasks that generally include cleaning, cooking, laundry, and child or other dependent care. Although sometimes romanticized in ideologies aimed at reaffirming the virtues of female "domesticity" in the "traditional" male-breadwinner family, in reality this work has historically been socially undervalued as "women's work," generally uncompensated when performed by household members and, when not, largely relegated to low-paid women of color and immigrant women in the United States.

The predominance of poor women of color and immigrant women in domestic work in the United States must be understood within two contexts: (1) the historical use of U.S. welfare policy to channel women of color into paid domestic work, and (2) the contemporary use of international finance policies to compel third world women to migrate in search of work in these and other service jobs.

Welfare scholar Mimi Abramovitz proposes that the welfare state has historically mediated capitalism's conflicting demands that women provide two functions: to remain in the home to reproduce and maintain the labor force, and to undertake traditionally "female" low-wage work in the paid labor force. Government policy resolves this conflict, Abramovitz says, by encouraging and subsidizing some women to remain home and nurture the workforce while forcing others into low-wage work (Abramovitz 1996, 313–318). Historically, U.S. welfare policy has been designed to channel women of color into paid domestic work on the rationale that women of color were more suitable for employment outside of the home and should be coerced to do agricultural or domestic work to meet market demands. This assumption was often translated into practice by, for example, denying Black families public assistance through explicit administrative measures such as the so-called suitable home and employable mother (that is, employable outside her own home) rules of the 1940s through the 1960s. The practice was also instituted more covertly by caseworkers' making eligibility determinations that barred or expelled women of color from welfare rolls, thus pushing them from their homes into the local labor market for domestic or agricultural work (Bell 1965, 34, 64). At the same time, U.S. social welfare and labor market policies have historically operated to keep the domestic workforce marginalized and low paid. In policy debates that acknowledged the preponderance of women and people of color in these jobs, domestic (as well as agricultural) workers were deliberately excluded from Social Security, unemployment insurance, collective bargaining, minimum wage, and other bedrock protections of the New Deal welfare state. Not until the 1970s, following several decades of struggle that won such benefits as Social Security coverage, were domestic workers brought under the minimum wage, overtime, and other provisions of the original 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. Even so, employer compliance is far from universal and is not rigorously enforced.

Today, we see a parallel channeling of Latina and Asian Pacific Islander immigrant women into domestic work, again through the denial of aid to these women in U.S. welfare and immigration policy. In addition, this coercion of third world women into service work in the United States begins even before they arrive in this country. Immigrant women workers are recruited, or, in effect, imported, from the third world for labor in the United States and other first world nations both through illicit trafficking and through formal international agreements benefiting both sending and receiving countries' governments and employers, particularly structural adjustment policies (SAPs). Through SAPs, first world creditor nations attach preconditions to their loans to third world indebted nations, requiring debtor nations to cut social spending and wages, open their markets to foreign investment, and privatize state enterprises. SAPs wreak havoc on the lives of women in third world nations, devastating subsistence economies and social service systems in such a way that women's nutrition, health, education, employment possibilities, and work conditions are vastly diminished. These ravages make it so difficult for women to survive and sustain their families that they must leave their home countries, and often leave their families behind, in search of work in the first world as domestic servants or other service workers.

The subsequent denial of all forms of aid to immigrants in "host" countries, such as the United States, seals the fate of these women, making them more willing to take the most scorned, low-paid service jobs once they arrive. The demise of social supports in the first world has created both an expanded demand for care workers and a lack of alternatives to this low-wage service work. Thus, the demolition of social supports in the third world through SAPs not only parallels the dismantling of the welfare state in the United States and elsewhere but also serves to reinforce the channeling of immigrant women workers into service work as the only viable choice. These women's vulnerability is further exacerbated in the current global market and political structure, which enables both sending and "host" countries' governments and private employers to avoid any accountability for overseas workers.

Ironically, many of these women are employed by the very International Monetary Fund and World Bank officials or foreign diplomats in the United States who are responsible for the design and implementation of the policies destroying their home countries' economies and social support systems. A Human Rights Watch report of June 2001 documents the extreme abuses migrant domestic workers suffer at the hands of these elite, powerful employers. The exploitation of immigrant women and women-of-color domestic workers by middle-class employers in the United States is also widespread and is increasingly being exposed, documented, and challenged.

In the face of these abuses, immigrant women domestic workers across the country and internationally are organizing to fight back, developing new messages and alternative strategies to address these challenges against great odds (Chang 2000, 136–146, 202–205). Immigrant women are playing central and leading roles in both mainstream and nontraditional labor organizing, fighting for domestic worker rights in the United States, challenging the trafficking of migrant women, and fighting the destructive SAPs that force them to leave their home countries and families.

Grace Chang

See also: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing; Social Security Act of 1935

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Dual Labor Market

See Labor Markets

Du Bois, W. E. B.

See The Philadelphia Negro; Poverty Research; Social Surveys

Dust Bowl Migration

The Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s plays an important and complicated role in the way Americans talk about the history of poverty and public policy in the United States. For almost seventy years, the story of white families from Oklahoma and neighboring states making their way to California in the midst of the Great Depression has been kept alive by journalists and filmmakers, college teachers and museum curators, songwriters and novelists, and of course historians. Although it was but one episode out of many struggles with poverty during the 1930s, the Dust Bowl migration became something of synecdoche, the single most common image that later generations would use to memorialize the hardships of that decade. The continuing fascination with the Dust Bowl saga also has something to do with the way race and poverty have interacted over the generations since the 1930s. Here is one of the last great stories depicting white Americans as victims of severe poverty and social prejudice. It is a story that many

The automobile was often the only hope for the future to many families fleeing from the Dust Bowl in the Southwest during the depression years of the 1930s. Pictured here is a migrant cotton field worker and family on their way to the West. Photograph taken in the early 1930s. (Bettmann/Corbis)

Americans have needed to tell, for many different reasons.

The story begins in the summer of 1935. That is when the economist Paul Taylor realized that something new was happening in California's agricultural areas, particularly the wondrously productive San Joaquin Valley, which supplied two dozen different kinds of fruits and vegetables to the nation's grocery stores and the highest-quality cotton fiber to its textile mills. The workers who picked those crops had been mostly Mexicans, Filipinos, and single white males before the Depression. Now, Taylor, an expert on farm labor issues, noticed more and more whites looking for jobs as harvest laborers, many of them traveling as families, a lot of them with license plates from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas.

Those states had suffered greatly in the early 1930s, both from escalating joblessness and from a severe drought that for several years denied much of the Great Plains sufficient rain to produce its usual complement of wheat and cotton. The drought had also produced a spectacular ecological disaster. Wind-driven dust storms had arisen in a broad swath of counties in western Kansas and the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles on several occasions between 1933 and 1935, each time filling the air with millions of tons of finely plowed topsoil and blackening skies for a thousand miles as the clouds moved east. The dust storms brought press attention and later government intervention to the affected area, soon known as the "Dust Bowl."

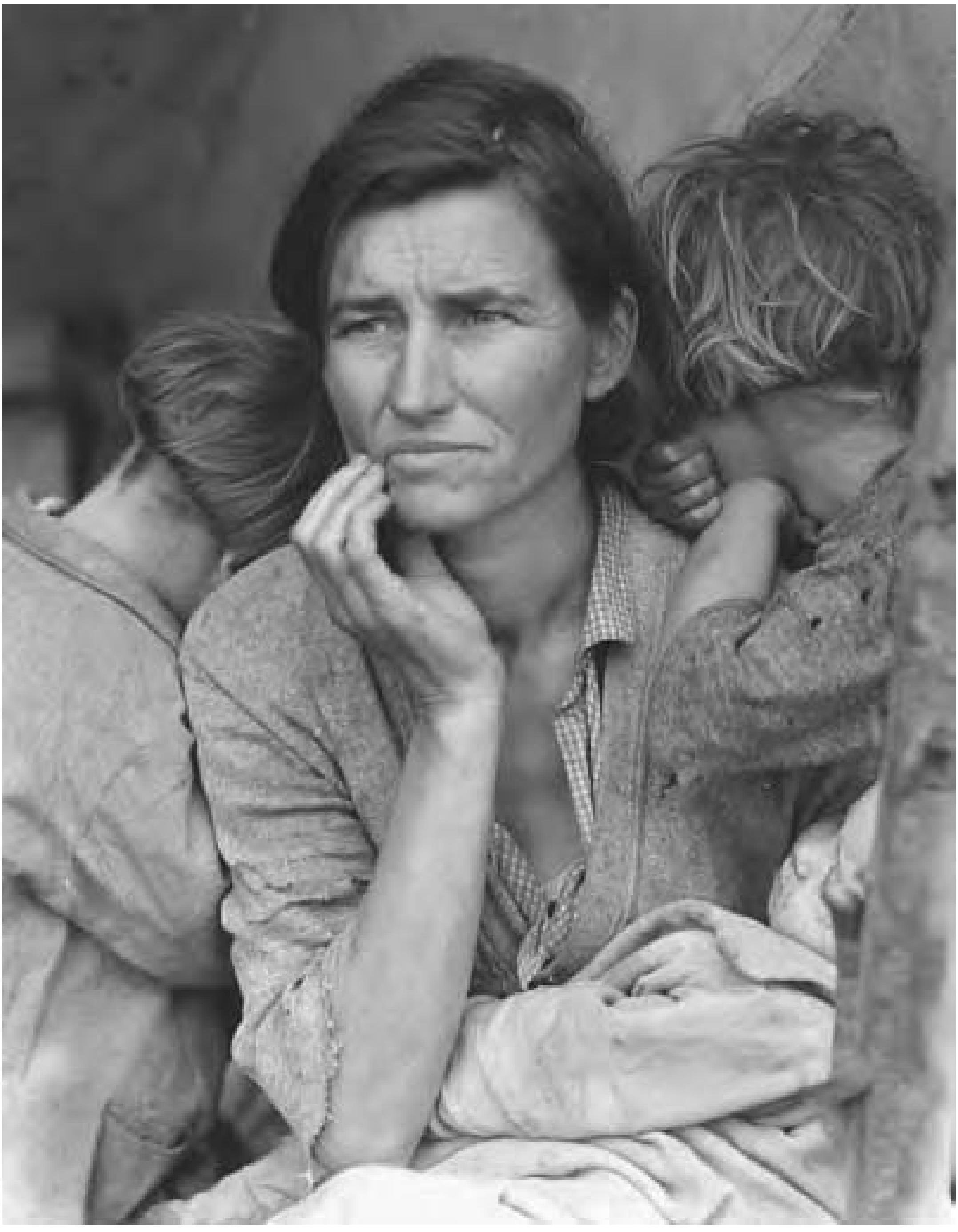
Taylor was thinking about drought and dust as he pounded out an article for *Survey Graphic* magazine. The article profiled the families from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas showing up in large numbers in the fields of California. They came with great hope, like the westward-moving pioneers of old, he wrote, but they were heading into disappointment. What awaited them was a shortage of work and low wages for what was available. Housing would be a tent camp or a shack thrown together of scraps. Taylor worried about their future even as he attached to them a label that he knew would bring sympathy. He called them "refugees," refugees from "dust, drought, and protracted depression" (Taylor 1935, 348). The journalists who read his article and rushed into the San Joaquin Valley to see and write more about the newcomers substituted the more evocative label "Dust Bowl refugees," assuming that the terms and locations were equivalent. In fact they were not. The actual Dust Bowl counties were sparsely populated and contributed few refugees to the migration stream that was pouring into California. Most of those who did migrate came from eastern sections of Oklahoma and from Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri, which knew drought and depression but little dust.

Historians have since clarified some of the dimensions of the misnamed migration. Numbers are elusive, but it is safe to say that 300,000–400,000 Oklahomans, Texans, Arkansans, and Missourians moved to California and settled there during the 1930s (Gregory 1989). This would have been a significant population transfer in any era, but it was particularly momentous in the context of the Depression, when internal migration rates for other parts of the country were low and when high unemployment made any kind of relocation risky.

Distinctive too were certain demographic features of the migrant population. Whites made up roughly 95 percent of those moving (Gregory 1989). African Americans were well represented in the populations of Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas, and some left during the 1930s, but African Americans usually moved to the cities of the North. It was not until World War II that large numbers of African Americans would move to the West Coast. Among the migrating whites, gender was pretty evenly balanced, and the number of families was quite large. A small family headed by young adults was the most common profile.

Many of the people moving westward were not farm folk. At least half had been living in a town or city and doing some kind of blue-collar or, less frequently, white-collar work before unemployment or stories of California opportunities encouraged them to pack the car and hit the road. Most of these migrants headed for the cities of California, where they usually found jobs and a decent standard of living in fairly short order. They were the overlooked half of the ill-named Dust Bowl migration; their urban stories were lost in the concern and fascination that centered on the relocating farm families who had chosen to look for work in the agricultural valleys of California.

John Steinbeck and Dorothea Lange created the most memorable portraits of what some families faced in those areas. Lange toured farm labor camps in the spring of 1936, snapping photographs of ragged children and worried parents living in tents and waiting for work. Some families were completely out of funds and food. Lange's most famous picture, "Migrant Mother," showed a gaunt young widow holding her three daughters, her careworn face suggesting that hope was running out. John Steinbeck wrote a set of newspaper articles that year depicting in similar terms the desperate plight of thousands. Then he sat down to write the book that became, three years later, *The Grapes of Wrath*. His 1939 fictional account of the Joad family, who lose their Oklahoma farm to dust and avaricious bankers and then set out for the California promised land, only to find there even greater challenges and hardships, became an instant best seller and a classic of American fiction, the publishing phenomenon of the decade. When Hollywood followed up with an equally



Destitute pea pickers in California. Mother of seven children, age thirty-two, Nipomo, California. This photograph, taken by Dorothea Lange and titled "Migrant Mother," is among the most famous images of want in the Great Depression. (Library of Congress) brilliant movie directed by John Ford, the image of the Dust Bowl migration was secure. These works of art—by Steinbeck, Ford, Lange, and others—gave the Joads and their kind a place in American history that has lasted to this day.

Fortunately, the poverty that drew the artists was much less permanent. Even as *The Grapes of Wrath* was flying off bookshelves in 1939, conditions were beginning to improve in rural California, thanks first to federal aid programs and then to the World War II defense boom that pulled many of the migrants out of the fields and raised wages for those remaining. Still, incomes for many former Oklahomans, Arkansans, and Texans would remain low for some time. As late as the 1970s, poverty experts in the San Joaquin Valley talked about "Okies" as a disadvantaged population and could point to poverty and welfare-use rates that exceeded norms for other whites. But the bigger story was the climb up from poverty that most families experienced in the decades after the Depression. Taking advantage of the wide-open job markets for white male workers that characterized the wartime and postwar eras, the Dust Bowl migrants and their children made steady, if unspectacular, progress up the economic ladder.

If the poverty associated with the Dust Bowl migration was transitory, the impact on public policy and on popular understandings of poverty was more lasting. This high-profile episode, with its sympathetic white victims and its powerful storytellers, helped reshape the terrain of poverty-related policymaking in various ways, especially around the issues of interstate migration and farm labor. Poor people crossing state lines would have a clear set of rights in the aftermath of the Dust Bowl migration, and the plight of farmworkers would be more visible even as the Joads left the fields to families with darker skins and different accents.

Until 1941, states felt free to restrict interstate mobility, focusing that power, when they used it, on the poor. To discourage indigents from crossing state lines, many states maintained tough vagrancy laws and required those applying for public assistance to prove many years of residence in the state. California had been especially hostile to poor newcomers. In 1936, the Los Angeles Police Department established a border patrol, dubbed the "Bum Blockade," at major road and rail crossings for the purpose of turning back would-be visitors who lacked obvious means of support. Withdrawn in the face of threatened lawsuits, this border-control effort was followed by a less dramatic but more serious assault on the right of interstate mobility. California's Indigent Act, passed in 1933, made it a crime to bring indigent persons into the state. In 1939, the district attorneys of several of the counties most affected by the Dust Bowl influx began using the law in a very public manner. More than two dozen people were indicted, tried, and convicted. Their crime: helping their relatives move to California from Oklahoma and nearby states. The prosecutions were challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union, which pushed the issue all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1941, the court issued a landmark decision (*Edwards v. California,* 314 U.S. 160) ruling that states had no right to restrict interstate migration by poor people or any other Americans.

Farm labor systems were not as easily changed, but there too the Dust Bowl migration left a lasting legacy, helping bring to public attention and into the policy arena the unique vulnerabilities of a sector of the labor force that most Americans had previously ignored. Publicity was the major contribution. The plight of white families in the fields and labor camps of California in the late 1930s aroused media attention on an unprecedented scale and forced public officials and urban consumers to contemplate, often for the first time, the systems of labor operating in rural areas. Farm employers had long enjoyed exemption from many of the customs, laws, and labor unions that protected most urban workers. As a result, farm laborers suffered forms of exploitation and at times degrees of poverty that exceeded urban experience.

The attention did facilitate some policy development. The federal government created some modest services for farmworkers during the 1930s: a camp program in California and Arizona run by the Farm Security Administration, a health service, and an emergency relief program. These were dismantled in the 1940s at the insistence of growers, but some of these services did not entirely disappear. County authorities took over the camps and began to provide certain health and education services to the farm labor families. These were insufficient but not completely insignificant. Moreover, states not affected by the Dust Bowl migration also paid more attention to farmworkers in the decades following *The Grapes of Wrath*. However modest the programs, the plight of rural workers could no longer be completely ignored.

In part, that was because the news media had been retrained by the dramatic stories that came out of California in the 1930s. In the decades to come, print journalists and television journalists would return again and again to the subject of farmworker poverty, finding in it a repeated source of compassion and outrage that pretty much followed the media formulas of the Dust Bowl era. That was certainly true of the CBS documentary *Harvest of Shame*, which shocked television viewers in 1960. Narrated by Edward R. Murrow and focusing on migratory farmworkers, who were by then mostly Mexican Americans in the West and African Americans in the East, the program worked with images and sympathies that Dorothea Lange and John Steinbeck had helped to create.

Race has always been central to the story of the Dust Bowl migration. Paul Taylor knew in 1935 when he wrote his first article about the "drought refugees" that their white skins and Anglo-Saxon names could win attention and sympathy that would not so readily attach to the Mexican and Asian farmworkers who normally struggled in the valleys of California. Steinbeck, too, used the paradox, emphasizing in a dozen ways that Americans of their pedigree were not supposed to experience what the Joads experienced.

As the Dust Bowl saga has worked its way into history, race has become still more important. The continuing fascination with this subject over the decades has had as much to do with racial politics as with the events themselves. As poverty became more and more racialized and as struggles over social welfare programs became increasingly contentious, the Dust Bowl migration took on new meanings and new functions. By the 1970s, an aging generation of former migrants and their upwardly mobile offspring were ready to memorialize the experiences of the 1930s, and another set of storytellers were ready to help. A new round of journalism, novels, history books, TV documentaries, and country music songs has been the result, much of it fed by a late-twentieth-century need for stories of poverty, hardship, and eventual triumph in which the victim-heroes are white. These latter-day Dust Bowl accounts have sometimes promoted conservative agendas, as in the collection of songs that Merle Haggard produced in the late 1960s and 1970s celebrating the struggles of his parents and implying that the poverty of their generation was more noble than the poverty of contemporary America. Unwilling to acknowledge kinship with the Mexican Americans who replaced them in the fields or to admit the importance of government assistance in Dust Bowl survival strategies, some former migrants constructed self-histories that added to racial distances. But others among the new storytellers see the meanings differently. In keeping alive the Dust Bowl migration saga, they remind America that poverty has had many faces, that disparaging the victims is senseless and cruel, and that the poor and helpless of one era will hopefully escape that fate in the next.

James N. Gregory

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; *The Grapes of Wrath*; *Harvest of Shame*; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; New Deal Farm Policy; Picturing Poverty (I); Rural Poverty; *Survey* and *Survey Graphic*;

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Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit for the working poor, enacted by Congress in 1975. Recipients receive a credit against income tax liability and a cash payment if the credit exceeds taxes owed. At the time of its initial passage, legislators viewed the EITC as a work-friendly alternative to conventional public assistance programs—a way to supplement low wages rather than provide more-generous welfare payments. Although Congress attacked welfare "as we know it" in the 1980s and 1990s, the EITC grew in size and scope. But popularity had its price. Although the benefit generally retains bipartisan political support, by the 1990s, some conservatives were turning against it, claiming that it had become a welfare subsidy rather than a tax offset, that it discouraged people from working more, and that it suffered from poor targeting and high costs.

As early as 1970, Congress considered the idea of tax credits for the "working poor," who were generally ineligible for cash welfare or benefits under Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). In part, this was a response to the declining wage levels and higher tax burdens that workers were beginning to experience, but the subsidy idea was also an alternative to then-popular proposals to expand welfare significantly by providing income guarantees to all low-income people, whether employed or not. Senator Russell Long (D-Louisiana) introduced a "work bonus" to offset regressive Social Security taxes, encourage work effort, and reduce welfare dependency. Congress rejected Long's plan in 1970 and again in 1972, 1973, and 1974. With the economy slipping into recession in late 1974, however, Congress endorsed the tax-credit approach to stimulate work effort among low-income workers. The Tax Reduction Act of 1975 included an "earned income credit" equal to 10 percent of the first $4,000 of earned income. The credit phased out at 10 percent and vanished completely when income levels reached $8,000, making it a relatively modest supplement.

For the next three years, the EITC underwent slight modification. In 1977, however, domestic policy planners in President Jimmy Carter's administration transformed the credit. President Carter's welfare reform initiative proposed tripling the size of the EITC to encourage claimants to choose work over welfare. Members of Congress praised the liberalized EITC as a pro-work, pro-growth, low-cost antipoverty program. Although the president abandoned his welfare reform proposal in 1978, Congress independently enlarged the EITC. By the end of the 1970s, the EITC had become "everybody's favorite program" (Lynn and Whitman 1981, 247).

The EITC survived welfare retrenchment in the early 1980s. The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 removed 400,000 families from the welfare rolls and increased the nation's poverty rate by 2 percentage points (Patterson 1994, 213). But the EITC escaped the budgetary knife. A bipartisan group of liberals and conservatives preserved and enlarged the credit. An expanded EITC appealed to liberals concerned with the working poor and with deteriorating wages and rising income inequality. A larger EITC appealed to conservatives because it reduced their responsibility for the growing disparity between rich and poor, a long-term trend accelerated by President Ronald Reagan's tax and social policy cuts. A liberalized EITC also benefited low- and middle-income families, reinforcing the pervasive "family values" rhetoric. Especially important, it was promoted by both liberals and conservatives as a "nonwelfare" approach to providing income support to the poor—indicating the degree to which liberals as well as conservatives had come to distance themselves from welfare.

In 1986, 1990, and 1993, bipartisan efforts in Congress expanded the EITC by raising the maximum benefit level and phase-out rate (the rate at which benefits fall as income rises), by extending the break-even point (the point at which benefits zero out), and by guaranteeing the credit's integrity by indexing it for inflation. The cumulative effect of the changes between 1986 and 1996 raised EITC expenditures by 1,191 percent (U.S. House of Representatives 1998, 872).

At the same time, these expansions began to draw political attention and controversy to a program once seen as part of the "hidden" (because administered through the tax system rather than as an outright grant) welfare state (Howard 1999). The EITC had grown too big and too fast, critics argued. The benefit levels were profligate, the phase-out rate created implicit work disincentives, and the break-even point amounted to welfare for the middle class. Dissatisfaction with the EITC crested in the mid-1990s when the IRS reported that the program suffered from unusually high error rates: Of EITC benefits, 40 percent went to ineligible taxpayers. Although later studies showed these error rates to be exaggerated, and due in part to honest mistakes, critics charged that the EITC subsidized defrauders and cheats.

Supporters of the EITC leapt to its defense. Congress had expanded the credit to offset increased payroll taxes, real decreases in the minimum wage, and higher excise taxes. Moreover, the EITC had grown in response to bipartisan efforts. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush initiated early expansions, while President Bill Clinton considered a larger EITC the cornerstone of his pledge to "make work pay." By 1996, the EITC was all that kept millions of individuals out of poverty. The 1996 welfare reform act pushed welfare claimants toward work, and the EITC eased the transition.

In response to these controversies, supporters and administrators of the EITC addressed its high error rates. The Treasury Department simplified the procedures for EITC claimants and made it easier for the IRS to verify eligibility for EITC. Congress authorized the IRS to levy penalties for EITC abuse and provided special appropriations for EITC compliance. By 1997, the IRS reported that error rates had fallen dramatically.

In addition, researchers revealed that the EITC's work disincentives were less severe than critics charged. Empirical studies relying on tax-return microdata found that the EITC produced unambiguous incentives for single workers to participate in the labor force and statistically significant increases in aggregate labor force participation.

Indeed, the prevailing evidence suggests that the EITC represents one of the U.S. welfare state's most effective weapons against poverty. Although not designed to get at the underlying roots of such problems as deteriorating wages for low-income workers, higher taxes for the working poor, and a widening divide between rich and poor, it counteracts the economic effects of these problems. In 1997, the Council of Economic Advisors reported that the EITC had lifted 4.3 million persons out of poverty, including 2.2 million children under eighteen, more than any other government program (Council of Economic Advisors 1999, 114). The EITC has proven so effective at the federal level that more than a dozen states have enacted low-income tax credits.

Dennis J. Ventry Jr.

See also: Tax Policy; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Economic Depression

Economic depressions are severe downturns in economic activity characterized by extensive unemployment and business failures. They have punctuated the overall trend of economic growth in the United States and are generally caused by weaknesses in the financial sector, adverse international events, economic restructuring, and governmental policy mistakes. The Great Depression (1929–1940) dwarfs all other American depressions, including important depressions in the 1850s, 1870s, and 1890s, the post–World War I depression, and the deep recession of the early 1980s. Depressions have triggered important political realignments and policy responses, especially the New Deal of the 1930s. Economic depressions exacerbate poverty, but the overall trend of economic growth throughout U.S. history means that the level of absolute poverty during later depressions was generally substantially *lower* than the level of poverty during good economic times from earlier periods.

In a recession, real (that is, inflation-adjusted) gross domestic product (GDP) falls in consecutive quarters. A depression is a *severe* recession, but there is no precise line separating the two. The depth of a depression is usually measured by the decline in real GDP or by the level to which the unemployment rate rises. Unfortunately, both statistics become harder to estimate the further one goes back in American history.

In the colonial and early national periods, the economy was dominated by agriculture. In 1800, about 89 percent of the labor force was either self-employed farmers or slaves. Therefore, the impact of economic downturns was not to generate massive unemployment but to cause defaults on loans, business failures, and falling incomes and prices. By 1850, the proportion of self-employed farmers and slaves had declined to 70 percent and the rising share of wage workers made for higher unemployment rates during recessions and depressions. By 1900, only 20 percent of the population were self-employed farmers, and the share of workers in the manufacturing, mining, and construction sectors—where demand can be very cyclical—had risen to 30 percent. The percentage of workers in these sectors peaked at 36 percent in 1950 and fell to 22 percent by 1990. Thus, some would argue that the potential for depressions in the U.S. economy rose throughout the nineteenth century and peaked in the first half of the twentieth century, before diminishing with the shift toward service-sector employment.

Economic downturns during the colonial era were often tied to conditions in Britain and occurred consistently at the ends of wars. The downturn in Britain at the end of the French and Indian War pushed it to tighten its control of the colonial American economy, which helped trigger the Revolutionary War. The British naval blockade and occupation of ports, especially from 1778 to 1780, caused considerable economic distress during the Revolution. The end of the Revolution brought a flood of imports, restrictions on exports and shipping, and an overall restructuring of ties with Britain, which triggered widespread bankruptcies among merchants and manufacturers and a decline of prices by about 25 percent. The economic crisis was deepened by tax increases to pay off state war debts and by a weak central government with little capacity to restore economic stability and probably helped precipitate the adoption of the Constitution. Unfortunately, quantitative measures of overall economic pain during these downturns are virtually nonexistent.

The rapid expansion of the U.S. economy in the first half of the 1800s was punctuated by a series of economic depressions. The first occurred in 1808 and was due to President Thomas Jefferson's trade embargo; national income declined by about 9 percent, and the northern ports suffered considerable unemployment. Agricultural workers' standards of living fell as the price of exported products (mainly staple crops) dropped by about one-quarter, while the price of imports (mostly manufactured goods) rose by roughly one-third. Trade disruption before and during the War of 1812 also brought localized depressed conditions.

Depression struck again from 1819 to 1821, fueled by a 50 percent drop in the price of cotton and a sharp contraction of the money supply and credit. Large-scale urban unemployment emerged for the first time in U.S. history, and the price of land collapsed, especially in the South. Although manufacturing employment may have fallen by two-thirds, national unemployment probably did not exceed 4 percent. Many states reacted by enacting laws relieving debtors, and the crisis led to demands for democratization of state constitutions and hostility toward banks and "privileged" corporations.

The financial Panic of 1837 was probably set in motion by a contraction of the money supply and credit due to Bank of England policies, although some argue that the land and fiscal policies of President Andrew Jackson's administration helped drain gold from eastern banks, prompting bank suspensions. The panic brought a rapid decline in prices and a widespread drop in real wages—which fell by 15 to 20 percent for artisans in the Midwest and South between the two crisis periods of 1831–1835 and 1836–1840—but it does not seem to have caused widespread unemployment. A brief recovery was followed by another crisis beginning in the summer of 1839 and lasting until 1843. This depression is usually linked to a borrowing binge by frontier states to fund transportation improvements, in anticipation of future taxes and revenues. When these states and their bankers overextended themselves, they were forced to cease work on their transportation projects; property values collapsed, there were runs on banks in the frontier states, and ultimately nine states, mostly southern and western, defaulted on their debts. Overall, prices fell over 35 percent, but there was not massive unemployment.

Robert Fogel (1989) argues that the 1850s brought a "hidden" depression that transformed American politics and the economy. The depression was not characterized by extraordinarily high unemployment rates—which probably peaked at 6 to 8 percent during the recession of 1857. Instead, the depression's impact was concentrated on native-born craftsmen, tradesmen, and petty merchants in the North, who made up nearly one-sixth of the labor force. The root cause of this "hidden" depression was the period's exceptionally high immigration rate, with 14 immigrants reaching the United States for every

1,000 persons in the U.S. population each year from 1847 to 1854. This 10 percent increase in the population flooded especially into northeastern cities, glutting labor markets, pushing down wages, displacing workers, increasing rents, and triggering epidemics. Fogel estimates that real wages declined by 25 to 50 percent, although other sources conclude that the declines were smaller—perhaps 20 percent among common laborers, for example. The political response included nativism and demands for land reform (for example, free homesteads), free primary education, and tariff protection, a policy package that was combined with abolition to fuel the rise of the Republican Party and hence may have been a catalyst for the Civil War.

Economic conditions were very weak during the Civil War, with the economy contracting for three consecutive years from 1861 to 1863 and real wages of laborers falling over 20 percent, but there were no widespread business failures or unemployment.

Average incomes doubled in the second half of the 1800s, but recurrent economic depression plagued the economy. The economic crisis that began in 1873 was probably the second-worst of the nineteenth century (after the depression of the 1890s). One of Wall Street's largest firms, Jay Cooke and Company, overextended itself attempting to finance a second transcontinental railroad, the Northern Pacific. With the railroad only partly completed, the European market for American railroad bonds dried up after the Vienna stock market crashed. Cooke's subsequent failure set off an economic crisis in the United States, as investors' optimism turned to pessimism. Railroad construction, which had reached 7,000 miles per year, fell below 2,000 miles in 1875, and about one-fifth of the track mileage in the country was owned by companies in bankruptcy. Wage cutting by railroads triggered an unprecedented round of strikes and violence in 1877 in the Middle Atlantic states and the Midwest. Strong economic growth did not return until 1879; public relief rolls surged, and the unemployment rate probably topped 10 percent for the first time in the country's history. Another steep recession beginning in 1884 brought a two-year economic dip, with industrial output falling 16 percent and the unemployment rate climbing to roughly 6 to 7.5 percent.

The depression of the 1890s is considered the second-worst in the nation's history. The economy shrank by about 7 percent in 1893, shrank again in 1894, rebounded in 1895, and contracted again in 1896. Christina Romer (1986) estimates that unemployment rose to 8 percent in 1893, hit 12 percent in 1894, and remained at 11 or 12 percent for five long years, until 1898. (Romer's figures are generally preferred to earlier estimates suggesting an unemployment peak of 18 percent in 1894.)

This depression's origin follows the pattern of many other economic downturns. It began with a drop-off in the British economy, a major source of investment capital in the United States. The American economy began to shrink early in 1893, and then in May a "panic" swept financial centers after European creditors redeemed American securities for gold; critics of powerful financial interests said these investors were wary about ongoing congressional debates about monetary policy and feared that the U.S. commitment to the gold standard was in jeopardy. The gold drain forced eastern banks to call loans, and short-term interest rates soared, causing many businesses to fail and others to suspend investments. The debate about silver versus gold continued at least until William McKinley defeated William Jennings Bryan in the 1896 presidential election. Farmers were especially hard-hit by the depression, as wholesale farm prices fell by over 20 percent from 1893 to 1896. Part of their response to the depression was populism, which advocated an inflationary expansion of the money supply through the increased coinage of silver and increased governmental regulation of railroads and other big businesses. Local governments expanded welfare relief and established public works projects. However, when Jacob Coxey and his "army" of unemployed men marched from Ohio to Washington, D.C., in 1894, agitating for federal work relief, they (and other similar groups) were turned away empty-handed. A wave of strikes, especially the American Railway Union's strike against the Pullman Company, precipitated considerable violence in 1894, leading to aggressive federal intervention against labor organizing and, in the case of the Pullman strike, to suppression by federal troops. A final reaction was the enactment of a federal income tax law in 1894, but the U.S. Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, rapid technological advances, an unprecedented rise in education levels, and an *eightfold* increase in average income levels ended absolute poverty for almost all Americans. But the economy faced its worst-ever depression, before largely escaping this menace after 1940. The century's first sharp recession came in 1907–1908, when unemployment reached 6 to 8 percent. Several months *after* the recession began, a short panic gripped Wall Street amid a run on New York's trust banks. A syndicate led by J. P. Morgan squelched the run, but the primary impact of this episode was the development of a political consensus that the banking system was unstable and in need of a central bank, which was established in 1913 as the Federal Reserve System ("the Fed"). The onset of World War I brought on a recession, with unemployment rates reaching 7 or 8 percent in 1915, and the war's end was followed by a sharp recession that is sometimes labeled a depression. The demobilization from the war effort, a substantial drop in government spending, requisite economic restructuring, and the Fed's tight money policy brought a rapid deflation. Wholesale prices fell a startling 46 percent, and unemployment reached 9 to 12 percent in 1921. The swift recovery from this intense contraction may have led policymakers initially to underestimate the seriousness of the Great Depression eight years later (Romer 1986; Fearon 1987).

The Great Depression began in 1929, hit bottom in 1933, and lasted throughout much of the 1930s. Its worldwide scope, its magnitude, and its duration set it apart from economic crises before and since. The value of economic output (real GDP) in the United States fell by 27 percent from 1929 to 1933. Simultaneously, prices fell by about one-quarter. The unemployment rate, which had averaged 5 percent in the 1920s, soared from 3 percent in 1929 to 25 percent (36 percent of nonfarm workers) in 1933 and averaged 14 percent for the decade of the 1930s. Industrial output fell substantially in many of the world's economically developed nations, with the United States taking the hardest hit (a drop of 45 percent), followed by Germany (41 percent) and Canada (32 percent) (Fearon 1987).

The Great Depression's causes are very complex and have been the subject of intense debate among economic historians. Most explanations point to weaknesses in credit markets—both internationally and within the United States—that sapped consumer spending and killed investment.

Stock prices surged upward from 1926 to September 1929, then lost 36 percent of their value in the next year and 84 percent of their value before hitting bottom in June 1932. Many link the run-up in stock prices to a speculative frenzy encouraged by financial manipulation and overextended financing and argue that this played a key role in the market's subsequent fall. The collapse destroyed much wealth, and this helped cut consumer spending somewhat, but most historians argue that the stock market mostly reflected investors' outlooks rather than driving the economy.

What caused the unusually severe contraction of consumer spending in 1930 that marked the beginning of the Great Depression? One plausible answer is that the proportion of household income going to pay off household debt had doubled during the 1920s, much of that debt being installment debt tied to the booming automobile market, with large down payments and short contracts. Missed installment payments could result in repossession and the forfeiture of the down payment and the payments already made. Rather than defaulting on these loans when the recession brought declining incomes and uncertainty, buyers responded by cutting back other spending, with overall real consumption expenditures falling by over 6 percent from 1929 to 1930. Unfortunately, this had a multiplier effect, forcing firms to reduce output and to lay off additional workers. The drop in demand also caused a fall in prices, and this deflation further handcuffed the economy by making it harder for businesses to earn a profit and by increasing the real value of business and household debts.

The collapse in spending was compounded by weaknesses in the banking system, which converted a nasty recession into the Great Depression. Most banks in the United States had only a single branch, and their loans were tied almost completely to the local economy. When low prices meant that many farmers could not repay their loans, this caused a wave of bank failures in the South in late 1930. Along with the failure of a large New York City bank, these failures began to make depositors leery of keeping their funds in banks. Bank failures climbed during 1931, cresting after Britain left the gold standard in September. The Federal Reserve Bank responded to Britain's move by trying to assure international investors that the United States would not abandon gold. It *increased* interest rates, increasing the dollar's attractiveness for international investors but undercutting troubled banks seeking to borrow funds rather than sell their assets in response to their depositors' withdrawals. Finally, the entire banking system froze up in early 1933. A bank run prompted Michigan's governor to declare a statewide bank "holiday" in February 1933. Depositors rushed to banks in nearby states to withdraw needed funds, precipitating mandatory shutdowns in neighboring states. After all the dominoes fell, most of the banks in the nation were closed. The loss of confidence in the banking system was crucial because it caused depositors to withdraw their funds, leaving banks with few resources to lend. Reduced lending resulted in reduced spending. Finally, the withdrawals caused the overall money supply to shrink, which generated more deflation and its negative consequences.

President Herbert Hoover tried vigorously to restore the economy to health. He signed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff in June 1930, which raised taxes on imports. It is not clear whether this helped the economy much, and in response, America's largest trading partner, Canada, retaliated by increasing its tariffs on U.S. exports. Another response was the establishment of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to lend money to banks and other businesses, but a congressional requirement that the names of these borrowers be published derailed the program's effectiveness, since it advertised to depositors that their banks were in weak shape. The larger response to the Great Depression came with the election of 1932. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic Party adopted a raft of new programs, most of which substantially increased the role of the federal government in the economy. Among these responses were government building projects, income supports to farmers, bank deposit insurance, laws promoting unions and collective bargaining, the creation of an agency overseeing the stock market, and the establishment of the Social Security system, unemployment insurance, and a minimum wage.

Unfortunately, because the damage from the Depression (especially in the banking system) was so acute and because some of the new policies were severely flawed (especially the National Recovery Act, which encouraged industries to form cartels and *reduce* output) and may have discouraged wary investors, the recovery from the Depression was slow and painful, with a second recession hitting in 1937 and the unemployment rate remaining at or above 10 percent until the end of the decade.

World War II effectively ended the Great Depression by putting the nation back to work. Widespread fears that the nation would return to depression after the war prompted the federal government to adopt the Employment Act of 1946 (originally named the Full Employment Act, but retitled when conservative lawmakers grew wary of the implied commitment), which committed the government to do something to prevent depression, recessions, and other macroeconomic malfunctions. Fortunately, perhaps because of increased stability within the economy itself or perhaps due to government policies (including such automatic stabilizers as unemployment insurance and proactive economic management by the Fed), the United States has avoided depression since the 1930s.

The closest the nation came was a series of recessions beginning in October 1973, when Arab exporters imposed an oil embargo on the United States, the price of oil rose by 150 percent, and the unemployment rate climbed to 8.5 percent in 1975. This was followed by a second "energy crisis" due to the Iranian revolution and the Iran-Iraq War, which caused another doubling of oil prices between 1979 and 1980. These oil shocks caused a significant restructuring of the economy, since many industrial practices relied on cheap energy. Simultaneously, industry was battered by increased foreign competition, especially from Japan. The crisis reached its worst point after the Fed purposely reduced money supply growth in 1981 in an ultimately successful attempt to squeeze inflation, which had reached 13.5 percent per year, out of the economy. The result was an unemployment rate that averaged a bit below 10 percent in 1982 and 1983 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Depression-like conditions gripped certain portions of the country, especially the industrial "Rust Belt," from Pennsylvania to Wisconsin, which was the home of much heavy industry, including auto and steel manufacturing. Policy responses to these downturns included some protectionist trade measures (as for autos), increased efforts to stabilize the world's oil supply, and a move toward deregulating the economy, a move motivated by evidence that overregulation had encouraged economic weaknesses and decreased the flexibility of the economy.

Robert Whaples

See also: Coxey's Army; Great Depression and New Deal; Unemployment

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Economic Justice for All (EJA), *U.S. Catholic Bishops*

Economic Justice for All (EJA), published by the U.S. Catholic Bishops in 1986, is a significant, broadly consultative, American contribution to a long tradition of Catholic concern for the poor and vulnerable, focused on those marginalized or mistreated by modern economic systems. Addressed simultaneously to U.S. Catholics and all justice-seeking citizens, the five-chapter "letter" draws on and updates economic-ethical teaching initiated by Pope Leo XIII's groundbreaking 1891 *On the Condition of Labor (Rerum Novarum)*. Centering on communally situated political *and* economic rights and responsibilities issuing from the God-given dignity of every human being, *EJA* argues that a properly functioning, just economy offers all members access to material well-being through dignified participation and proposes socio-moral principles and practical policy directions toward that end.

EJA's drafters organized extensive hearings, feedback, and listening sessions that gathered input from experts, working persons, and poor people themselves. The resulting document employs personalist criteria for evaluating any economic arrangement or practice: What does it do *for* and *to* people, and *how are people empowered to participate in it?* (U.S. Catholic Bishops 1996, ch. 1, para. 1). Its analysis is permeated by an "option for the poor," which makes the litmus test for a just economy the degree to which its most vulnerable members are enabled to attain a decent livelihood (ch. 2, paras. 51–52, 86–87, 123). Amid unprecedented abundance, poverty is a "scandal" (Introduction, para. 16) demanding alleviation.

Chapter 2's religiously grounded economic-ethical framework articulates a tri-dimensional goal of "basic" economic justice. *Commutative justice* requires "fairness in agreements and exchanges between individuals and private groups" such as wage labor contracts and employer-employee relations; *distributive justice* evaluates society's allocation of income, wealth, and power "in light of its effects on persons whose basic material needs are unmet"; *social justice* affirms persons' duty to be active, contributing participants in society, and institutions' duty to make such participation possible (paras. 69–72). Basic justice entails "a floor of material well-being on which all can stand" pursuant to "minimal levels of communal participation for all," for to be treated or abandoned as if one is a nonmember of the human race is "the ultimate injustice" (para. 77). Since work is crucial to economic participation and livelihood, high unemployment and job discrimination are morally intolerable. Materially advantaged citizens have special obligations to undertake individual initiative, but even more, they are obligated to carry out collective action to examine and revise "institutional relations and patterns that distribute power and wealth inequitably."

Chapter 3 treats selected economic policy issues: unemployment, poverty, food and agriculture, the U.S. economy, and developing nations. Here, *EJA* proposes reforms that drew criticism for their "liberal, New Deal" slant. With their primary expertise being spiritual and moral, the bishops conceded that their policy proposals are open to debate, but they challenged disputants to offer equally concrete alternatives consonant with the *nonnegotiable* economic justice principles previously outlined. The final two chapters consider intrachurch economic practices and spiritual resources for Christian justice seekers and call for a "bold new American experiment" wherein varied social actors collaborate in a "partnership for the common good" dedicated to extending substantive economic rights to every member of the human community.

Christine Firer Hinze

See also: Catholic Church; Catholic Worker Movement; Living-Wage Campaigns

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Economic Report of 1964, *Council of Economic Advisors*

The Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) *Economic Report of 1964* is a key document in the history of poverty in the United States, and indeed, in the history of twentieth-century liberalism. For the first time in the history of the world's most prosperous society, the administration's chief economists were proclaiming that eliminating poverty was not only within reach but was to be a goal of the nation's economic policy. The approach outlined in the report marked the culmination of a sequence of broader political, intellectual, and institutional developments that had led to President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration in January 1964 of a War on Poverty and that put his economic advisers in the forefront of planning.

The more immediate context was the CEA-led effort, starting early in the administration of John F. Kennedy and continuing through Lyndon Johnson's succession to the presidency after Kennedy's assassination in late November 1963, to mobilize the administration behind a high-growth, full-employment economic policy through a combination of growth-stimulating tax cuts and expanded social welfare spending. As part of this agenda, the CEA in 1963 began to lobby within the administration for a major attack on poverty as a top policy priority—and a theme for the upcoming presidential campaign. The longer-range context was the emergence of what was popularly known as the "new economics" in the decades following World War II, based on the theories of British economist John Maynard Keynes—who proposed a more activist role for government fiscal policy (a tax-and-spend policy) in order to manage the economy and promote full employment—as well as on more recent developments that emphasized the importance of "human capital" investments to enable individuals to take advantage of the opportunities provided by economic growth. The Kennedy and Johnson administration economists fully embraced these ideas and made the CEA the vehicle for their growing influence on federal policymaking.

Their 1964 report, written in the immediate aftermath of President Kennedy's assassination and in response to President Johnson's decision to escalate their proposed "attack" on poverty into a full-scale "war," reflects the core ideas of the new economics, proposing economic growth and full employment as the chief weapons against poverty, coupled with expanded investments in education and training, antidiscrimination measures to ensure access to labor markets and related opportunities, and improvements in New Deal–era social welfare programs to protect those outside the labor force from the risk of poverty. It also reflects the then-current thinking that poor people in America—by most measures a large and varied group representing at least one-quarter of the population—were an "other" America, living in a "world apart," rather than an integral part of the economy of prosperity. Above all, it reflects the tremendous optimism that characterized liberal economics and liberalism more generally in the mid-1960s, and nowhere more clearly than in the report's underlying convictions that the rational science of economics had uncovered the keys to ongoing economic growth and that ending poverty could be achieved without substantial, politically controversial redistributions of resources and power.

The following excerpt is taken from chapter 2, "The Problem of Poverty in America."

Alice O'Connor

See also: Economic Theories; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Labor Markets; Liberalism; War on Poverty

In his message on the State of the Union, President Johnson declared all-out War on Poverty in America. This chapter is designed to provide some understanding of the enemy and to outline the main features of a strategy of attack.

Eliminating Poverty—a National Goal

There will always be some Americans who are better off than others. But it need not follow that "the poor are always with us." In the United States today we can see on the horizon a society of abundance, free of much of the misery and degradation that have been the age-old fate of man. Steadily rising productivity, together with an improving network of private and social insurance and assistance, has been eroding mass poverty in America. But the process is far too slow. It is high time to redouble and to concentrate our efforts to eliminate poverty.

Poverty is costly not only to the poor but to the whole society. Its ugly by-products include ignorance, disease, delinquency, crime, irresponsibility, immorality, indifference. None of these social evils and hazards will, of course, wholly disappear with the elimination of poverty. But their severity will be markedly reduced. Poverty is no purely private or local concern. It is a social and national problem. . . .

The poor inhabit a world scarcely recognizable, and rarely recognized, by the majority of their fellow Americans. It is a world apart, whose inhabitants are isolated from the mainstream of American life and alienated from its values. It is a world where Americans are literally concerned with day-to-day survival—a roof over their heads, where the next meal is coming from. It is a world where minor illness is a major tragedy, where pride and privacy must be sacrificed to get help, where honesty can become a luxury and ambition a myth. Worst of all, the poverty of the fathers is visited upon the children. . . .

Although poverty remains a bitter reality for too many Americans, its incidence has been steadily shrinking. The fruits of general economic growth have been widely shared; individuals and families have responded to incentives and opportunities for improvement; government and private programs have raised the educational attainments, housing standards, health, and productivity of the population; private and social insurance has increasingly protected families against loss of earnings due to death, disability, illness, old age, and unemployment. Future headway against poverty will likewise require attacks on many fronts: the active promotion of a full-employment, rapid-growth economy; a continuing assault on discrimination; and a wide range of other measures to strike at specific roots of low income. As in the past, progress will require the combined efforts of all levels of government and of private individuals and groups.

All Americans will benefit from this progress. Our Nation's most precious resource is its people. We pay twice for poverty: once in the production lost in wasted human potential, again in the resources diverted to coping with poverty's social by-products. Humanity compels our action, but it is sound economics as well.

Source: Council of Economic Advisors, *Economic Report of 1964* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1964), 55–56.

Economic Theories

Introduction

Poverty and social policy have always been topics of concern in economics. Beginning with Adam Smith's classic work *The Wealth of Nations*, economists have worked to define, measure, explain, and prescribe cures for poverty. There are a wide range of economic theories of poverty and corresponding social policies. They share the notion that poverty is an economic condition in which one cannot meet basic needs. However, what constitutes "need" varies widely across economic theories, as do ideas about the way the economy works.

Generally, economic theories argue that the main cause of poverty is lack of income-sustaining employment, of adequate wages, and/or of compensation for work, such as caregiving and child rearing, that is socially vital but not formally recognized as "work" worthy of compensation. As such, almost all economic theories of poverty and social policy focus on three related but separate areas of economic analysis. The first analyzes labor markets and with them wage and employment levels. The second area examines economic growth and development to determine macroeconomic levels of employment and income-generating potential. The third area looks at income distribution and inequality to help assess relative poverty and to better focus on certain groups that are especially vulnerable to poverty.

How economists understand poverty dictates their prescriptions to cure it. Since economists seem to carry disproportionate weight in policy discussions, the economic theories that policymakers adhere to often carry disproportionate weight in how poverty is understood and addressed.

We delineate our discussion of economic theories of poverty historically. We focus first on the "grand" theories developed before World War II. We then turn to more modern theories, spawned initially by the expansion in the number of independent nation-states in the 1950s and the accompanying development concerns, and subsequently, in the 1960s, by the War on Poverty in the United States.

Economic Theories before the 1940s

Prior to the 1940s, economic theories of poverty initially focused on production, or "supply," as the engine of growth and economic well-being and gradually came to incorporate the role of "demand," or consumption, in affecting the status of workers and the general level of macroeconomic market activity. If the manufacturing class did not produce enough to hire workers or if workers were paid wages below subsistence levels, then poverty would result. Early writings (1776–1870s) tended to be most concerned with the development of a laboring class and the difficulties posed by newly developing capitalist production. Later writings (1880s–1930s) focused more on how workers were integrated into already-established labor markets in rapidly industrializing economies.

Classical Political Economy

Classical political economists writing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and Thomas Malthus) argued that, provided there was ample production, workers as a group would receive a wage share that was sufficient to cover a basic standard of living. In the absence of enough production, poverty would result. Smith in particular is well known for his theory that individuals pursuing their own self-interest and the "invisible hand" of the market would coordinate production and generate adequate wages. Still, he and other classical political economists recognized that economic growth and income distribution involved exchanges among large groups (or classes)—such as workers, landlords, and manufacturers—and that wage levels were grounded in custom as well as in economic "laws" and were largely based on subsistence levels.

For classical political economists, poverty in the form of insufficient wages for the laboring classes would result if nation-states impeded trade or if population growth pushed agricultural production to use increasingly marginal land. The resulting insufficient food production would benefit landowners by pushing the rents they receive up while putting a squeeze on workers' wages and manufacturers' profits. Although Ricardo promoted free trade and restrictions on landlords as way to stave off poverty, Malthus argued strongly for population control through moral restraint, convinced that agricultural production would never increase as fast as the population and that widespread deprivation would result. Reflecting the influence of this gloomy Malthusian outlook, economics would henceforth be known as the "dismal science."

Marxist Theory

Karl Marx also saw society as being drawn into distinct and opposing classes. Writing in the middle to late 1800s, Marx argued that capitalism is driven by "exploitation" of the working class by the profit-seeking property-owning class (capitalists). Exploitation occurs because workers produce the entire product in society yet are only paid for a portion of it. The rest—surplus—goes to capitalists by virtue of their ownership of the equipment and materials used in production as well as by virtue of their control over the production process itself. Although workers as a class are typically paid their "value" (a historically determined subsistence standard of living), poverty is still endemic in Marx's capitalism. Indeed, unemployment (and with it, poverty for some) is an important self-regulating function in capitalist production. At full employment, workers' strength allows them to increase wages at the expense of profits. Capitalists respond by firing workers, creating a "reserve army of labor." These "armies" consist of the workers available for employment but not currently employed, who will be willing to take lower wages and worse working conditions than the currently employed, driving down wages and boosting profits. Over time, Marx predicted an immiseration of the working class by two distinct means. First, capitalists, in their drive to produce more profits, would draw previously untapped workers into the labor force (immigrants, women, workers in overseas production) and pay them less than the currently employed labor force, driving wages down further and further. Second, Marx argued that profit rates would fall over time as capitalists substitute capital for labor. This substitution leaves more and more workers unemployed. For Marx, nothing short of changing the mode of production (capitalism) and the rules of ownership (private property) to achieve a more egalitarian system would alleviate poverty.

Neoclassical/Marginal Productivity Theory

In the late 1880s, Leon Walras in France, Carl Menger in Austria, and W. S. Jevons in England simultaneously generated the so-called marginalist school in economics, the precursor to contemporary neoclassical economics. Unlike previous economic analyses, this school of thought focused on the behavior of individual firms, consumers, and workers. Based on a utility theory of value (which holds that the price of a good or service will be determined by how useful people find it), this new school of thought used abstract reasoning and calculus to develop equilibrium models of the economy. Equilibrium is achieved when the amount producers can supply at a given price exactly equals the amount consumers want to buy. Importantly, the signals that markets send to consumers and producers when not in equilibrium push the prices in each market and the entire economy to equilibrium conditions. Thus, the market, according to this theory, is self-regulating and requires no outside intervention. This includes the labor market, which implies that as long as wages can fluctuate freely, there should be no unemployment. If workers are unwilling to accept prevailing market wages, they will not be employed and will receive no wages, making poverty, in effect, a condition of their own choosing.

The marginal productivity theory of wages was first articulated by American economist John Bates Clark in his 1898 book *The Distribution of Wealth: A Theory of Wages, Interest, and Profits*. Rather than seeing profit as surplus (what is left over after paying rent, wages, and materials) in an inherently class-conflicted production process, Clark argued that profits, wages, and interest are fair payments based on each economic factor's contribution to production. Workers, like all "inputs" to production, are paid an amount equal to their marginal productivity—in this case, how much the last worker employed adds to the value of goods produced. Workers get what they are "worth," and as long as the labor market works in an unimpeded fashion, there should be no unemployment. Poverty is unlikely if workers are willing to work as many hours as necessary to achieve self-sufficiency.

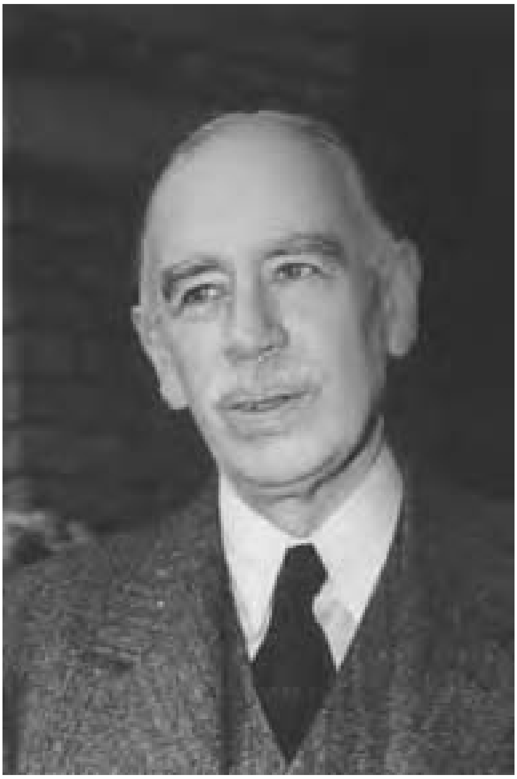
Historical/Institutionalist Theories

Noting the inadequacy of neoclassical laissez-faire economics to explain the vast disparities of income and the concentrations of wealth in late-nineteenth-century capitalism, institutionalist, or "social," economists developed a different understanding of the economy, based on the idea that markets are fundamentally social and political institutions and need to be studied as such. Associated with the historical school in Germany, this group of political economists became well established in U.S. academic circles and government bureaus during the Progressive Era. Thorstein Veblen and John R. Commons were among the best-known proponents of this approach. Unlike previous schools of economic thought, this group included women, most notably Edith Abbott, the University of Chicago–trained economist who conducted pioneering statistical studies of female industrial workers and played a prominent role in "maternalist" and child welfare movements. Further, the leading African American social scientist W. E. B. Du Bois was also trained in German historical methods, an approach he used to understand race relations in the United States.

The rise of large-scale industrial capitalism brought the realities of industrial production—the concentration of the population into urban areas, wage work, the sweatshop—into everyday life and helped spur the movement for a more activist, regulatory state. This was the context within which institutionalist scholars launched major investigations of workplace and labor conditions. Armed by such investigations, they argued that economic outcomes are not determined by scientific models but, rather, are shaped by custom, law, institutions, and powerful coordinated actors. Government policy could be used to reduce poverty and other harmful impacts of the rapid economic changes wrought by industrial capitalism, but the development of such policy required proper knowledge of the problem and empirical documentation. Institutionalists also distinguished among different groups, arguing that they often faced different economic conditions and opportunities for employment opportunities. Of particular concern were immigrant, Black, and women workers. In the institutionalist school, poverty was not seen as a function only of the conditions of the labor market; rather, it was seen as also being shaped by the ways tradition and prejudice (including prevailing ideas about people of color, immigrants, and women) prevented workers from participating in certain industries and occupations.

Keynesian Economic Theory

Writing in the mid-1930s, during the most extensive worldwide economic downturn since the inception of capitalism, John Maynard Keynes rejected his own training and practice in marginalist equilibrium analysis. In its place, he argued that capitalist economies were not self-equilibrating. Insufficient demand for goods and services that had already been produced would result in unemployment. Unemployment would further reduce aggregate demand, making matters worse. With unemployment comes poverty and social unrest. Keynes argued that uncertainty about the future and the proclivity toward speculation among investors meant that they could not be relied upon to correct macroeconomic instability and unemployment. Consumers, lacking income due to high levels of unemployment, were not equipped to provide relief either. Rather, Keynes argued that government action—purchasing goods and services or reducing taxes so consumers could purchase more—would ultimately bring the economy back to acceptable levels of unemployment. Economic growth and sufficient demand would reduce unemployment and poverty, but it was up to government and monetary authorities to manage growth, employment, and income levels through policy interventions. Initially controversial, Keynes's "demand-side" explanation, and especially its



John Maynard Keynes. Keynes argued that government action during economic downturns—purchasing goods and services or reducing taxes so consumers could purchase more—would ultimately bring the economy back to acceptable levels of growth and employment. (Library of Congress)

emphasis on the need for government spending and intervention, came to be a centerpiece of economic thinking about poverty and economic well-being until the late 1970s and early 1980s, when "supply-side" theories reemerged.

Post–World War II Theories of Poverty

Post–World War II prosperity among industrialized nations as well as growth in the number of new nation-states brought a new direction for poverty theory and research in economics. A major focus of this work concerns why certain groups, certain regions, or certain countries are poor despite the achievement of prosperity among other groups or countries. Most use the theories discussed above as their base or springboard. We briefly discuss eight threads of poverty theory in contemporary economics.

Development Theories

The aftermath of World War II and the gradual independence of formerly colonized countries contributed to a growing concern about what became known as "underdevelopment," in reference to the lack of industrial, manufacturing, or other large-scale productive capacities. Underdevelopment and the lack of economic growth and production were seen to be the main cause of poverty in third world countries, at least in absolute terms. Typically, economic development and modernization of productive capacities have been posed as the solutions.

Broadly speaking, economic development theories tend to range from neoclassical to Marxist approaches. Neoclassically based development theories emphasize market-based solutions. This school focuses on market growth rather than on income distribution, arguing that economic growth raises living standards. Marxist and some institutionalist-based development theories argue that the historical colonial relationship is the cause of underdevelopment and poverty. Only after the postcolonial dependency relationship is broken can countries proceed with equitable development, emphasizing egalitarian distribution of resources even at the expense of rapid growth.

Development theories have historically focused on industrialization. However, development theorists differ on how best to industrialize and on what role the state should play in the process. Some countries emphasize the "big-bang" approach, an attempt to simultaneously address macroeconomic and development policy problems through massive state initiatives. Others focus on structural adjustments to the existing economy, introducing market friendly economic liberalization policies. Some promote export promotion strategies based on the notion that nations should specialize in the kind of production in which they have a comparative advantage in world markets. Still others espouse import substitution, a strategy in which countries start producing the products that would otherwise have to be imported. Most development theories emphasize economic growth, with the conviction that it reduces poverty by improving everyone's living standard. It is not clear, however, that growth and redistribution policies can always or easily go hand in hand.

Discrimination

Beginning in the late 1950s with Gary Becker's book *The Economics of Discrimination* (1957), economists have engaged in a debate about the role discrimination plays in markets and in the disparities they produce. As long as discrimination exists, certain groups will be denied full and equal access to markets, possibly contributing to poverty in the form of less or no income, inferior health status, inadequate housing, or unequal educational opportunities. Discrimination theories focus on explaining the uneven distribution of economic resources and poverty of specific groups of people delineated by where people live or by differences in race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual preference, immigration status, or gender. Neoclassical discrimination theories focus on individuals as the agents of discrimination, while Marxist and institutional theorists focus on structural and institutionalized forms of discrimination.

Becker, a neoclassical economist, originally argued that labor market discrimination could exist in the form of an individual's tastes and preferences; a racist employer, for example, who prefers to hire whites will pay them higher wages regardless of their skill levels. When this does occur, it could help explain lower wages or occupational segregation of workers facing discrimination even though they have qualifications equal to those of other workers. However, Becker soon rescinded this argument, instead claiming that market competition bids away discrimination. Firms without a "taste" for discrimination would readily hire equally productive workers at their going wages, while discriminating firms would pay a price—higher wages for preferred workers—for refusing to hire qualified workers regardless of race, sex, or other characteristics. When this happens, in Becker's theory, the nondiscriminating firms boost profits, driving firms that discriminate out of business. Thus, the competitive market should then "bid away" discrimination, since it is unprofitable. In a similar vein, in the 1970s, neoclassical economists argued that it was possible for "statistical discrimination" to exist. In this case, employers screen workers not on a case-by-case basis but based on average characteristics of a group. This results in hiring or wage discrimination against individuals who belong to groups whose average productivity (along with wages) are lower than others. But soon afterward, neoclassical economists rebuked this argument. Firms under competitive conditions will develop ways to ferret out equally productive workers, eliminating statistical discrimination. Today, few neoclassical economists argue that discrimination exists when markets are allowed to operate unhampered.

Marxist and institutional economists argue that discrimination exists even with competitive markets. Racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination has been ingrained in economic institutions and customs over centuries and still exists even in the face of antidiscrimination laws and vast changes in individual views. These theorists argue that wage levels, occupational opportunities, educational systems, and housing patterns have been shaped by centuries of discrimination, resulting in persistent inequality. Entire groups of people are much more likely to be poor due to current and previous institutional and individual discrimination.

Human Capital

In lieu of discrimination as a way to explain inequality, neoclassical economists, again led by Gary Becker (1964), turned to human capital theory to explain why some people had high levels of unemployment or low wages and, by extension, high poverty rates. Human capital theory, extending Clark's marginal productivity arguments to a matter of individual choice, argues that workers' investments in themselves determine wage levels. Workers who do not pursue education and training opportunities or on-the-job experience will have lower marginal productivity and hence lower wages and a higher likelihood of being poor. Alleviating poverty requires policies, such as tax credits for education, that boost individual incentives to invest in human capital.

Labor Market Segmentation

Developed in the 1970s by institutionalist economists (see Doeringer and Piore 1971) and further expanded in the 1980s by Marxist economists (see Gordon, Edwards, and Reich 1982), labor market segmentation theory argues that there are distinct labor markets with distinct wage structures, advancement opportunities, job-related benefits, and portals of entry. There are basically two segments to the labor market—primary and secondary—and three labor groupings: independent primary, subordinate primary, and secondary workers. These groups roughly correspond to white-collar professional jobs, blue-collar skilled and semiskilled manufacturing and service work, and unskilled, high-turnover jobs, respectively. Primary-sector jobs have select ports of entry based on education levels, personal networks, and discriminatory hiring practices. Secondary workers, most often women, teens, and people of color, receive low wages and few benefits and have little or no opportunity for job advancement. Where people fall in the job structure helps explain poverty. Poverty levels are further exacerbated by the growth in secondary jobs led by the free flow of manufacturing jobs to other parts of the world. For labor market segmentation theorists, improving the wage and work conditions in these secondary jobs is key to reducing poverty, as are policies that improve educational attainment, combat discrimination, and prevent nepotism.

Theories of Regional Poverty

Researchers sometimes separate the issues of rural poverty from those of urban poverty. Rural poverty, for example, is seen as a function of lack of wage employment or other forms of income-generating opportunities. Development strategies, population shifts, and economic growth patterns often make subsistence farming untenable, resulting in increased rural poverty as well as migration to urban areas. Urban poverty is also a result of insufficient income-generating activities, but it often exists amid expanding economic opportunities and vibrant market activity. In absolute terms, urban poverty standards tend to be higher, simply because urban lifestyles tend to be more expensive than rural lifestyles. The costs of housing, transportation, and food items are relatively higher in urban areas.

There is a dynamic relationship between rural and urban poverty. Migration from rural areas contributes to the problems of urban poverty, since most of the rural migrants tend to be poor. Because urban poverty is more visible to politicians and policymakers, it has tended to draw more attention than rural poverty. In the 1970s, however, policymakers began to pay more attention to the interconnectedness between rural and urban poverty dynamics and the notion of "urban bias" (Lipton 1976). This new awareness has led to "meso" policy solutions directed toward infrastructure and other rural development activities.

Underclass and Social Exclusion

The notion of an "underclass," characterized by poverty-producing behavior, occupies one of the central positions in poverty debates in contemporary writings across all ideological spectrums. Typically, those who write about the underclass in the United States describe it as a subset of the urban poor—usually African American—whose members' behaviors or lifestyles largely deviate from those of the rest of society. Arguments diverge as to the source of these behaviors. Not all of the urban poor exhibit poverty-producing behaviors, nor are all of those who show so-called deviant behavior poor.

A lack of desire or motivation to be employed, the lure of criminal activities, and out-of-wedlock childbirth are the behaviors most frequently cited in this literature as reasons for persistent poverty and the cause of sustained or intermittent nonemployment (see Jencks and Peterson 1991). Lack of employment limits people from getting the resources needed to escape poverty and precludes their developing the social and cultural networks that would help them break away from poverty-producing behaviors. Employment is required to eradicate underclass poverty.

William Julius Wilson (1987), a prominent underclass researcher in the United States, argues that urban deindustrialization accounts for the concentrated urban poor. The loss of manufacturing work accelerated middle-class suburbanization, which in turn destroyed interclass networks in ghetto neighborhoods, made illegal activity more attractive, and generated negative attitudes toward low-wage employment. The underclass poor, he argues, will disappear when economic conditions improve and when decent-paying jobs and job training become available. Another, more conservative perspective, presented by Charles Murray (1984) and others, argues that cash and in-kind assistance, such as welfare benefits and food stamps, encourage poor people not to seek employment, to have more children, and to engage in "off-the-books" economic activity. The solution, conservatives argue, is to eliminate or drastically reduce public assistance and instead to provide incentives (usually negative) to discourage what is seen as deviant behavior and to encourage employment.

Outside the United States, researchers focus on the notion of social exclusion (International Institute for Labour Studies [IILS] 1996). They seek to understand the processes by which particular segments of the population end up being systematically excluded from mainstream economic, political, and civic and cultural activities. Although social exclusion does not equate to poverty in a literal sense, its proponents argue that it is a process that leads to poverty.

The social exclusion debate focuses on broad institutional and structural forces. Unemployment, lack of income, lack of education and good health, and other inadequacies that largely characterize conditions of people in poverty are the outcomes of the process of social exclusion. Broadly speaking, social exclusion takes three major forms: First, people are denied access to the labor market and other income-generating activities, thereby rendering them unable to acquire economic resources to have adequate consumption. The long-term result is that the excluded poor will deviate socially from the mainstream lifestyle. Second, social exclusion occurs when people lack access to participation in a wide range of political activities, including actions that directly result in improving one's own life. The third form of exclusion includes the denial of access to civic, social, and cultural organizations, networks, and functioning. This can occur at the local or community level as well as the broader regional, national, and global level.

Like U.S. underclass theorists, social exclusion theorists see employment as a major policy solution. Among the more widely advocated policy solutions are universal social rights and social insurance to promote opportunities for inclusion in labor markets and other social, cultural, and political activities.

Capacity and Poverty

Most economists construe poverty to mean a lack of income. However, economist Amartya Sen

(1999) and others argue that poverty results from a lack of "capacity" to earn income, to make informed decisions, or to fight discrimination or injustice. This lack of capacity inhibits income-generating potential, constituting the root cause of poverty. Capacity may be constricted by poor health; unsafe living conditions; gender, caste, or class restrictions; or inability to access education opportunities. Taking these issues into consideration, the U.N. Development Program (2000) includes a capability poverty measure (CPM) for every nation in its annual publication *Human Development Reports* (UNDP 2000).

Capability researchers focus on physical and social well-being as a way to measure poverty. They argue that it is important to use capability measurements in terms of education, health, nutrition, gender disparity, and ethnic disparity as proxies for measurements of well-being, since these are highly correlated with the achievements (or functioning) needed to avoid poverty. Similarly, the notions of basic social rights and freedoms are also incorporated in the capability concept of well-being. Social rights and freedoms, proponents argue, are necessary to allow people to develop the capacity to participate fully in society.

Debates continue as to what determines individual capacity. For some, it is a function of individual choices and efforts. For others, individual capacity is largely determined by broader institutional and structural forces, which provide incentives for or pose threats to the way people develop capacities. Capability researchers argue that improvement in individual capacities can lead to poverty reduction through educational, health, and nutritional measures as well as other measures to eliminate gender and ethnic discrimination.

Feminist Economic Theories

Adult women make up the majority of the adult poor everywhere. Further, lone-mother families face higher poverty rates than do other families. Clearly, gender plays a distinct role in understanding the causes and cures of poverty. Although economists have often recognized that women, especially mothers, are disproportionately poor, it has taken the development of explicitly feminist economic theories to explain why.

Feminist economists point to the role that caregiving—as distinct from employment, economic growth, and inequality—plays in understanding poverty. Women's role in providing care for family members as well as for others restricts their labor market participation and remuneration. All systems of economic production are vitally dependent on care work. However, care work has been undervalued economically, socially, and politically. In capitalist economies, care work has precluded the participation of many women—especially white women—in the labor force and has often shunted women of color into care work jobs. In addition, undervaluing care work results in low wages for women who perform care work for pay. Nancy Folbre (2001) calls this the care penalty. Women, then, are particularly vulnerable and much more likely to be poor than men.

Low pay and primary responsibility for care work makes many women dependent on men for income. Hence, without male income, these women are poor. As women's labor force participation has increased and in some countries as women's demands for equal treatment in the labor market have been met, many more women without children have been able to live independently and not in poverty. Still, even in advanced industrialized countries, lone mothers have the highest poverty rates of all families.

Feminist economists promote policies that reduce the care penalty, such as equal-pay legislation, generous family allowances, child care stipends or provision, and paid parental leave policies.

Randy Albelda and Udaya Wagle

See also: Capitalism; Classism; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Employment Policy; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Income and Wage Inequality; Labor Markets; Malthusianism; Rural Poverty; "Underclass"; Unemployment; Urban Poverty

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Economic/Fiscal Policy

Introduction

Although economic deprivation has always been part of the American experience, the issues and policies that frame current understandings of poverty in America took shape in the 1930s. There are two reasons for this, and they serve as the basis for much of this entry. First, the Great Depression made it abundantly clear that poverty was not necessarily a function of personal failure, such as lack of motivation or skills, but was linked to economic conditions. Second, a role for the federal government in poverty reduction was firmly established. Through macroeconomic policy—taxing and spending decisions and regulation of financial markets—the government can improve economic conditions, decreasing poverty.

The Great Depression was a massive failure of the free market, and while no poverty statistics comparable to today's measures are available from that period, it was surely the case that at least one-third and perhaps one-half of the nation suffered severe income restrictions at some point in those years. Although the causes of the Depression are not the subject of this entry, the important point is that no one could realistically blame the poor or the unemployed for their predicament. For many policymakers, not least of all President Franklin D. Roosevelt, it was clear that steps had to be taken both to get the economy moving again and to protect those who were being battered by its failure.

The theoretical foundation for this dramatically new mind-set toward the economy originated with the great British economist John Maynard Keynes. Before Keynes, it was widely held that an "invisible hand" guided market economies to the best outcomes. Once markets were created and the rules of the game, such as property rights, were established and defended, rational economic agents would engage with each other in ways that would automatically lead to the best results for all parties. Any interventions, including well-intentioned efforts to help the downtrodden, would only lead to counterproductive distortions of market outcomes.

Keynes, however, looked out at the ravaged landscape of the 1930s and realized that sometimes the invisible hand is all thumbs. His key insight was the realization that market economies, unless properly managed from above, regularly fail to utilize all their available resources. The result is higher unemployment, lower incomes, and higher poverty rates. By invoking policies to put the fallow resources (including the unemployed) to work, the government can give the invisible hand a firm nudge, speed up growth, and lower, perhaps even eradicate, poverty. To no small degree, the ongoing American (and to a lesser extent, European) debate about poverty policy is an argument over whether Keynes was right.

Knowingly or not, Roosevelt implemented a Keynesian program. The 1930s saw the creation of a broad and lasting set of federal policies designed both to protect the disadvantaged from market failures and to strengthen their ability to bargain with the owners of capital for a larger share of the fruits of growth. At the same time, New Deal economic policy aimed to jump-start capital toward productive ends again. With the establishment of Unemployment Insurance, the minimum wage, Aid to Dependent Children (the first federal safety net program for the families of poor single mothers, who were generally not expected to work in the paid labor market), the Wagner Act encouraging collective bargaining, and Social Security (which provides benefits to both workers and nonworkers), the Roosevelt administration created a large regulatory structure that strove to use government intervention to promote growth, provided a social safety net for those unable or unexpected to work, and began to empower workers as well.

Through these interventionist policies, along with large temporary public-sector job programs such as the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Roosevelt administration staved off severe privation for many poor families. Equally important, these policies represented an explicit acknowledgment that the market economy could not be counted upon to generate enough growth to reduce poverty. But the key theme, in terms of poverty policy, is that such policies viewed poverty as flowing from a lack of economic opportunity, not from a lack of personal initiative. Thus, by the early 1940s, the themes that still dominate the poverty debate in industrialized economies were established. To what extent is poverty a market failure or a personal failure? How far can macroeconomic management go toward reducing poverty, or will such management simply thwart the invisible hand? What is the role of the safety net? Is it reasonable to believe that the poor can be protected from harsh aspects of the market economy, or will such efforts simply generate perverse incentives, encourage exploitative behaviors, and engender an impoverished culture of dependency?

With these questions in mind, this essay broadly reviews five decades, from 1950 to 2000, of the American poverty experience and the specific role of macroeconomic policy. We find, unsurprisingly, that the pendulum swings back and forth between the polarities explicit in these questions. But, in our view, that should not be taken to imply that both sides are equally right. We think the evidence shows that a full employment economy with publicly provided "work supports" (subsidies designed to meet the gap between earnings and needs), along with a safety net for families that cannot work, is needed to reduce poverty to the lowest possible level. In the absence of this policy set—and it is a set that has never been fully employed in the United States—the lack of progress against poverty here should not be surprising.

1950s and 1960s: Strong Economic Growth and Activist Government Lead to Large Declines in Poverty

In the immediate post–World War II period, macroeconomic policy as a tool of government also took on its modern shape. The U.S. Congress passed the Employment Act of 1946, which called upon the federal government to use all means available to promote "maximum employment, output, and purchasing power." The Council of Economic Advisors was established to advise the president on economic policy, and the president was charged with providing an annual economic report to Congress. Congress established the Joint Economic Committee to help both houses of Congress keep tabs on such federal agencies as the Department of the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Board.

The 1950s were characterized by a huge postwar boom, fueled by individual consumers (with both newly available veterans' benefits and pent-up savings that had accumulated during the war when there was little to buy) and by the Cold War arms race with the Soviet Union. The relatively stable, high-paying jobs that resulted from this combination of consumer demand and massive government investment in the military-industrial complex helped spread prosperity widely. The labor movement, empowered by New Deal–era legislation, also played a central role, as did federal programs that subsidized suburbanization and helped put home ownership within reach of a broader segment of the white working class. The highest-ever proportion of U.S. workers enjoyed union membership, and they bargained and won pensions and health insurance. The middle class grew, and the birthrate soared. President Dwight D. Eisenhower golfed, while mommies stayed home to raise the kids in new suburban developments and daddies went to work.

Despite this idyllic picture of the 1950s, not everyone benefited equally. Recessions in 1948–1949, 1954, and 1958 saw unemployment rates of 5.9, 5.4, and 6.8 percent, respectively. The unemployment rates of Blacks and other minority races were 9.0, 9.9, and 12.6, respectively, in the same recessions. The federal government's response to the recessions was minimal; the Eisenhower administration was more worried about the dangers of inflation than about the dangers of unemployment. Moreover, despite the Employment Act, the 1950s saw little use of macroeconomic policy to fight poverty. Rather, poverty was addressed by the expansion of the Social Security system to cover domestic, agricultural, and professional workers as well as employees of many state and local governments, so that coverage was nearly universal by 1956. Benefits for disabled workers and family members were also added in 1956. Aid to Dependent Children was also expanded to include assistance to the mother and other adults in low-income families in addition to children; the name of the program was changed to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in 1962. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, which administered these programs, issued the first official poverty rate in 1959, when 22.5 percent of the population were estimated to be poor.

President John F. Kennedy, elected in 1960, experienced another recession early in his administration, but his Council of Economic Advisors was far more activist in striving to achieve full employment. They set 4 percent as the target unemployment rate, and when the economic recovery proceeded slowly, with unemployment remaining over 5 percent through 1964, they engineered a tax cut, which worked to stimulate the economy. The expansion was supported by the Federal Reserve Board, now far less concerned about inflation and willing to expand the money supply so that high interest rates would not choke off the recovery. Their coordinated actions maintained the longest sustained period of economic expansion known until that time (105 months).

Kennedy also asked his advisers to report on poverty, for he had observed deep "pockets"—or concentrated areas—of unemployment and poverty when he campaigned in economically depressed parts of the country, such as Appalachia. Structural unemployment was recognized as a phenomenon that might not be reduced much by a strong economy if people remained in geographic areas that were underdeveloped. Kennedy's advisers developed plans for several antipoverty programs. In the 1960s, urban poverty in the northern cities also drew increased attention from policymakers. More than 1 million American Blacks had abandoned impoverished farms in the South decades earlier and had flocked to northern cities where they could find work. Now increasingly excluded from the growth they witnessed around them, their dissatisfaction, coupled with the need for greater legal rights in the South, where racial segregation still reigned, fueled the civil rights movement.

Michael Harrington's *Other America,* published in 1962, increased public awareness and helped build public support for government intervention. After President Kennedy's assassination, President Lyndon B. Johnson succeeded in enacting several antipoverty programs, known as the War on Poverty, in 1964, including Head Start, the Community Action Program, the Model Cities program, and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). Medicare and Medicaid, longer-lasting programs, were enacted in 1965.

The War on Poverty complemented macroeconomic policy with targeted economic development and job-training programs to address pockets of poverty. More resources were also poured into education. Head Start sought to give poor children an equal place at the starting gate. Graduating from high school became a nearly universal experience, and the development of the community college system in the 1960s brought higher education to many. Although conservatives subsequently criticized the War on Poverty as a failure, in reality, macroeconomic policy was especially effective in the 1960s in reducing poverty, as Richard Freeman (2001, 108) has shown. Programs like Head Start have been shown to make a lasting difference in achievement levels of poor youth, and the Community Action Program and Model Cities contributed to the redistribution of political power to the poor. Medicaid and Medicare now deliver health care to 70 million Americans.

Meanwhile, in addition to the extraordinary spate of federal government antipoverty activism spurred by the combination of prosperity and social movements, other changes were occurring to move American society away from the stereotyped 1950s image. Nowhere were these changes more evident than in the family. As the decade of the "second wave of feminism" was getting under way, women's increased education, the invention of the birth control pill, and the Vietnam War all pulled women into the workforce, and the traditional one-earner, two-parent family began its long decline.

The 1970s: Transitioning away from Activism

After falling from 22.4 percent to 12.1 percent between 1959 and 1969, poverty barely budged over the 1970s, ending the decade at 11.7 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2001b). Given the ambitious and successful antipoverty agenda of the 1960s, this was a discouraging result, and it set up the major retrenchment of antipoverty policy that was to follow in the next decade. In this sense, the 1970s represent a transitional period in the history of how poverty is viewed in the United States. The nation moved from the belief that strong macroeconomic growth in tandem with greatly expanded investments in the poor would reach even those entrenched corners of poverty identified by Harrington, to the view that poverty was more a personal problem or, from the perspective of some social scientists, a cultural problem. In this context, the dominant view was heading toward the position that government interventions are likely to do more harm than good.

The dynamic of the transition is revealing in and of itself. Over the first half of the decade, momentum from the 1960s led to continued expansion of certain War on Poverty programs. Spending on antipoverty programs such as means-tested transfers actually accelerated in the first half of the decade. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) was passed in 1973, and the Earned Income Tax Credit—a wage-subsidy for workers in low-income families with children—followed in 1975.

The second half of the decade introduced a decidedly new trend. Overall spending on means-tested programs as a share of gross domestic product was unchanged, but spending on direct cash assistance through AFDC, which grew 49 percent in real terms in the period 1970–1975, fell 7 percent in the period 1975–1980 (the decline was attributable to both falling real benefit levels and lower welfare caseloads). Spending on in-kind benefits (such as food stamps) continued and even increased, but the stage was set for a broad attack on these programs as well. As Sheldon Danziger and Robert Haveman have noted, "By the late 1970s, the optimistic belief that government could solve most social problems had turned to the pessimistic attitude that 'nothing works'" (2001, 4).

At the same time, the economy stumbled through two recessions, and the ability of Keynesian style macromanagement to achieve full employment became highly suspect. In fact, the dominant ideology in economics shifted toward the belief that government intervention in the economy was most likely to generate not low unemployment but high inflation. As if to prove the point, the latter years of the decade were characterized by what came to be called "stagflation": high unemployment and high inflation. The fact that the latter resulted more from the sharp increase in the cost of imported oil than from harmful macroeconomic policy was lost in the shifting ideology of the moment.

At this point, conservative poverty analysts saw an opening to gain public support by attacking the War on Poverty, particularly those programs that provided cash transfers to the poor. Ronald Reagan ran on a platform that attacked "welfare queens" who were bilking the system, and conservative social scientists began to argue that not only were U.S. antipoverty efforts ineffective, they were harmful. For example, these critics argued that welfare was responsible for the increase in mother-only families, particularly among minorities, a group whose poverty rates were much higher than average. In fact, virtually every aspect of the policies and institutions that grew out of the Depression and New Deal came under conservative fire for either stifling economic growth or creating perverse incentives. By the 1980 presidential election, the pendulum had swung far from the optimistic activism of prior decades.

The 1980s

Although the Reagan campaign made the political case against the poverty policies of the 1960s, social scientist Charles Murray made the analytic case. His book *Losing Ground,* published in 1984, argued that poverty programs, particularly AFDC, reduced work incentives and encouraged women to become single mothers. According to Murray's research, far from solving the problem, these programs had the unintended consequence of deepening poverty.

Though his evidence was not particularly convincing, Murray's work was taken very seriously. Common sense, backed up by quantitative research, did suggest that some welfare recipients worked and married less than would have been the case in the absence of welfare. But Murray and those around him vastly exaggerated the magnitude of these findings, ultimately claiming that dramatic reduction of the welfare state would reduce poverty much further than would continuing to finance what he considered to be counterproductive behaviors. These ideas resonated with the Reagan revolution against government.

With the first Reagan budget, growth in some means-tested benefits slowed, particularly AFDC, due to both a decline in real benefit levels and a tightening of eligibility criteria. Other spending, however, quietly expanded, particularly for Medicaid and EITC, the latter of which was included in the Tax Reform Act of 1986. As Reagan himself said about the act, it is "the best antipoverty bill, the best profamily measure, and the best job-creation program ever to come out of the Congress of the United States" (Reagan 1986). Here one sees the seeds of a subtle shift: a distinction between the worthy and the unworthy poor that would become very important in the next decade.

In addition to all this focus on the impact of incentives, major economic changes that were to have a profound impact on poverty were also occurring. First of all, the so-called supply-side revolution—the notion that deregulation and deep tax cuts would stimulate faster overall growth—was not having its intended effect. Growth was moderate over the decade and unemployment remained high. Second, there was a sharp increase in economic inequality. Both of these trends, particularly the latter, led to higher poverty.

The problem of higher-than-expected poverty was first noted in the latter part of the decade, when it became clear that poverty rates were falling less than expected. Even though growth was slower in the 1980s than in previous decades, the economy did expand, and given historical relationships between growth and poverty reduction, poverty should have fallen more than it did. Though few analysts recognized it at the time, the main reason for this disconnect between economic growth and poverty—the "rising tide" was *not* lifting all boats—was the sharp increase in inequality.

The 1980s saw the continuation and acceleration of this late–1970s trend toward higher levels of economic inequality, and this meant that what growth did occur over the 1980s went largely to those at the top of the income scale. Inequality created a wedge between economic growth and poverty reduction. Despite the fact that real per capita income grew 23 percent over the decade, the real family income of those in the bottom 20 percent fell by 4 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2001a) and poverty increased by 1 percentage point (these values are taken from 1979–1989, since both these years are business-cycle peaks).

This increase in poverty over the 1980s is very instructive. As noted in the introduction, for poverty to decline, both market and nonmarket forces must work in tandem. Growth must be fast enough to generate low unemployment, which in turn raises the employment and earnings opportunities of low-income working families. In addition, the safety net must be in place both to help close the earnings/needs gap faced by many low-wage workers even in good times and to catch those who are unable to work. Although the 1980s saw some expansion of work supports, particularly the EITC, neither economic conditions nor social provisions were working very hard to reduce poverty, and the result was higher poverty amid growth.

The 1990s

Perhaps more than is often realized, the 1990s were a fairly clear continuation of the 1980s, though with a few salient differences. For example, the dominant 1980s view that the welfare system, primarily AFDC, created perverse incentives to reduce labor supply and bear children out of wedlock persisted in the 1990s and ultimately led to the end of welfare as an entitlement (that is, a program where all eligible families can receive benefits). Another similarity was the continuation and even refinement of the distinction between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor, with work in the paid labor market being the major determinant of worthiness. Stressing this distinction, President Bill Clinton greatly expanded the EITC and raised the minimum wage as well (although Reagan had done the former, he had avoided the latter).

On the other hand, the second half of the decade featured a very different economy from that of the 1980s. For the first time since the 1960s, the economy grew quickly enough to drive the unemployment rate down to a thirty-year low of 4 percent in 2000. The movement toward full employment led to the first persistent real wage gains among low-wage workers in decades and slowed the seemingly inexorable growth in inequality. After peaking at 15.1 percent in 1993, poverty fell to 11.3 percent in 2000. Although this was certainly an impressive decline, it is worth noting that in 1973, the rate was 11.1 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2001b). After twenty-seven years, the nation was about back where it started.

The replacement of AFDC with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is an excellent microcosm for viewing the shift in poverty policy over the decades, both positively and negatively. The framers of welfare reform were most concerned about reducing dependency on government and building self-sufficiency. Contrast this view with that of the New Deal depression fighters of the 1930s or the Keynesian economists and antipoverty warriors of the 1960s, who clearly saw a positive role for the federal government in improving the life circumstances of the poor—and indeed, of all Americans—and did not see themselves as fostering dependency. Many who supported TANF wanted to get the federal government out of the poverty business for good, and provision of welfare was thus highly devolved down to the state level, while welfare beneficiaries were subject to a lifetime limit of five years (states were free to reduce this limit, and many did so).

On the other hand, TANF, at least as implemented in the second half of the 1990s, was not a dramatic retreat from antipoverty initiatives. Because of the block grant structure of the program and the sharp decline in welfare caseloads, spending per recipient climbed steeply over the latter 1990s. Numerous states used these resources to finance a system of work supports—child care, health care, transportation, training—designed to smooth the path from welfare to work. With these work supports in place, including the expanded EITC, and the strong economy at their backs, some of those who left welfare found jobs and lifted their incomes well above what they would have had on welfare.

Of course, they also had more expenses (child care in particular), fewer cash welfare benefits, and, too often, the loss of food stamps and Medicaid. They also faced many of the hurdles and stressors that less-skilled workers face in the low-wage labor market, including inflexible and erratic schedules and difficulty making ends meet on their meager earnings, even with the more generous EITC. In addition, a smaller group of poor single mothers were excluded from the program due to tougher rules and, in many localities, because of TANF administrators who viewed their mandate as cutting the welfare rolls or who simply discouraged applying. Research shows that this group is far poorer than they were under AFDC and that they have far less access to health insurance and food stamps (Lyter, Sills, and Oh 2002).

The United States ended the decade with a highly decentralized, devolved system tilted very heavily toward the elderly and the working poor and providing little help for able-bodied people outside the paid labor force. Although poverty expenditures as a share of the economy have changed little since the mid-1970s, that spending is far more tied to work than it was in the past. In this regard, the current system depends more on economic growth than did previous incarnations; that is, antipoverty policy, at least for the nonelderly, does much less to counter the effects of economic slowdown than it did in the past. Earnings and related credits (the EITC), as opposed to public assistance, now make up a much larger share of the income of low-income families, particularly for single mothers. This worked to reduce poverty in the latter 1990s, when the economy moved toward full employment, but it is a source of concern moving forward.

Conclusion

The history of poverty and poverty policy since the 1930s is a rich one, reflecting many shifts in ideology that kept the pendulum in fairly constant motion. The themes were set up right from the beginning, when the Great Depression revealed seismic cracks in the market system and dragged a huge proportion of the citizenry into privation. The notion that the federal government had a role and in fact a responsibility to implement an antipoverty strategy was fully established.

In response to this great market failure, the Roosevelt administration built a set of regulations and institutions that served to empower workers, regulate the excesses of the market, and provide a safety net for the most disadvantaged. At the same time, Keynesian economists realized that left to its own devices, the market would too often underperform, and the invisible hand needed guidance as often as not. Without being too reductionist, it is fair to say that the rest of what followed over the next sixty years was largely a debate over whether this was the right way to fight poverty.

We think the record shows that it was and is. This is not wholly to deny conservative critics who argue that some poverty programs created perverse incentives that led to unintended consequences. But we judge these effects to be economically small, in that they have had much less influence on behaviors and outcomes than is claimed by their critics. The record shows that fighting poverty calls for a strong macroeconomy running at full capacity in tandem with a set of supports to help lift the incomes of the working poor to a level that enables them to meet their needs. Finally, despite the contemporary desire to get government out of the business of providing for the poor, a safety net is still needed to catch those who fall out of the labor market when the economy stumbles and to provide for the needs of those unable to work.

Jared Bernstein and Heidi Hartmann

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Area Redevelopment Act; Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Economic Theories; Employment Policy; Great Depression and New Deal; Labor Markets; 1940s to Present; Tax Policy; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Education Policies

Education in the United States serves multiple, often contradictory, purposes. Education promotes a healthy economy by producing a trained workforce. It advances democratic ideals, at least in theory encouraging individuals to reach their fullest potential and providing common training for future citizens. It stabilizes the polity by socializing and assimilating marginalized groups. In the process of fulfilling these mandates, education both reinforces and mitigates the racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism that perpetuate poverty in the United States.

During the colonial period, education typically was a family matter; children were trained at home and formal education was for the most part reserved for select, wealthy, white males. Still, as early as 1647, the Massachusetts Bay Colony court decreed that communities should have elementary and Latin schools so that children could be tutored in Calvinism and could learn to read their Bibles (Mondale et al. 2001, 6). The expansion of commerce and the development of an industrial economy in the early nineteenth century generated calls to "prepare the children for the labors of the mills" (Bowles and Gintis 1986, 162) through a system of free public education. By the 1850s, seven states had provisions for public education (Mondale et al. 2001, 12).

At midcentury, Horace Mann became the head of the newly formed Massachusetts State Board of Education, serving from 1837 to 1848. One of the foremost leaders in educational innovation and reform, Mann claimed that public education created a ready and compliant work force, a united society, and "good" citizens who were less likely to engage in crime. Also referring to education as "the great equalizer," Mann lobbied for a school system that would be tax supported and nonsectarian (Mann [1853] 1990, 3). Mann's initiatives dramatically increased the number of children enrolled in Massachusetts public schools and the resources devoted to these schools.

Education innovations abounded in other contexts as well during second half of the nineteenth century. The 1862 Morrill Act provided for the establishment of state universities and land-grant colleges. "Reform schools" combining education and juvenile rehabilitation were launched. The first compulsory education laws were enacted. Legislation made it illegal for Native American children to be taught in their own language. Professional education theorists and administrators became a dominant force in deliberations about schooling. Meanwhile, with the end of Reconstruction, racial segregation and deprivation became an organizing principle for education in the South.

Late-nineteenth-century industrialization, economic instability, and social movements precipitated reform efforts in every aspect of U.S. society, including education. During the Progressive Era, new educational philosophies stressed unity of the school with the community and what has come to be called "child-centered learning" (Mondale et al. 2001, 11). John Dewey was at the forefront of this reform. In *Democracy and Education* (1916), he outlined the social role of education, both formal and informal, positioning education as a dynamic process of growth that allows all children—including the poor—to realize their greatest potential in partnership with the community. In focusing on the integration of knowledge and experience, Dewey envisioned liberal education as necessary for social equalization, full human and community development, and thus the success and vibrancy of the democratic community.

Progressives argued that education should be "tailored to the child." This impetus, perhaps rooted in devotion to social justice, led to some reforms that produced stratification rather than equality. The movement spawned special curricula for poor and working-class children; tracking for "appropriate" education on the basis of students' ethnicity, race, gender, and economic backgrounds; special gender-based vocational education programs for those tracked into "practical" fields; and the development and popularization of "intelligence" testing and academic aptitude testing (Gordon 1992). The first substantive federal education initiative, the Smith-Hughes Vocational Education Act of 1917, supported these developments by funding industrial (boys), agricultural, and domestic arts (girls) education in secondary schools and extension programs.

Although the Smith-Hughes Act was an important step in U.S. education policy, the federal government left virtually all education policy to the states until the middle of the twentieth century. In turn, states deferred to local communities and did little to correct disparities of educational provision across jurisdictions within their own borders. States did take on a bigger role in the regulation and funding of education in the post–World War II period, although most states did not interfere with the local bases of education financing and provision. Although a preference for neighborhood schools and community control remained strong throughout the twentieth century, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]) and the civil rights movement precipitated major changes in the federal government's role in education policy.

In its 1954 *Brown* decision, the Court unanimously declared racially segregated schools to be inherently unequal schools. In a 1955 follow-up decision, *Brown v. Board of Education II* (349 U.S. 294 [1955]), the Court required that segregated schools be desegregated with "all deliberate speed." These two decisions made education a constitutional, and therefore a national, matter. Although *Brown* did not overturn the state and local basis of education (indeed, it affirmed it), the declaration of a fundamental national guarantee of equality in education triggered federal action to enforce it.

Congress responded in part with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, providing a statutory prohibition on racial segregation in public schools. Congress's primary response to the new national principle of equal educational opportunity was to deal with the effects of segregation, both racial and economic, in the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Title I of this landmark law addressed the educational opportunities of economically disadvantaged students; amendments over the years have added provisions for disabled students, for bilingual education, for schooling for migrant children, and for education in correctional facilities.

These measures have expanded educational access, but they have not necessarily equalized the quality of education. The federal share of total educational expenditures hovers at only around 6 percent—hardly enough to overcome discriminatory distribution of educational services by states and localities. The local property tax remains the basis of school financing in most jurisdictions, providing ampler resources and facilities to schools in wealthier districts. In 1973, in *San Antonio Independent School District et al. v. Rodriguez et al.* (411 U.S. 1), the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Texas's school financing scheme based on property taxes. The Court argued in part that it could not discern discrimination against poor people in the Texas policy, that wealth classifications do not trigger special, heightened constitutional review, and that education is not a fundamental right, though it is "an important function of state and local governments."

Without a constitutional "right to education" that individuals can deploy, the best avail-

San Antonio Independent School District et al. v. Rodriguez et al. *(1973) 411 U.S. 1*

This suit attacking the Texas system of financing public education was initiated by Mexican-American parents whose children attend the elementary and secondary schools in the Edgewood Independent School District, an urban school district in San Antonio, Texas. They brought a class action on behalf of school children throughout the State who are members of minority groups or who are poor and reside in school districts having a low property tax base. . . .

We must decide, first, whether the Texas system of financing public education operates to the disadvantage of some suspect class or impinges upon a fundamental right explicitly or implicitly protected by the Constitution, thereby requiring strict judicial scrutiny. . . .

The individuals, or groups of individuals, who constituted the class discriminated against in our prior cases shared two distinguishing characteristics: because of their impecunity they were completely unable to pay for some desired benefit, and as a consequence, they sustained an absolute deprivation of a meaningful opportunity to enjoy that benefit. . . . Neither of the two distinguishing characteristics of wealth classifications can be found here. . . .

First, in support of their charge that the system discriminates against the "poor," appellees have made no effort to demonstrate that it operates to the peculiar disadvantage of any class fairly definable as indigent, or as composed of persons whose incomes are beneath any designated poverty level. . . .

Second, neither appellees nor the District Court addressed the fact that, unlike each of the foregoing cases, lack of personal resources has not occasioned an absolute deprivation of the desired benefit. The argument here is not that the children in districts having relatively low assessable property values are receiving no public education; rather, it is that they are receiving a poorer quality education than that available to children in districts having more assessable wealth. . . . A sufficient answer to appellees' argument is that, at least where wealth is involved, the Equal Protection Clause does not require absolute equality or precisely equal advantages. . . . For these two reasons—the absence of any evidence that the financing system discriminates against any

able federal remedy for the unequal distribution of state and local educational resources is federal spending, which includes whatever conditions Congress attaches to federal spending. The challenge during the late twentieth century was to increase federal contributions to elementary and secondary education. However, partisans of local control, opponents of Title I programs for poor schools and students, and proponents of less government effectively blocked significant increases to federal ESEA expenditures. In 2002, President George W. Bush won passage of his "No child left behind" legislation, which expands the federal role in schooling without substantially expanding the federal financial commitment. Most significantly, the new law targets "failing schools" for loss of federal support and, in fact, for closing. Failing schools are identified by their students' performance on standardized tests.

The federal government has carved out a more extensive, though no less controversial, role in postsecondary education, including in private colleges and universities. The federal role in higher education has produced some profound changes.

Three centuries ago, the impetus for establishing colleges was the desire for an educated clergy. The first educational and public policies were unspoken but absolute: Higher education definable category of "poor" people or that it results in the absolute deprivation of education—the disadvantaged class is not susceptible of identification in traditional terms. . . .

We thus conclude that the Texas system does not operate to the peculiar disadvantage of any suspect class. But in recognition of the fact that this Court has never heretofore held that wealth discrimination alone provides an adequate basis for invoking strict scrutiny, appellees have not relied solely on this contention. They also assert that the State's system impermissibly interferes with the exercise of a "fundamental" right and that accordingly the prior decisions of this Court require the application of the strict standard of judicial review. . . . It is this question—whether education is a fundamental right, in the sense that it is among the rights and liberties protected by the Constitution—which has so consumed the attention of courts and commentators in recent years. . . .

[T]he importance of a service performed by the State does not determine whether it must be regarded as fundamental for purposes of examination under the Equal Protection Clause. . . . Education, of course, is not among the rights afforded explicit protection under our Federal Constitution. Nor do we find any basis for saying it is implicitly so protected. . . . Even if it were conceded that some identifiable quantum of education is a constitutionally protected prerequisite to the meaningful exercise of either right, we have no indication that the present levels of educational expenditure in Texas provide an education that falls short. . . . This is not a case in which the challenged state action must be subjected to the searching judicial scrutiny reserved for laws that create suspect classifications or impinge upon constitutionally protected rights. . . .

While it is no doubt true that reliance on local property taxation for school revenues provides less freedom of choice with respect to expenditures for some districts than for others, the existence of "some inequality" in the manner in which the State's rationale is achieved is not alone a sufficient basis for striking down the entire system. . . . [A]ny scheme of local taxation—indeed the very existence of identifiable local governmental units—requires the establishment of jurisdictional boundaries that are inevitably arbitrary. It is equally inevitable that some localities are going to be blessed with more taxable assets than others. . . . It has simply never been within the constitutional prerogative of this Court to nullify statewide measures for financing public services merely because the burdens or benefits thereof fall unevenly depending upon the relative wealth of the political subdivisions in which citizens live.

was intended only for white, propertied men "of good character." Not until 1837 were women admitted to any college (Oberlin) along with men of all races, and not until the Morrill Act of 1862, more than 200 years after Harvard opened its doors in 1636, did federal policy provide for the postsecondary education of some women in the new network of public colleges and universities. Even so, colleges accepted the entry of young women, students of color, the poor, immigrants, and the disabled into academia on a very limited basis (Kates 2001). Those men of color and women who did pursue higher education were typically tracked into fields deemed appropriate to their social station, and they were barred in some cases from fields considered the province of white men.

Perhaps the most significant federal policy affecting higher education was the G.I. Bill, signed into law on June 22, 1944. Most notably, the G.I. Bill invested billions of dollars in education for millions of veterans, opening up educational opportunities to lower- as well as middle-class men. However, G.I. Bill educational benefits were initially of more limited value to Blacks and other veterans of color, who faced racial exclusions in admissions policies and other discriminatory barriers. At the same time, women lost educational opportunities. Because priority was given to veterans, poor undergraduate and graduate women found it more difficult to be admitted and were denied financial assistance (Gordon 1992, 113). Although the G.I. Bill did not call for discrimination against women, women were but a tiny fraction of the armed forces until late in the twentieth century.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a spate of legal and legislative actions fostered policy changes designed to open access to education to women, nonwhites, and the poor. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, banning race discrimination in institutions that receive federal funds, and the federal student loan program began to change patterns of admissions and financial support. In 1971, the U.S. Congress approved an Omnibus Higher Education Bill. This legislation included Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination, including discrimination in the treatment of pregnant students, in all federally assisted educational programs, including admissions, academic programs, and athletics. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination in employment, was also extended to cover employees in all educational institutions. In addition, in 1972, guidelines were issued to implement executive orders requiring federal contractors, including schools, to institute affirmative action programs to ensure equal treatment. Affirmative action has been a critical tool for securing access to higher education for women and people of color.

Today, women outnumber men in college, in part due to the access guaranteed by Title IX and facilitated by affirmative action. But for the most part, women in higher education are predominantly white, middle-class, and able-bodied. Poor women, students of color, and disabled students remain vastly underrepresented in colleges and universities (Rothman 1999, 18; U.S. Census Bureau 2000a). In addition, disproportionate numbers of women earn degrees in fields with lower status and lower pay than the fields white men enter; and in the job market, the degrees that women, workers of color, and the disabled hold are worth less than are their counterparts' credentials (Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 1998a, 1998b).

Bias is also evident in policy determining the offer of financial aid in colleges and universities across the nation. Even though women far surpass men as adult, part-time, independent, low-income, and thus "financially needy" students, women receive only 68 percent of what male students receive in financial aid earnings, 73 percent of what men are awarded in grants, and 84 percent of what men receive in loans for low-income undergraduates (Dahlberg forthcoming, 368; Malveaux 2002, 3). Students from low-income families made up only 6 percent of the student population in 1996, as opposed to 18.7 percent from middle-income families and 41.1 percent from high-income families (Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 1998a, 18). Profoundly poor women, especially those on public aid, are dissuaded from entering educational programs because of welfare legislation that supports "work first" rather than educational advancement. As a result of 1996 welfare policy legislation, the number of poor families participating in programs leading to postsecondary degrees was cut from 648,763 in 1995 to 340,000 in 1998–1999 (Adair 2001, 226; Greenberg 1999, 3). Similarly, despite the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, disabled students, and particularly low-income disabled students, have yet to become full participants in the American educational system (Jordan 2001).

In 2000, there was a clear correlation between educational credentials and financial security. The more higher education an individual accrues, the less likely she or he is to become or remain poor. Yet primary, secondary, and postsecondary education continues to impede participation by the poor and to track white women and people of color into fields that do not offer the best incomes. Many educators argue that contemporary educational practices of tracking and uniform testing exacerbate these gaps in education.

Contemporary issues of vocational education, multilingual education, and school vouchers threaten to deepen class and race gaps in education, and accordingly they generate intense debate. A "back to basics" testing movement has been supported by those who favor standardized tests and curricula that prioritize basic skills over critical thinking and intellectual freedom. As in the past, these standardized tests are often used to track students into specific courses, schools, curricula, and occupational sectors. Opponents of tracking claim that the practice contradicts the tenets of an equal education because inferior educational resources are allocated to students in nonacademic tracks. Poor children and children of color are overrepresented in these tracks.

Monolingual education also reinforces the access and opportunity gap in education at all levels. Supporters of bilingual education encourage schools to build on children's native language and culture and to draw students into substantive learning by teaching them in their first languages until they have grade-level command of English. Increasingly vocal critics argue, meanwhile, that in order to succeed in the nation, (primarily poor) immigrant children must acquire English quickly and exclusively.

Perhaps the starkest challenge to poor people's educational opportunity is the school voucher movement, which is also a challenge to public schools. Supporters of vouchers believe that free-market competition will improve both students' and schools' performance, especially for the poor and for students of color. Armed with vouchers, students could abandon "failing schools" by using their vouchers to pay for alternative private education, or they could simply vote with their feet by switching to a successful public school. Opponents fear that both vouchers and public school choice will drain funds away from the poorest schools and will disadvantage the poorest students who will not be able to afford to travel long distances to the school of their "choice," let alone afford private education with meager vouchers. To many, the voucher/school choice debate is a Rubicon, as the disappearance of underfunded schools in poor districts will reinstitute educational apartheid.

Vivyan C. Adair

See also: Affirmative Action; Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Disability; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; G.I.. Bill; Immigrants and Immigration; Industrialization; Progressive Era and 1920s; Racial Segregation; Vocational Education; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Employment and Training

Employment and training programs provide public or publicly subsidized instruction in job skills to individuals who are unemployed, in poverty, or at risk of falling into either category. Job skills may include finding and retaining jobs, skill education in the classroom (vocational education) or worksite skill training (on-the-job training). The large-scale employment and training programs initiated in the United States in the early 1960s aimed at first to assist unemployed breadwinners who had been displaced by trade policies, by automation, or by industrial decline. Over time, employment and training became more closely tied to the welfare system, with programs increasingly motivated by the desire to reduce welfare dependency and welfare expenditures. Employment and training programs have increasingly emphasized job-search skills rather than extensive training.

Americans who seek to improve their employment skills have always depended heavily on their own initiative, their employers' efforts, and private labor market institutions. Despite the tradition of free public schooling and of postsecondary education for higher-status occupations, the United States provided little direct job training to help the poor and jobless improve their position in the labor market. The federal government's Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 supported vocational education for high school students. This program quickly came to be dominated by agricultural training for white southern farmers; vocational education for women consisted primarily of home economics and secretarial training.

The New Deal provided numerous work-relief programs for millions of jobless Americans in the 1930s. These programs aimed to provide temporary income rather than long-term skills or jobs. A few New Deal initiatives established enduring models for job training that informed policy in the 1960s and 1970s: part-time jobs for students (the National Youth Administration), employment and training in conservation (the Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC]), adult basic education, literacy training, and defense vocational training.

After World War II, interest in employment and training policy increased as economic planning became more widely accepted. The G.I. Bill extended education and training benefits for veterans, a population expected to swell the ranks of the unemployed after the war. Federal support for vocational education expanded substantially. Liberal senators briefly floated a proposal to spend $100 million annually for retraining and relocating the jobless in high-unemployment areas in 1949. A decade later, a Senate committee recommended federal grants for a "nationwide vocational training program" to deal with the problem of jobless Americans who lacked the skills to adjust to the changing economy.

By the early 1960s, national policymakers considered job training an important remedy for the problem of long-term unemployment among older male breadwinners. Automation, free trade, and industrial change had eliminated the jobs of many heads of households. Growing concern about this problem resulted in the Area

Redevelopment Act (ARA) in 1961 and the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) in 1962. The ARA authorized job training as part of a package of aid to "depressed" areas with unusually high jobless rates. The MDTA provided grants to every state for retraining workers through the vocational education system and on-the-job training. As many as 300,000 individuals were enrolled in MDTA-sponsored programs in the mid-1960s; about 40 percent were female, and a third were African American. MDTA trained people to serve as typists, machine tool operators, nurse's aides, auto mechanics, secretaries, and cooks. MDTA avoided the institutionalized racial discrimination in vocational education and the U.S. Employment Service in the South. The U.S. Labor Department increasingly tried to bypass these systems entirely by contracting directly with employers for on-the-job training.

As unemployment declined in the early 1960s, policymakers grew more interested in using employment and training to address poverty. The Public Welfare Amendments of 1962 extended benefits for families with an unemployed parent who were receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and encouraged the states to expand social services, including job training, to welfare recipients by providing federal funding for three-quarters of the cost of "rehabilitation" services. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (the War on Poverty) expanded the population eligible for help and expanded the employment and training help available, most notably by providing "work experience" (temporary paid employment to bring welfare recipients into the labor market). The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) provided direct funding to community-based organizations, especially in minority communities, that could provide employment and training services directly to target populations. Philadelphia's Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) program, founded by the Reverend Leon Sullivan, was the most influential community-based employment and training program. Organizations such as OIC, the National Urban League, and Service Employment and Redevelopment (SER)–Jobs for Progress today remain important institutions in the delivery of employment and training services across the United States. Inspired by the New Deal's CCC, the War on Poverty's Job Corps (established in 1964) has provided residential education and job training for youth aged sixteen through twenty-four. In 1968, in the aftermath of riots in major American cities, President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration implemented the Job Opportunities in the Business Sector program, the first substantial program to subsidize private-sector jobs for the poor.

Baffling complexity plagued the job-training system by the end of the 1960s. The Labor Department alone was trying to control over 10,000 separate contracts with community-based organizations, private employers, unions, and state and local agencies. President Richard M. Nixon's "New Federalism" initiative proposed to combine these grants and delegate administration to state and local governments. A lengthy battle between the president and Congress resulted in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973. CETA delegated substantial authority to over 400 state and local governments, which would receive block grants for job training. Congress insisted that CETA include a program for public employment to counter recessions and for areas with high joblessness. By the late 1970s, CETA employed over 700,000 individuals. Programs such as the Job Corps continued as separate, federally administered programs.

During the 1970s, CETA came to be seen as a policy failure. The program's rapid growth, its decentralization, and its emphasis on public job creation made CETA vulnerable to abuse in many places. Public funds were used for patronage jobs in some areas; other areas used CETA to ease their budget crises by cutting regular payrolls and rehiring workers with CETA funds.

Media attention to training programs for professional card dealers and other questionable occupations further undermined the program. Though CETA was amended in 1978 to correct some of these problems and to target disadvantaged youth, the acronym was irretrievably tainted.

As CETA lost credibility, a backlash against welfare and perceived welfare dependency was encouraging sentiment for using employment and training to discipline welfare recipients. The Work Incentive (WIN) Program of 1967 marked an early sign of this sentiment. WIN took a step toward requiring job training as a prerequisite for receiving welfare. Welfare recipients could lose their eligibility if they refused to take suitable jobs or to enroll in job-training programs. By the end of the 1970s, support was strong for replacing welfare with "workfare," that is, providing temporary income support for needy people on the condition that they work or participate in job training.

President Ronald Reagan's administration eliminated spending for CETA's public employment programs in 1981. As joblessness increased in 1982, the Reagan administration reluctantly agreed to reauthorize federal job-training programs. The Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA), which replaced CETA, explicitly targeted the poor and economically disadvantaged, cementing the connection between U.S. employment and training policy and the welfare system. No JTPA funds were to be used for income support for trainees. Federal job-training grants were channeled through state governments to local Private Industry Councils (the majority of whose members had to come from the business community), which would manage local employment and training policy. Despite efforts to consolidate employment and training programs, the federal government still funded 163 separate job-training programs in 1995.

Subsequent changes in national welfare policy have inspired further changes in employment and training policy. The Family Support Act of 1988 created the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) training program, which required states to place 20 percent of welfare recipients in workfare programs by 1995 and emphasized job training and education for those considered at risk of long-term dependency. Because the program permitted the states considerable discretion in achieving the program's goals and because a severe economic recession soon followed its enactment, the cash-strapped states invented new, cheaper approaches to expediting the removal of welfare recipients from the rolls. Programs in San Diego, California, and in Arkansas emphasized helping welfare recipients find new jobs as quickly as possible without any additional job training. This approach, which often places people in low-paying, insecure jobs, has been ensconced in policy as the "work-first" principle followed in many localities.

In 1992, presidential candidate Bill Clinton sought to combine education and job-training services for welfare recipients with a time limit on benefits. Conservative Republicans, who won congressional majorities in 1994, insisted on mandatory work requirements. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which replaced AFDC with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), limited the number of months an individual could receive income support over his or her lifetime and required recipients to enroll in work or job training. TANF permitted states to experiment with these workfare requirements. The Wisconsin Works program, implemented in 1997, ended cash assistance to the poor and substituted a system of job-placement services and supports for poor people, depending on their employment readiness. The lessons of the Wisconsin, San Diego, Arkansas, and other experiments made it attractive for states to emphasize job-search assistance before job training for many welfare recipients. Two other considerations have been important in this "work-first" emphasis. One is that effective job training requires a bigger up-front investment of time and money. The other is that the new federal welfare law—and the incentives it offers the states—is focused solely on reducing the welfare rolls as quickly as possible rather than on moving people out of poverty.

These changes in welfare policy affected national employment and training policy in 1998, when the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) replaced JTPA. Unlike previous programs, which had emphasized the education and the development of skills before job search, WIA emphasized immediate job-search, job-placement, and job-retention skills (such as interviewing, punctuality, and workplace literacy). WIA also attempted to create "one-stop" service delivery, with the intent to create single locations that would blend the job-training programs of JTPA with unemployment insurance, the employment service, vocational education, veterans programs, trade adjustment assistance, and, it was hoped, TANF and school-to-work programs.

Despite the bold rhetoric of the MDTA, CETA, and other programs of the 1960s and 1970s, U.S. expenditures on employment and training never approached the levels of such expenditures in many European nations, and they have declined considerably since the late 1970s. When JTPA ended in the 1990s, it had provided training for about the same number of people as MDTA had thirty years earlier, despite substantial growth in the eligible population. Initially conceived as programs to help male breadwinners adjust to economic change, American employment and training programs steadily became an adjunct of the welfare system, serving a clientele that was disproportionately young, minority, and female. The entry-level jobs encouraged by employment and training policy are aimed at reducing dependency at the lowest cost rather than at increasing the quality of the labor supply.

The evidence that job training has helped youth or men is inconclusive. Job training and job services evidently provide modest benefits for women. Even the best job-training programs do not raise earnings enough to make a substantial difference in the poverty status of poor mothers. The most successful programs seem to be those conducted by employers themselves. "Creaming" (that is, selecting the most job-ready candidates for training services) and "substitution" (that is, substituting publicly subsidized trainees or employees for one's own employees in order to reduce payroll costs) persistently plague these programs. Meanwhile, American employment and training policy in the near future will continue to be driven by American welfare policy.

David Brian Robertson

See also: Area Redevelopment Act; Employment Policy; Unemployment; U.S. Department of Labor; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Workfare

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Employment Policy

At the end of World War II, employment policy developed out of the liberal-labor vision of a right to a job for all able to work or seeking work, which the federal government would guarantee. Responding to widespread fears of mass unemployment, Montana's Democratic Senator James E. Murray drew upon the legacy of wartime planning and economic coordination to propose the Full Employment Act of 1945. The resulting Employment Act of 1946 contained not new obligations or entitlements but, rather, an economic planning mechanism and commitment to promoting "maximum employment, production, and purchasing power" (Joint Economic Committee 1966, 9). The act instructed the president to transmit an economic report at the beginning of each legislative session, and it formed two new agencies, the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) in the executive branch and the congressional Joint Economic Committee, to gather data and analyze economic trends, with the first acting in an advisory capacity and the second directing congressional attention to the economy. Over the years, the CEA attempted to shore up aggregate demand through fiscal devices, seen in the 1964 tax cut, rather than to address structural barriers to employment, which became the purview of targeted regional development and manpower training programs under the War on Poverty. Policymakers disconnected overall economic health from social welfare.

By the 1940s, policy intellectuals inside and outside the government had turned to the writings of British economist John Maynard Keynes. His ideas permeated the National Planning Association, an elite Washington group composed of agriculture, business, and labor interests, and the National Farmers Union, the most liberal group in the farm lobby, which joined the fiscal division of the Bureau of the Budget to push for economic planning for full employment. Keynesians argued for state investment and expenditure to raise purchasing power and to stimulate job creation in the private sector, with jobs programs being a last resort. In 1943, the National Resources Planning Board, located in the Executive Office of the President, issued *Security, Work, and Relief Politics*, a report that announced a "New Bill of Rights" that began with the right to work. President Franklin D. Roosevelt reinforced this idea with his Economic Bill of Rights of January 1944 and subsequent speeches during the presidential campaign of that year. Congressional planning committees were already grappling with the consequences for employment of terminating war contracts and converting production for postwar uses. Upon assuming the presidency, Harry S. Truman embraced the concept of full employment.

Murray's Senate Committee on Military Affairs strongly claimed in its 1944 report, "Legislation for Reconversion and Full Employment," that only government could ensure full employment. The bill Murray introduced a few months later, cosponsored by liberal Democrats such as New York's Robert Wagner and Republican mavericks like Oregon's Wayne Morse and North Dakota's William Langer, placed the responsibility for employment and prosperity squarely with the government. It mandated a National Production and Employment Budget, greater coordination of economic policy, and public spending to compensate for lost private investment. Significantly, the original wording restricted the government's guarantee of employment to "all Americans who have finished their schooling and who do not have full-time housekeeping responsibilities" (Bailey 1950, 243). Such a proposal assumed that married women who had entered wartime factories were temporary workers. The government, declared cosponsor Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney (D-Wyoming), should not encourage employment among "people . . . who ought to be at home helping to raise families" or engage in policies to "break up the family" (quoted in Kessler-Harris 2001, 20). Although the bill sent to the House dropped this language, full employment never meant that all would be fully employed; rather, only those recognized as workers were covered.

Organized labor and liberal groups, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Catholic Welfare Conference under the auspices of the Union for Democratic Action (which became Americans for Democratic Action), lined up behind the 1945 bill. The Congress of Industrial Organizations felt that the bill would buffer economic shocks but that only its own more robust program of higher wages, price controls, extended Social Security and unemployment compensation, fair taxation, aid to housing and education, and improved race relations would guarantee full employment. In contrast, major business lobbyists, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, charged that the bill would lead to inflation and would replace private enterprise with statism. In the midst of the largest strike wave in history, with fears of rising prices replacing concerns over unemployment, the more conservative House of Representatives adopted a weakened bill. Truman accepted the resulting act as a first step.

The CEA would come to serve as an advocacy group for the president as much as a compiler of economic information, improving the executive's ability to evaluate the economy. Whether it would promote Keynesian ideas depended on presidential appointments and the influence of the council on both the president and more-established agencies. Liberal Democrats would come to dominate the Joint Economic Committee, which was limited to holding hearings and thus had little substantive impact on enacting the employment demands of trade union allies.

Though the Employment Act of 1946 made no mention of inflation, balance of payments, or redistribution of income, these issues would face the CEA over the next two decades. Central to postwar policy was a presumed trade-off between employment and inflation. Rather than stressing employment, the first *Economic Report of the President,* in 1947, asked trade unions to moderate wage demands lest prices rise, anticipating the idea of wage-price guidelines. Although price controls ended before the 1948 election, the Korean War brought deficit spending and limited price, wage, and credit controls. Leon Keyserling, then the council's chair, pushed economic growth to obtain high employment without fluctuations in prices, but cold war spending made "little direct contribution to increased standards of living" (Norton 1977, 123).

Federal spending tied to foreign policy, rather than macroeconomics, ignited postwar growth, so neither employment policy nor Keynesian pump priming actually drove economic policy. Congress nearly cut off funding for the CEA in 1953, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower's appointments, led by Arthur Burns, were not inclined to push government intervention. Moderation of economic fluctuations became the goal. By 1956, economists believed that a conflict existed between high employment, rapid growth, and stable prices. Despite more-frequent recessions (1949, 1954, 1958, and 1961–1962), each with greater unemployment, policymakers praised the general level of economic prosperity. They sought a technical outcome—a balanced budget at full employment—without much interference in the workings of the private labor market.

Though Walter Heller and the other economists appointed by President John F. Kennedy to the CEA were liberal Keynesians, they separated social from economic policies. By increasing growth, they argued, unemployment would diminish and so would poverty. Though the CEA's 1962 *Economic Report* admitted that families "headed by women, the elderly, nonwhites, migratory workers, and the physically or mentally handicapped" were left out of prosperity, they still insisted that growth and full employment would end poverty (O'Connor 2001, 152). Through new statistical measures, administration economists like Robert Solow and Arthur Okun associated decreased poverty with numerical goals, such as 4 percent rates for both unemployment and growth. Against this aggregate growth position were trade unionists, as well as conservatives, who saw unemployment as structural. The conservatives argued that any rate of unemployment over 5 or 6 percent would generate inflation, while labor saw automation displacing industrial, especially minority, workers (who were mostly male). Thus, labor and its left-liberal supporters promoted active job creation, retraining, minimum-income guarantees, and other market interventions by government.

To combat the recession of 1962, when automatic stabilizers appeared to be ineffective, Heller and the CEA recommended tax cuts. Deficit spending would generate a "full employment budget," that is, "the excess of revenues over expenditures that would prevail at 4 percent employment" (Norton 1977, 181). Although the CEA believed tax cuts to be more "efficient" in producing the necessary deficits to stimulate the economy, it did not dismiss increased spending. Rather, congressional diffidence over spending bills blocked other options; here a spillover effect from southern Democratic opposition to social welfare spending reinforced the tax-cut approach. Kennedy lacked the political clout to initiate any bold move against rising unemployment, especially since poverty and joblessness increasingly appeared connected to distressed regions and hidden people, as Michael Harrington noted in *The Other America* (1962).

Kennedy-Johnson initiatives targeted structural unemployment but never with adequate resources. The 1961 Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) provided loan guarantees and training and technical grants to high-unemployment areas. The 1962 Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) would make employable skilled men who had been dislocated by technology. To end youth unemployment, the War on Poverty initiated the Jobs Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps, programs geared to changing the characteristics of individuals rather than to transforming labor markets or redistributing income.

African Americans, who undoubtedly had the highest unemployment rates in the nation, became identified with the War on Poverty, bringing racial politics to the forefront of employment policy. Some policymakers began to believe, as one House task force put it, that "a successful employment program would in itself help to solve many of the problems of social disorganization" (quoted in Weir 1992, 92). The 1968 Kerner Commission Report on urban riots recommended public employment; jobs were a top priority of the 1968 Poor People's Campaign, as they had been for the 1963 March on Washington. The fiscal drain of the Vietnam War and a general political reluctance to provide the poor with government jobs led to an emphasis on creating incentives for private-sector employers to open up jobs and job training. But neither business nor unions felt subsidized job training was in their interest. The most effective jobs program for African Americans turned out to be the growth of public-sector employment.

The Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act (1978) responded to the growing unemployment of the mid-1970s by combining a renewed interest in economic planning with full-employment guarantees. It joined together a bill proposed by former vice president Senator Hubert Humphrey (D-Minnesota) to create an Economic Planning Board, based on the ideas of Nobel laureate Wassily Leontief, with one initiated by Representative Augustus Hawkins (D-California) to provide a job for all who would work, based on the demands of the Congressional Black Caucus. As an amendment to the 1946 Employment Act, it would "put full employment back in the Employment Act," Humphrey declared in 1976, by setting a goal of reaching 3 percent unemployment in four years (quoted in Weir 1992, 135). Liberals found the bill useful during the election to tarnish opponents, but actual political support was lukewarm. Moreover, intellectual advocates were outside the mainstream of an increasingly neoclassical economics profession, and only the liberal industrial unions, like the United Auto Workers, were fully behind the bill. It was judged inflationary by President Lyndon B. Johnson's former budget director Charles Schultze during congressional hearings, and support dropped off. President Jimmy Carter signed a bill in 1978 that targeted a 4 percent unemployment rate within five years without committing the government to providing either jobs or any mechanism to reach that goal.

Full employment lost support of elite policymakers during the stagflation of the 1970s. Associated with African Americans, its political feasibility diminished with the election of Ronald Reagan. Job training programs were cut back, and punitive welfare-to-work schemes, developed over the previous twenty years, replaced the right to a job as government's main employment policy. Attention thus shifted from the unemployed white male breadwinner to the unmarried minority mother as the subject of poverty and the object of reform.

Eileen Boris

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Employment and Training; Unemployment

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End Poverty in California (EPIC)

End Poverty in California (EPIC) was the campaign platform turned social movement that transformed California's politics during the Great Depression by making socialist reform a distinct possibility in one of the nation's largest and most politically significant states. Muckraking novelist, critic, and socialist Upton Sinclair promised to "end poverty in California" if elected governor in 1934. Sparking one of the most exciting and controversial gubernatorial elections in American history, both Sinclair's grassroots popularity and his ultimate defeat attest to the possibilities and the limitations of reform during the Great Depression.

In 1933, Sinclair, who was well known for such widely read reform novels as *The Jungle* (1906), switched his party affiliation from Socialist to Democratic as he contemplated a campaign for the California governorship. He hoped that associating with the Democratic Party and with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal would make his views more palatable to the public and would increase his chances of electoral victory. He also published a small book entitled *I, Governor of California and How I Ended Poverty—A True Story of the Future*, which served as the basis for his 1934 End Poverty in California (EPIC) gubernatorial campaign. The EPIC plan consisted of twelve points, each of which was intended to quell the economic depression facing the region. Sinclair wanted the state to appropriate unused lands and factories to build "production-for-use" (rather than for profit) communities. He also wanted to shift the burden of taxation to the wealthy, proposing heavy, graduated income and inheritance taxes as well as large taxes on corporations and utilities. Capitalizing on an issue popular in California due to the state's many aging residents, he advocated pensions for the elderly and the disabled. Invigorated by Sinclair's proposals, EPIC clubs formed all over the state and brought

Upton Sinclair, The Epic Plan, *1934*

1. A legislative enactment for the establishment of State land colonies, whereby the unemployed may become self-sustaining and cease to be a burden upon the taxpayers. A public body . . . will take the idle land . . . and erect dormitories, kitchens, cafeterias, and social rooms, and cultivate the land. . . .
2. A public body . . . will be authorized to acquire factories and production plants whereby the unemployed may produce the basic necessities required for themselves and for the land colonies, and to operate these factories and house and feed and care for the workers. . . .
3. A public body . . . will . . . issue scrip to be paid to the workers and used in the exchanging of products within the system. . . .
4. An act . . . repealing the present sales tax, and substituting a tax on stock transfers . . .
5. An act . . . providing for a State income tax . . .
6. An increase in the State inheritance tax . . .
7. A law increasing the taxes on privately owned public utility corporations and banks.
8. A constitutional amendment revising the tax code of the State . . . exempt[ing] from taxation . . . homes and ranches [assessed at] less than $3000. Upon properties assessed at more than $5000 there will be a tax increase. . . .
9. A constitutional amendment providing for a State land tax upon unimproved building land and agricultural land which is not under cultivation . . .
10. A law providing for the payment of a pension of $50 per month to every needy person over sixty years of age . . .
11. A law providing for the payment of $50 per month to all persons who are blind, or who by medical examination are proved to be physically unable to earn a living . . .
12. A pension of $50 per month to all widowed women who have dependent children . . . increased by $25 per month for each additional child . . .

Source: Upton Sinclair, *Immediate Epic: The Final Statement of the Plan* (Los Angeles: End Poverty League, 1934). Reprinted in *The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933–1945: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Richard D. Polenberg (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 2000), 120–122.

many previously apolitical men and women into the American democratic process.

Sinclair convincingly won the Democratic Party's gubernatorial nomination, but he simultaneously became a lightning rod for controversy. He never gained the support of the state Democratic Party bosses, who believed that the writer was too radical. For much the same reason, President Roosevelt refused to endorse him and took pains to distance himself from Sinclair's left-leaning ideas. This lack of support from the party establishment struck a significant blow against Sinclair's chances. Sinclair also galvanized a relentless conservative opposition intent on his defeat. Industrial leaders loathed him, and newspapers, almost unanimous in their opposition, printed propaganda against him. One common practice was to attribute the words of a fictional Sinclair character to the candidate himself, making him look absurd. For the first time, Hollywood leaders became explicitly politically active as well. Short propaganda films dressed up as prefeature "newsreels" were aired throughout the state and showed "hoboes"—who were actually actors—pouring into California for government "handouts" in anticipation of a Sinclair victory. Louis B. Mayer, the head of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios, threatened to leave the state if Sinclair won. The most important campaign issue, however, was religion. As a result of his novel *The Profits of Religion* (1918), the press painted Sinclair as a subversive hostile to Christianity. Although many clerics supported him anyway, popular leaders like Aimee Semple McPherson attacked the candidate as an atheist and a communist.

In the end, Sinclair's grassroots supporters could not overcome the power and the money of the many forces aligned against him. But the campaign was not a total defeat. EPIC candidates won many seats in the State Assembly, and EPIC clubs helped revive Californian progressivism. Thousands of new Democrats were registered, and in order to beat Sinclair, Republican victor Frank Merriam pledged to bring the programs and ideas of the New Deal to California, which he subsequently did. In the era of Roosevelt, Huey Long, and Francis E. Townsend, the Sinclair campaign provided another example of the opportunities and the limitations of poverty relief and wealth redistribution available to reformers during the Depression. EPIC also stands out for its bold objective: ending poverty through political and policy action, a goal that would not again be embraced until the affluent 1960s, with President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of "unconditional war on poverty" in 1964.

Matthew A. Sutton

See also: Great Depression and New Deal; Social Security Act of 1935; Socialist Party; Townsend Movement; War on Poverty

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Entitlements

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Citizenship; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Environmentalism

Environmentalism is a social movement that began in the late nineteenth century whose purpose was the preservation of natural forests and wildlife refuges. Since that time, it has evolved to include efforts to eliminate environmental inequities that result in the location of poor and minority communities on or near toxic lands. The concern with environmental inequities is called the "environmental justice movement." It consists of over 400 grassroots organizations in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Although organizations originally established for preservation may also engage in activities around environmental justice, there is an ideological distinction between environmentalism and environmental justice.

Environmentalism was born in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who believed in a spiritual link between man and nature. In the late 1800s, several organizations dedicated to the conservation of lands and wildlife emerged—the Audubon Society and the National Parks and Conservation Association, among others. The most prominent such organization was the Sierra Club. The beauty of the Yosemite Valley in California transformed John Muir, a naturalist, during what was to be a brief visit. He made California, and the exploration of the valley and the Sierra Nevada mountains, his life's work. Muir led the campaign to establish Yosemite National Park, and in 1892, he helped establish the Sierra Club. Muir was its first president.

Since it began, the Sierra Club has been a powerful lobbying organization for the preservation of the wilderness. In the early twentieth century, the organization encouraged the establishment of the National Park Service. In the mid-1970s, the Sierra Club began to advocate for energy conservation policies and clean air. By the end of the twentieth century, the Sierra Club had turned to the effects of globalization on the environment.

In the middle to late 1960s, a period of significant social and political change in the United States, a worldwide movement grew to create more respect for the planet through the elimination of pollution and the reduction of waste. This led to the first international Earth Day on April 22, 1970. The activities of the Greenpeace environmental group heightened global awareness of environmentalism. Greenpeace is an international organization established in 1971 to protect endangered species. In their efforts to prevent the extinction of whales and seals, Greenpeace members employed the nonviolent resistance tactics of the civil rights movement by manning small boats that hovered between the hunters and their prey.

In the late 1970s, the Love Canal incident, which demonstrated the threat that toxic waste posed to humans, became a national political issue. Love Canal was a working-class neighborhood in Niagara Falls, New York. The homes and apartments in the neighborhood had been built on top of a landfill that had been used by several chemical plants located along the Niagara River. The nearly 42 million pounds of toxic chemicals dumped by these plants seeped into the yards and playgrounds in Love Canal. In 1978 and 1980, President Jimmy Carter declared Love Canal an environmental emergency area, and 950 families were evacuated. This was the beginning of a national awareness of the possibility of exposure to toxins in residential areas and of the consequent threat to human health.

In 1978, drivers for Ward Transformer Company, one of the largest transformer-repair companies in the United States, sprayed more than 200 miles of North Carolina roadsides with oil containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). This toxic chemical is a carcinogen and may cause birth defects and liver and skin disorders. In an attempt to decontaminate the roadsides, the state decided to collect the tainted soil and bury it in a landfill in Warren County, North Carolina. Warren County, which is 60 percent African American, fought this decision on the grounds that because the county is composed of a group that has been historically discriminated against, exposing those residents to the PCBs contained in the soil was a civil rights violation. A series of demonstrations resulted in the arrests of over 350 people. Although residents did not succeed in blocking the location of the landfill in their community, the struggle attracted the attention of national civil rights leaders and Black elected officials. The Warren County struggle, for many, marks the beginning of the environmental justice movement.

Since the Warren County incident, the environmental justice movement has been slowly gaining momentum. Citizens in the mostly Black community of Chester, Pennsylvania, combat toxins from various waste disposal, waste treatment, and incinerator sites in their community. Residents of New Orleans, Louisiana, fight efforts to rebuild a housing project near a toxic landfill linked to higher rates of breast cancer for residents who live near it.

In 1987, the Commission for Racial Justice, under the auspices of the United Church of Christ, published *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites*. Using an analysis of demographic patterns, the report found that race was significantly associated with the location of commercial hazardous waste facilities.

This report and the activities of environmental justice activists have led to the recognition of environmental justice as an issue of national importance.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, which required the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to address environmental justice issues as part of its mission. It also established the Interagency Federal Working Group on Environmental Justice, which was composed of sixteen other agencies. These agencies are responsible for collecting data on the impact of environmental hazards on minority and poor communities, for promoting public participation in the policymaking process related to the health of humans and the environment, and for ensuring the enforcement of health and environmental statutes. Since the passage of this order, the Environmental Protection Agency has established a national environmental justice program as well as individualized programs for each of its ten regions.

Andrea Y. Simpson

See also: Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations

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Epidemic Disease

The American health experience has been shaped by the shifting nature of the country's economic, social, and political life. In particular, experience with epidemic disease among women and men, the aged and the young, African American and white, and the rich and poor have all been affected by such factors as the isolation of rural communities, the development of an economy based on commerce and industry, the growth of large urban and industrial centers, race and racism, changing housing and working conditions, and the development of extremes in poverty and wealth.

From early in American history there has been an intimate connection between health status and social developments. Although recent research (e.g., Ulrich 1990) appears to contradict some of the rosier conclusions of earlier studies, many studies of colonial New England written in the 1970s reveal an extraordinarily successful experience with disease as measured by available statistics on average length of life. According to Philip Greven (1972) and other colonial historians, men living in the first Andover, Massachusetts, settlement and elsewhere lived into their sixties, seventies, and eighties while their English counterparts were dying in their midthirties.

In contrast, although yellow fever and malaria, both mosquito-borne diseases, were both widely reported in seventeenth-century New England, their impact on the colonists of Jamestown, Virginia, was inordinately greater. The first Virginia colonies were plagued by starvation, which led to susceptibility to malaria, yellow fever, and a variety of other epidemics. Constant infirmity, infertility, and early death marked their experiences.

The differing experiences with disease in New England and Virginia were probably related to the distinct social and economic bases for these colonies. The New England colonies were settled by families seeking to establish stable, self-sufficient communities based on sustainable agriculture. The Virginia colonies, on the other hand, were settled largely as exploitative settlements of men who sought to plunder the land and the peoples of the area to extract wealth in the form of the cash crop, tobacco. The lack of commitment to establishing permanent, ongoing settlements helps explain the relative dearth of women among the first generations of colonists, their inability to establish successful economic and social institutions, and their inability to ward off starvation and susceptibility to epidemic diseases.

Early Epidemics: Smallpox

Smallpox, an acute viral disease whose symptoms are high fever and dark red spots that soon fill with pus and disfigure its victims, was perhaps the most fearsome disease of the colonial period. Introduced to the Americas by European colonists, the disease had an especially devastating effect on the Native American populations, who, because of their lack of contact with the disease, had virtually no immunity to it. While various English and Spanish settlements were periodically swept by an epidemic that caused varying degrees of distress, Native American populations throughout the colonies were devastated. In the nineteenth century, some U.S. Army units gave blankets previously used by smallpox and measles victims to Indian tribes, thereby destroying their communities and destroying resistance to westward expansion.

In some early smallpox epidemics, it was observed that a technique called "variolation" practiced by African American slaves seemed to be effective in protecting the Black population from the disease's worst ravages. The focus of intense public and religious debate in the early eighteenth century, the technique consisted of transplanting scabs and pus of smallpox victims into open wounds of healthy individuals. These people then developed a mild set of symptoms and, thereafter, immunity. This technique was adopted by European Americans and helped in the development of inoculation and vaccination as effective preventives.

By the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, an extensive commercial economy combined with a growing, increasingly urbanized and poor population to make epidemic diseases a much greater threat to Americans. Epidemic disease, once a local phenomenon circumscribed by the relative lack of mobility among self-sufficient and isolated rural communities, began to sweep through the nation along the well-established trade routes. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the highly crowded and increasingly poor urban centers experienced death rates that were as high as those of European cities. Cholera, dysentery, tuberculosis, and a host of other water- and air-borne infectious conditions were endemic in the country's teeming urban centers, such as Boston, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere.

In the decades following the Revolution and continuing through the nineteenth century, a number of new water-borne and air-borne conditions began to sweep through urban poor communities. Cholera, a disease that caused severe dehydration through acute diarrhea, made dramatic and fearsome sweeps through the growing ports and cities of the nation in 1832, 1848, and 1865. In the absence of sewerage systems, pure water, systematic street cleaning, pure or fresh food or milk, and decent methods for preserving or freezing meats, diphtheria, whooping cough, and any number of fevers and flus became constant threats to babies and young children in the filthy urban trading centers of the nation. By the second half of the century, death and disease rates in American cities had increased substantially, and Americans' average length of life was by then no better than that of Europeans.

Tuberculosis, perhaps the most pervasive and deadly disease historically, emerged as the focus of intense concern as its primary symptoms—hacking coughs, fever, loss of weight, and night sweats—took on a seemingly dangerous aspect in the crowded and poverty-stricken urban environment of the late nineteenth century. Despite the fact that the disease probably peaked in significance in the middle years of the century and began to decline as a major cause of mortality after the 1880s, public health professionals and charity workers began to focus on this condition in the early years of the twentieth century.

The Use of Disease to Stigmatize the Poor

The changing experience of disease was often used as part of a broader political agenda that sought to stigmatize the poor and identify immigrants as a cause, rather than as victims, of disruptions in the life of the community. This use was particularly important in the nineteenth century amid the urbanization, industrialization, and large-scale immigration that transformed the nation's economy and environment. Especially in eastern port cities and most pointedly in New York, the demographic and physical transformation of the country was hard to miss: An English-speaking, largely Protestant community became, by the 1880s, home to thousands of Catholic and Jewish immigrants, who made up a poor and largely impoverished industrial working class. While some embraced these socioeconomic and demographic changes as signs of future growth and possibility, others expressed alarm at the increasingly visible poverty, illness, crowding, and "foreignness" of the city. To more-established residents, most of them Protestants, the connection between "plagues and people" seemed clear. Epidemic diseases, such as smallpox, cholera, typhoid, yellow fever, and a host of intestinal diseases, became powerful symbols of uncontainable social decline and were largely blamed on the immigrant poor.

In New York City, the elite class bemoaned the passing of a "golden age" in the city's history, but those memories were in large measure nostalgic and highly selective. High death rates and pestilence had long affected rich and poor communities alike. Yet patterns of disease in recent decades appeared to contemporaries to confirm the community's decay. "By mid-century, New York had among the worst health statistics in the nation. Vital statistics gathered by the City showed that while one out of every 44 people died in 1863 in Boston and one of 44 in Philadelphia, New York's rate was one in 36 . . . Despite the fact that endemic conditions such as tuberculosis and diarrheal diseases among children were more important contributors to mortality . . . than epidemic diseases, the appearance of scourges such as cholera had a very real significance as symbols of the apparent rapidity" with which American life was being transformed (The Living City/NYC).

The Sanitary Condition of the City

Amid this atmosphere of alarm over the "conditions of the poor," civic leaders launched major investigations into the social and environmental as well as the individual causes and consequences of disease, and with those investigations they began to pave the way for the public health movement, and its advocacy of improved sanitation, in the United States. In 1865, just as the Civil War was ending and shortly following the infamous draft riots of 1863, the Council of Hygiene and Public Health of the Citizens' Association of New York issued a report entitled *Sanitary Condition of the City*. Dedicated to the benefit of "all classes in the city," the report provided over 300 pages of detailed description of the city's physical, social, and moral character. Coming at the end of a bloody war that had split apart not only the nation but the communities of New York City as well, the report reflected both the hopes and the fears of the merchant leaders who had commissioned it.

Beginning with the observation that "pestilential diseases" laid bare "the impotence of the existing sanitary system," the report noted that outbreaks of disease paralyzed the commercial and political life of the community: "The people are panic-stricken [and] the interests of commerce suffer by the insensible and certain *loss of millions*." In a city of less than 1 million people, fully 7,000 to 10,000 lives could be saved, it was estimated, if proper sanitary practices could be developed (*Sanitary Condition of the City* 1865, xii). Disease was a hindrance to the new economy, and health was a commodity that could be measured in dollars and cents. An organized response to the high disease rates was a political and social necessity. Equally important, the report depicted disease as a matter of public morals and safety as well. "The mobs that held fearful sway in our city during the memorable out-break of violence in the month of July, 1863, were gathered in the overcrowded and neglected quarters of the city," the report reminded the reader. "The high brick blocks and closely-packed houses where the mobs originated seemed to be literally *hives of sickness and vice*" (xvi).

The observation that housing, politics, morals, and health were all intertwined underscored the council's perception of what needed to be done for the city in the coming years. Of first importance was the need to document and quantify the degree of suffering, the inadequacy of health and social services, and the horrors of urban and especially tenement life. Hence, with a voyeur's acuity, an elite's sense of authority, and the moral righteousness of missionaries, the council set out to expose the physical and social conditions that led to the spread of disease in mid-nineteenth-century New York. Their emphasis in these investigations was on the links between the physical environment—especially sanitary and tenement conditions—and individual behavior and morality as mutually reinforcing causes of illness. Similarly, their advocacy of improved sanitation was accompanied by calls for behavioral change. In this sense, the early public health literature did little to dispel the idea that poor people, "foreigners," and people of color were at least partly to blame for their own vulnerability to disease and for the threat that disease posed to other parts of the city.

Death and Disease in the New Environment

Underlying the social geography of disease documented by sanitary investigations were patterns of economic development and land use in urban centers that had created some of the world's worst crowding and most-depressing health statistics. By the middle years of the century, epidemics of typhus, yellow fever, cholera, and other diseases swept through the tenements and urban slums with fearsome impact. Despite the fact that epidemics were relatively minor contributors to overall death rates, the highly visible and often dramatic experience of seeing people literally dying in the streets had an enormous impact, affecting where and how cities developed. In the late eighteenth century, yellow fever had caused elites to flee from cities to relatively distant suburbs, beginning a spatial segregation of the rich and poor that would develop over the next century.

The commercial city of the late nineteenth century had created a skewed market for land and housing, which provided landlords and absentee owners with enormous profits and denied to workers and their families wholesome living quarters. Older, early-eighteenth-century housing patterns, in which artisans and working people lived and worked in the same dwelling, were replaced by land use patterns that separated work from home, wealthy from poor, immigrant from native, and owner from occupant. The market for housing created "unnatural" social relationships and market-driven scarcities of housing and land, which, in turn, created the preconditions for the disastrous health experience as market values replaced human values in the legal and social environment (Blackmar 1989).

The "sanitarians" who led reform efforts generally saw themselves as more than technical experts or professionals trained in a specific skill. Some had come from elite merchant families, and others had been trained in the ministry. They defined their mission as much in moral as in secular terms, and they believed that illness, filth, class, and disorder were intrinsically related. Individual transgression and social decay were equally at fault for poor health. In this period, before the widespread acceptance of the notion that specific pathogens caused particular diseases, public health workers, medical practitioners, and laypeople alike understood disease in highly personal and idiosyncratic terms. Much of public health practice as well as medical therapeutics rested on the belief that disease was a reflection of individuals' special social, personal, hereditary, and economic circumstances. An individual's maladies were based, in part, on his or her peculiarities and life. It was the special relationship between an individual and a complex, highly particularized environment that was at the root of illness.

With the revolution in bacteriology that followed the discoveries of Louis Pasteur, Joseph Lister, and Robert Koch in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, a new faith in laboratory science emerged not only among physicians but also among public health workers. "Bacteriology thus became an ideological marker, sharply differentiating the 'old' public health, the province of untrained amateurs, from the 'new' public health, which belonged to scientifically trained professionals," pointed out Elizabeth Fee (1987, 19). Despite the different professional mandates of public health workers and physicians, members of both professions who identified themselves with the science of medicine and public health began to share a common faith in the significance of the disease-specific germ entity in causing tuberculosis. A new model was gaining greater acceptance: A bacillus made people sick. The slums of large cities came to be seen as "breeding grounds" that were "seeded" with tuberculosis bacilli waiting to infect the susceptible victim. Tuberculosis came to be viewed as a disease that could be transmitted to susceptible individuals by means of air impregnated with bacteria from dried sputum, breathing, and so on. The dusting of furniture could throw into the air the "dried sputum" of tuberculars. Crowded public spaces or unclean home conditions with moist, warm, and stagnant air were seen as the most likely conduits for the disease.

New Public Health and Old Health Conditions

Despite decades of agitation and a rapidly evolving view of disease causation, the nation still faced daunting environmental hazards. In 1912, New York's Public Health Department issued its annual report, which, in language as dispassionate as any, detailed the continuing environmental problems that New Yorkers faced. The Public Health Department picked up over 20,000 dead horses, mules, donkeys, and cattle from the city's streets during the year and recorded 343,000 complaints from citizens, inspectors, and officials about problems ranging from inadequate ventilation and leaking cesspools and water closets to unlicensed manure dumps and animals kept without permits. It also removed nearly half a million smaller animals, such as pigs, hogs, calves, and sheep. While such environmental hazards had by then become familiar, somewhat startling was the emergence of changing patterns of death in the city. Officials wondered whether the nature of disease in the city was undergoing a perceptible shift. The infectious diseases of the nineteenth century, such as smallpox, typhoid fever, diphtheria, and pulmonary tuberculosis, appeared to be claiming fewer and fewer of the city's children and young adults. But cancer, heart disease, and pneumonia were claiming larger and larger numbers of elderly. To public health officials, these findings were significant in two ways. On the one hand, they showed measurable progress in the battle against infectious diseases. On the other hand, the report suggested a need to broaden the focus of public health policy to reduce mortality from diseases increasingly associated with middle and old age.

As the approach among public officials became more medicalized and scientific, their conceptualization of the public health challenge became less individual and personalized. Unlike in the early nineteenth century, when writers' works had a moral undertone, in the twentieth century a distinctly commercial tone overtook public health activities. History had taught health officials that "the full benefits of the methods and practice of sanitary science are available to any intelligent and well-organized community which will make the necessary expenditures, [and that] it may be truly said that within certain limits *public health is purchasable*" (*Annual Report* 1912, 12).

The health problems the nation faces today are largely of our own making as a society and are also potentially under our own control. AIDS, tuberculosis, SARS, and diseases associated with poverty and homelessness are in a very real way social creations and, therefore, can be addressed through social decisions. In a 1992 essay on what he calls "framing" disease, Charles Rosenberg noted that "disease is at once a biological event, a generation-specific repertoire of verbal constructs reflecting medicine's intellectual and institutional history," and "a sanction for cultural values." Pointing out that disease is a "social phenomenon," he illustrates that in large measure, "disease does not exist until we have agreed that it does, by perceiving, naming, and responding to it" (Rosenberg 1992, xiii).

Yet disease takes specific forms at different moments in history. Not only do we define different symptoms as pathological events, but we also create the physical environments and social relationships that allow for the emergence of very real new problems. In a very real way, we create our environment, and hence we create the conditions within which diseases thrive. Whether infectious disease in the nineteenth century, AIDS, cancer, heart disease, or tuberculosis today, or cholera, silicosis, or yellow fever in earlier times, the manner in which we address disease becomes emblematic of a specific society at a particular moment in history. Just as physicians, the elites, and the politicians in the mid-nineteenth century presented cholera as a moral as well as medical stigma, so too do we use disease as metaphor. We need only recall that as recently as the 1980s, newspapers, politicians, and public health professionals presented AIDS as a disease peculiar to Haitians and gay men, to realize how deeply social values and specific historical circumstance shape our understanding of disease and how quickly our assumptions about the causes and victims of disease can change.

Ironically, the success of the postwar decades in developing a wider and wider range of technological innovations left the nation almost unprepared for the new scourge of the 1980s, AIDS. Public health departments were underfunded and understaffed, and a generation of public health and medical practitioners had been reared in the belief that medical science and technology could protect us from widespread epidemics. In addition, the fact that the 1970s were marked by a giant fiasco—in which millions of dollars were spent on the development and distribution of a vaccine for a swine flu epidemic that never occurred—undermined our ability to mobilize against a disease that primarily affected gay men, intravenous drug users, and their partners. Some have also accused government and research scientists of deliberate inaction because of the association of AIDS with immorality among groups already disliked by large cross-sections of the population.

The nation's reaction to epidemic infectious disease has varied greatly over time. Once perceived to be a local problem of divine origin, epidemics became national in scope and became understood in highly medicalized terms. Yet the reaction and public response to illness is largely shaped by our perceptions of its victims and the social circumstances in which we live.

David Rosner

See also: Health Policy; Housing Policy; Urban Poverty

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Eugenics

Eugenics is the scientific theory and social movement that sought to ensure human betterment by applying the principles of evolutionary biology to human populations. Sir Francis Galton, a British amateur scientist, began arguing in 1883 that human improvement could be best secured through efficient management of human heredity. Just as humans had bred faster horses and fatter cattle, scientists could eliminate physical and mental disabilities and solve a host of social problems through rational control of human reproduction and immigration. The idea of human betterment appealed to many middle-class and white social reformers, who used it to justify a variety of social reforms in the early twentieth century. But the formal eugenics movement focused on several reforms: marriage restrictions, institutionalization and compulsory sterilization of mentally and physically disabled persons, and restrictions on immigration. Supporters of eugenics believed that heredity determined everyone's potential and that science could identify those persons whose hereditary endowment made them likely to be diseased or unsuccessful in life. In turn, legal restrictions—or negative eugenics—could be instituted to weed out the unfit, while state-funded incentives—or positive eugenics—could be used to encourage fit persons to have more children. Despite developments in biology that discredited most of their hereditarian assumptions, eugenicists continued to believe that all the characteristics important to success in life were biologically determined. Following the notion that social class reflected one's inherent worth, eugenicists often confused wealth with biological fitness. Likewise, eugenicists confused white political supremacy with biological superiority. Thus, eugenic definitions of fitness lent scientific credence to traditional U.S. elitist and racial prejudices. As a consequence, for decades to come, the impact of the policy successes achieved by eugenicists in the 1910s and 1920s fell most heavily on the poor, especially women and ethnic minorities.

Eugenics came to public attention through the publication in the first and second decades of the twentieth century of a number of scientific studies of human heredity. In a 1912 study called *The Kallikaks*, Henry Goddard traced the family tree of a mentally retarded girl, describing a family history in which miscreants, paupers, and prostitutes propagated at high rates. He concluded that the unregulated reproduction of people of limited intelligence constituted a menace. His recommended solution to this menace of the feebleminded was to institutionalize such individuals in sex-segregated facilities where they could receive vocational training and be prevented from procreating. In 1915, *The Jukes*, a study claiming to have traced the more than 700 descendants of a single Dutch immigrant through five generations, provided another portrait linking feeblemindedness to poverty, crime, prostitution, and excessive fertility. *The Jukes* and numerous other less well known family pedigrees were produced by workers at the Eugenics Record Office. Opened in 1907 with funding from the Carnegie Foundation, the Eugenic Records Office served as the headquarters of the American Eugenics Society. The office, run by Charles Davenport and Harry Laughlin, was the primary source of eugenic research until it was closed in 1939. The definition of feeblemindedness that Goddard used in writing *The Kallikaks* was based on results of the newly developed IQ tests. Although eugenicists believed IQ tests provided an accurate measure of inborn intelligence, eugenic family pedigrees were grounded in social prejudice more than in objective testing. The feeblemindedness identified in these studies was often based only on visual observations of white, middle-class fieldworkers. Following the American myth that any capable person, through hard work and thrift, could improve his or her social standing, eugenicists believed poverty resulted from low intelligence or other hereditary inadequacy. Thus, eugenic investigators usually skipped testing and just interpreted poor living conditions or periodic unemployment as evidence of underlying biological inadequacy.

Eugenicists feared that those with weak heredity were also, in addition to being social failures, naturally inclined to have very large families. Following Charles Darwin's observations that more-evolved species have fewer offspring than do less-evolved species, Herbert Spencer, a nineteenth-century British sociologist, concluded that as the capacity for rational thought increased, reproductive capacity decreased. Darwin's sea turtles laid hundreds of eggs, but only a few hatchlings survived. On the other hand, mammals, particularly humans, had very few offspring, and most lived to adulthood. Eugenicists quickly applied this logic to the differential fertility rates reported after the 1910 census. Eugenicists understood this differential rate to be the result of the difference in biological quality between native-born middle-class persons and working-class ethnic immigrants. Eugenicists also feared that the increasingly popular social welfare programs would actually undercut evolution by allowing unfit individuals to survive and reproduce. The differential fertility rate suggested to eugenicists that the proportion of unfit persons might actually be increasing. These fears spurred their efforts to secure sterilization of the unfit and to impose legal restrictions on marriage. By the mid-1930s, forty-one states prohibited the marriage of the feebleminded and twenty-seven states required their compulsory sterilization. Harry Laughlin was an expert witness in the 1927 U.S. Supreme Court case *Buck v. Bell*, which upheld sterilization laws. Following eugenic logic, the Court held that "in order to prevent our being swamped with incompetence," compulsory sterilization was justified. The Court held that it was in the interests of public welfare for society to "prevent those who are manifestly unfit from reproducing their kind" (quoted in Reilly 1991, 87).

The last reform that eugenicists pursued was the restriction of immigration. Eugenicists believed that the capacity for self-government, like every other important human characteristic, was grounded in biology and was most highly developed in those races that evolved in the German forests and the English countryside. Therefore, heavy immigration from other regions, they feared, might dilute the instinct for democracy within the U.S. population and thereby threaten to undermine the U.S. government. Arguing before Congress in 1921 that the IQ tests and physical exams given to World War I recruits demonstrated that recent immigrants were of an inferior stock, Harry Laughlin helped persuade Congress to limit immigration to the United States from all of Asia, Africa, and the southern and eastern regions of Europe.

Carole R. McCann

Buck v. Bell *274 U.S. 200 (1927)*

This is a writ of error to review a judgment of the Supreme Court of Appeals of the State of Virginia, affirming a judgment of the Circuit Court of Amherst County, by which the defendant in error, the superintendent of the State Colony for Epileptics and Feeble Minded, was ordered to perform the operation of salpingectomy upon Carrie Buck, the plaintiff in error, for the purpose of making her sterile. The case comes here upon the contention that the statute authorizing the judgment is void under the Fourteenth Amendment as denying to the plaintiff in error due process of law and the equal protection of the laws.

Carrie Buck is a feeble minded white woman who was committed to the State Colony above mentioned in due form. She is the daughter of a feeble minded mother in the same institution, and the mother of an illegitimate feeble minded child. She was eighteen years old at the time of the trial of her case in the Circuit Court, in the latter part of 1924. An Act of Virginia, approved March 20, 1924, recites that the health of the patient and the welfare of society may be promoted in certain cases by the sterilization of mental defectives, under careful safeguard, &c.; that the sterilization may be effected in males by vasectomy and in females by salpingectomy, without serious pain or substantial danger to life; that the Commonwealth is supporting in various institutions many defective persons who if now discharged would become a menace but if incapable of procreating might be discharged with safety and become self-supporting with benefit to themselves and to society; and that experience has shown that heredity plays an important part in the transmission of insanity, imbecility, &c. . . .

The judgment finds the facts that have been recited and that Carrie Buck "is the probable potential parent of socially inadequate offspring, likewise afflicted, that she may be sexually sterilized without detriment to her general health and that her welfare and that of society will be promoted by her sterilization," and thereupon makes the order. . . .

It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. The principle that sustains compulsory vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the Fallopian tubes. Jacobson v. Massachusetts, 197 U.S. 11. Three generations of imbeciles are enough.

Judgment affirmed.

See also: Birth Control; Feminisms; Reproductive Rights; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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See Let Us Now Praise Famous Men; Picturing Poverty (I); *Survey* and *Survey Graphic*

F

Factories in the Field, *Carey McWilliams*

In 1939, writer and lawyer Carey McWilliams published *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Labor in California,* a scathing indictment of the state's exploitative agricultural system during the Great Depression. Published just two months after *The Grapes of Wrath,* McWilliams's work was considered a praiseworthy nonfiction companion to John Steinbeck's legendary novel. After traveling extensively throughout California's fields, working as a labor organizer, and spending countless hours perusing old newspaper accounts and government records, McWilliams produced what he called "a hidden history" of the misery endured by migrant farmworkers in the state of California. *Factories in the Field* was the first comprehensive exposé of the harmful effects of corporate agriculture on farmworkers and the environment and is now considered a classic work of social history and investigative journalism.

McWilliams was particularly interested in showing his reader how the growth of corporate agriculture turned independent and hardworking farmers into a throng of low-paid farmworkers toiling on gigantic factory farms. He argued that the corporate agricultural system was largely the product of government policies—including water subsidies, marketing orders, and price supports—that favored agribusiness over the family farm. More accurately portraying modern farmworkers as members of the proletariat, just like their counterparts in urban factories, McWilliams called for their right to collective bargaining. There may have been no turning back from the rise of agribusiness, but this, according to McWilliams, made eliminating the artificial distinction between farmworkers and factory workers even more pressing.

During the Depression, over 1 million people moved to California, at least 150,000 of whom became farmworkers, expanding the farm workforce from 200,000 to 350,000 people. Many of these migrants, hailing mainly from the Midwest, drove up to farmhouses and asked for work, expecting that they would work as farmhands until they had saved enough money to buy their own farm. But the new system of industrialized agriculture precluded such a possibility for the vast majority of farm laborers. The urban factory model of product specialization and division of labor had effectively insinuated itself into California's agricultural system, making the family farm a thing of the past.

During his brief tenure as head of California's Division of Immigration and Housing from 1939 to 1942, McWilliams tried to help migrant farmers as much as he could. He stepped up inspections of grower-owned labor camps, which he found particularly troublesome because on-farm housing made farm laborers too dependent on their employers. He also abolished rules that denied relief to migrants who refused to accept farm jobs paying low wages, a policy that effectively forced growers to raise wages.

As a result of his book and his policies, the Associated Farmers, a coalition of agribusiness interests, called McWilliams "Agricultural Pest No. 1, worse than pear blight or boll weevil" (quoted in Julian 2002). Republican gubernatorial candidate Earl Warren promised to fire McWilliams during his campaign and followed through on that promise after his election in 1942.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Dust Bowl Migration; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor

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Two News Girls. Edward F. Brown, Investigator. Location: Wilmington, Delaware. Photo by Lewis W. Hine. (Photograph from the records of the National Child Labor Committee, U.S. Senate) (Library of Congress)

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

Part of the New Deal program to alleviate poverty and stimulate the economy by increasing Americans' purchasing power, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 established a national minimum-wage rate and maximum-hours standard for workers in covered occupations, and it restricted employment of children younger than sixteen. The act's initial impact was limited by its low minimum-wage rate and its exemption of many low-paying, long-hour occupations. Over the decades, a succession of amendments broadened FLSA coverage and raised the minimum wage, although the wage rate has not kept abreast of cost-of-living increases or brought the earnings of a full-time worker with dependents above the poverty line.

The FLSA originated in a movement begun in the 1890s by female reformers to improve the working conditions of women. Reformers focused on women because discrimination by employers and unions kept women's labor standards especially low and because the courts and labor unions resisted government regulation of men's labor standards. After ruling in 1905 that restricting men's hours was an unconstitutional violation of men's "freedom of contract," the U.S. Supreme Court in 1908 sustained an Oregon ten-hour-day law for women on the ground that women's role as "mothers of the race" justified state intervention. From 1909 to 1937, many states enacted maximum-hours and minimum-wage laws for women, often after campaigns by the National Consumers League and Women's

Trade Union League. Male trade unionists' lukewarm support reflected their concern that legislated standards would undercut unionization and collective-bargaining agreements.

The Great Depression demonstrated that state labor laws could not check the downward pressure on standards exerted by interstate competition. State legislators were reluctant to enact or enforce standards higher than those of states that were their economic rivals. The resulting variations encouraged industries to relocate to lower-wage, lower-standard states. In turn, the threat of industry migration undermined unionization efforts as well as wage and hour standards. This competition, especially apparent in the textile and garment industries and more generally between northern manufacturers and lower-paying southern manufacturers, produced new enthusiasm for wage-hour regulation among labor leaders and some employers. A national standard would limit the threat that employers would relocate to a state with lower wages or longer hours, they argued, and would bolster unionization and labor protection efforts.

National labor standards were adopted on an industry-by-industry basis under the National Recovery Administration (1933–1935) until that program was found unconstitutional. In 1937, the U.S. Supreme Court reopened the door to national wage-hour policy by upholding both a Washington State minimum-wage law for women and the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. Thereafter, support from organized labor, especially the new Congress of Industrial Organizations, was indispensable to enacting the FLSA over intense opposition from low-wage employers and a congressional coalition of southern Democrats and conservative Republicans.

The FLSA's initial impact was more symbolic than material. It applied only to employees deemed to be in "interstate commerce" and therefore within Congress's legal jurisdiction—initially about 11 million workers, or one-fifth of the labor force. For them, the act set an hourly minimum wage of twenty-five cents, to increase to forty cents over seven years. Twenty-five cents per hour represented a raise for only about 300,000 of the covered workers; overtime provisions entitled another 1.4 million workers to raises. Women, Black men, and southerners were overrepresented among these beneficiaries because they were concentrated in low-wage occupations (for example, in the garment, textile, fertilizer, and lumber industries). But the vast majority of workers who earned below-subsistence wages for backbreaking hours were excluded from the original FLSA. The act held domestic servants and retail workers to be outside interstate commerce, and agricultural workers were exempted because of the political power of their employers. These exclusions denied protection to most minority workers and many white women. However, these groups stood to gain the most from the FLSA if coverage could be expanded.

Despite its limitations, the FLSA was a significant intervention in the labor market. By setting a national floor for standards and limiting the attractiveness of relocating a factory across state borders, it improved the bargaining position of organized workers and offset some obstacles to organizing others. Unionization rates did not surge in the wake of the FLSA's passage, but this outcome reflected a rightward shift in national politics rather than the FLSA's impact. The act's effects were subsequently limited further by the underfunding of the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor, which was responsible for enforcing the legislation.

After the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the FLSA in 1941, liberal and labor groups waged an ongoing struggle to raise the minimum wage and expand coverage. Amendments in 1949, 1955, 1961, 1966, 1974, 1977, 1989, and 1996 brought the minimum wage to $5.15 per hour by 1997. The 1949 amendments reduced the act's total coverage, despite new formal restrictions on industrial homework in the garment industries.

Muller v. Oregon, *208 U.S. 412 (1908)*

On February 19, 1903, the legislature of the State of Oregon passed an act . . . , the first section of which is in these words: "SEC. 1. That no female (shall) be employed in any mechanical establishment, or factory, or laundry in this State more than ten hours during any one day. The hours of work may be so arranged as to permit the employment of females at any time so that they shall not work more than ten hours during the twenty-four hours of any one day." The single question is the constitutionality of the statute under which the defendant was convicted so far as it affects the work of a female in a laundry. . . .

We held in *Lochner v. New York,* 198 U.S. 45, that a law providing that no laborer shall be required or permitted to work in a bakery more than sixty hours in a week or ten hours in a day was not as to men a legitimate exercise of the police power of the State, but an unreasonable, unnecessary and arbitrary interference with the right and liberty of the individual to contract in relation to his labor. . . . That decision is invoked by plaintiff in error as decisive of the question before us. But this assumes that the difference between the sexes does not justify a different rule respecting a restriction of the hours of labor. . . .

It is undoubtedly true, as more than once declared by this court, that the general right to contract in relation to one's business is part of the liberty of the individual, protected by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution; yet it is equally well settled that this liberty is not absolute and extending to all contracts, and that a State may, without conflicting with the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment, restrict in many respects the individual's power of contract. . . . That woman's physical structure and the performance of maternal functions place her at a disadvantage in the struggle for subsistence is obvious. This is especially true when the burdens of motherhood are upon her. Even when they are not, by abundant testimony of the medical fraternity continuance for a long time on her feet at work, repeating this from day to day, tends to injurious effects upon the body, and as healthy mothers are essential to vigorous offspring, the physical well-being of woman becomes an object of public interest and care in order to preserve the strength and vigor of the race. . . .

Still again, history discloses the fact that woman has always been dependent on man. . . . Though limitations upon personal and contractual rights may be removed by legislation, there is that in her disposition and habits of life which will operate against a full assertion of those rights. She will still be where some legislation to protect her seems necessary to secure a real equality of right. . . . Differentiated by these matters from the other sex, she is properly placed in a class by herself, and legislation designed for her protection may be sustained, even when like legislation is not necessary for men and could not be sustained. . . . Even though all restrictions on political, personal and contractual rights were taken away . . . it would still be true that she is so constituted that she will rest upon and look to him for protection; that her physical structure and a proper discharge of her maternal functions—having in view not merely her own health, but the well-being of the race—justify legislation to protect her from the greed as well as the passion of man. The limitations which this statute places upon her contractual powers, upon her right to agree with her employer as to the time she shall labor, are not imposed solely for her benefit, but also largely for the benefit of all. . . .

In 1961, the FLSA was extended to new groups, including retail employees. An Equal Pay Act for women was incorporated into the FLSA in 1963. In 1966, civil rights and labor groups finally won coverage for agricultural workers. The 1974 amendments extended protection to domestic workers, after the women's movement forced a revaluation of household labor. Many remaining specific exemptions were removed in 1977. The 1974 and 1977 amendments increased penalties for violations.

The FLSA came under heavier fire after 1977 as conservatives regained political power. Targeting the minimum wage in particular, conservatives have argued that it actually lowers employment by raising the cost of labor—an argument that is widely disputed in the economics literature. Such opposition, along with broader efforts to undermine the political power of labor, contributed to a steady erosion in the value of the minimum wage. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan's administration also rescinded some FLSA restrictions on industrial homework. Enforcement suffered as the staffing levels of the Wage and Hour Division declined and as staff substituted telephone conciliations for on-site investigations. The 1996 increase in the minimum wage was concurrent with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, intended to force welfare mothers into employment. In 2000, a Senate committee heard arguments for raising the minimum wage to reduce the gender-based pay gap, a proposal that faced diminished prospects under the administration of President George W. Bush.

Landon R. Y. Storrs

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Family Wage; Great Depression and New Deal; Living-Wage Campaigns; Minimum Wage; Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing; Trade/Industrial Unions; Wagner Act; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Family Assistance Plan (FAP)

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Family Structure

Poverty and family structure are deeply connected in any consideration of poverty and social welfare policy in the United States. The idea that something is wrong with families that do not look like the imagined norm—married mother, breadwinner father, and children—has been central to debates about the causes of poverty and the requisites of social policy since the nineteenth century. Especially since the release in 1965 of the Moynihan Report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, these "deviant" or "problem" families have been typified in the social policy and popular imagination as young, female headed, and Black. Meanwhile, even as family structure has become more diversified in the United States, on the whole welfare policy has become increasingly preoccupied with the nuclear family ideal and with pushing poor women into marriage.

The assumption that single-mother family structures cause poverty has been the linchpin of neoliberal and conservative arguments that social policy should be used to reconstitute single-mother families as heterosexual marital units. In *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950–1980*, Charles Murray set the tone for policy discussions during the 1980s and 1990s regarding race, welfare, and the composition of families.

The view that the family ought to include an adult male married to a female partner continues to dominate discussions of poverty and families. This view guided the policy decision that poverty should be alleviated by biological fathers rather than by government. Hence, the 1996 welfare reform imposed harsh requirements and time limits on poor unmarried women with children, instructing them either to secure financial support from a man or to support themselves by working full-time in the labor market.

The assumption that nonmarital mother-headed families are deviant is the product of race, class, and gender dynamics and generates race, class, and gender consequences. The African American family is a powerful case in point.

From the beginnings of enslavement in America, the security and permanency of Black family bonds were at the mercy of slave owners. Although evidence suggests that African Americans were quite creative in maintaining family ties under the system of slavery (Gutman 1976, 10), enslavement still undermined Black families in quite powerful ways. For example, in slaveholding states, marriages between enslaved women and men were not legally recognized. In addition, enslaved mothers and fathers had no parental rights to their children. African Americans responded to these and other legal disabilities and structural vulnerabilities by defining family broadly, a practice probably rooted in western African ways and traditions and re-created in the American context (Gutman 1976, 212). Despite the resiliency of Black families even under slavery, racism has marked as inferior those Black families that do not conform to father-headed marital norms.

African American men and women collectively experience racism, but in somewhat different ways. The massive marginalization of African American men from the economy and the racial and gender segregation in the labor market are two dynamics that direct the fates of African American families. Since nuclear family formation is predicated on the model of the male breadwinner, such family forms have become more and more difficult to form and maintain in the absence of viable work for too many Black men.

African American women also suffer. Black women may be more likely to find work or are forced into work through the welfare system's workfare demands, but too often the work is low paid, keeping these women and their families mired in poverty. And in too many instances the families are without decent child care, housing, or health care.

The public policy debate has been intensely focused on the family structure of women on welfare, especially African American mothers who are not married and who head their families. Yet all families have been brought under scrutiny by the drumbeat of marital family values. The idea that something is wrong with the American family is the general tenor of much of this analysis. Conservative analysts such as Murray and Daniel P. Moynihan and more liberal analysts such as William J. Wilson (1987) and William A. Darity and Samuel L. Myers (1995) argue that reconstituting the heterosexual father-led family is key to reducing poverty. The idea that fathers should be present or that fathers should pay and be visible in families has dominated discussion since the 1980s. Whether the analyst takes the tack that there are too few "marriageable men" (Wilson 1987; Darity and Myers 1995) or that there is something fundamentally pathological about the culture and value choices of Black families (Moynihan 1965; Murray 1984), the endpoint is the same. There is only one family structure that matters: a married nuclear family headed by a male.

These positions have been countered by the argument that actual American families are varied in their forms, ranging from nuclear to blended to single parent. Some feminist welfare scholars challenge the patriarchal assumptions running through much of the current policy recommendations for poor women, which press for marriage and, if not marriage, work (Albelda and Withorn 2002). Women-of-color feminists such as Bonnie Thornton Dill and Maxine Baca Zinn (Dill, Zinn, and Patton 1999) and progressive white feminists such as Stephanie Coontz (1992) point to the sexual division of labor, the structure of the economy, and gender discrimination as the mainsprings of women's poverty and family decisions. Many feminists also argue that patriarchal violence, not a shortage of patriarchs, also leads to family decisions such as the decision to parent alone. Although the decision to leave an abusive partner can expose a mother and her children to poverty, single-mother families are not the only families that can be poor. Sixteen percent of families are still in poverty, as compared to one in two of single-female-headed households (National Committee on Pay Equity 2001, 310). Further, 20 percent of married African American families with children aged six and under are poor (Aulette 1994, 142). A number of feminists argue that these statistics say more about gender, class, and racial inequality than they do about any particular household form per se.

We do know that gender, poverty, and family structure are connected. Many women are poor, but single women who are family heads are the poorest of the poor (Burnham 2002, 49). We know that race and ethnicity matter. Women of color, especially, are profoundly economically disadvantaged, and their children are among the poorest of all children (Burnham 2002, 49). Many of these women are working, but they simply do not earn enough money to get their families out of poverty. Nonetheless, one of the most prominent antiwelfare demands is that women on welfare work.

In a service-driven economy where many jobs pay minimum wage without benefits, it is not surprising that families, whatever their structure, remain poor. The minimalist welfare state has contributed to this state of affairs. Job training, general assistance, and affordable housing have been all but eliminated for poor families. Moreover, low-wage workfare and the elimination of health and child care supports can make having a job too costly to lead out of poverty.

Rose M. Brewer

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Heteronormativity; Racism; Sexism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Family Wage

The family wage—that is, a wage sufficient to support a family—was a main demand among male unionists and social reformers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This wage reduced poverty among working-class families and enabled many wives and children to avoid employment (Carlson 1996). However, it justified overt discrimination against women and child workers and legal barriers to female employment. It also perpetuated poverty among nondependent women, especially single mothers, and remained out of reach for most unskilled and minority workers (Hartmann 1979).

Heidi I. Hartmann (1979) claimed that the family-wage system was a patriarchal bargain between capitalists and socially privileged adult male workers. Although capitalists wanted to ensure working-class reproduction, these workers wanted to reduce labor market competition, ensure their social dominance, and benefit from women's unpaid domestic labor. Indeed, many adult, white, native-born, male workers, especially those in craft unions, raised their wages by excluding women and other kinds of workers from union membership and better-paying jobs. However, most employers provided the family wage reluctantly in response to pressure from workers and their allies. A notable exception was Henry Ford, who adopted family wages to avoid unionism (Carlson 1996). Male workers' and employers' interests in job segregation and exclusionary wage and employment policies were also more variable, and contingent, than Hartmann suggested (Milkman 1979).

Social reformers, including maternalist reformers, designed U.S. welfare programs to replace the family wage when the male breadwinner was absent or lost his job. Welfare policies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries thus reinforced traditional expectations that women (especially white, native-born widows) should stay at home with their children and be dependent on their husbands. Unequal benefits also reinforced the income inequalities associated with the family wage (Gordon 1994).

The family-wage economy was still evident in the 1950s, when the income ratio among married couples with and without an employed wife approached one. This ratio rose after 1970 as the male-female wage gap narrowed. This was partly due to greater union support for the principle of "equal wages for equal work" in response to feminist demands and partly due to women's rising labor force participation. Enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and affirmative action also reduced gender discrimination at work (Carlson 1996). As the economy restructured and the labor movement declined, male wages also shrank, while the ideal of supporting a family on the wages on one earner—male or female—became increasingly difficult to attain. Today, most unions pursue "living wages" rather than "family wages." Even so, the family-wage ideology and the male-female wage gap still persist.

Ellen Reese and Acela Minerva Ojeda

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Feminization of Poverty; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Income and Wage Inequality; Labor Markets; Living-Wage Campaigns; Maternalist Policy; Social Security Act of 1935; Trade/Industrial Unions; "Working Poor"

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Farm Security Act

See New Deal Farm Policy

Farm Security Administration Photographs

See Dust Bowl Migration; Great Depression and New Deal; Picturing Poverty (I); Rural Poverty

Federalism

Federalism is a constitutional principle providing for two layers of government: a central government and a lower level of governments, known as provinces, cantons, republics, commonwealths, or states, with some kind of representation of the lower units in the central government and usually some provision for guaranteeing the integrity of the lower units in the national polity.

To understand how federalism works, one needs to look beyond the formal principle to the actual division and allocation of precise functions and powers between the two levels in each system.

For the first 150 years of history under the Constitution, the United States clearly lodged more-substantive functions and powers in the states (the "constituent governments") than has been true of any other federal system. This was the "intent of the framers," as expressed in Article I, Section 8 of the original 1789 Constitution, which specifically delegated a few powers to the national government and reserved all other powers to the states. That principle of division was reaffirmed by the Tenth Amendment in 1791, providing that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

For all of the nineteenth century and the first thirty-three years of the twentieth, these principles allocating powers between the two levels of government were observed and applied in the real world of government in the United States. The policies of the national government were largely those of internal improvements (infrastructure), operations of the postal service, disposal of large portions of the vast public lands acquired by conquest, the recording of patents and copyrights, the establishment of uniform standards for currency and for weights and measures, and the surveying of the land and the counting of the population. Except for the grants and other services mentioned here, the national government did not reach individuals directly, especially in efforts to regulate the conduct of individuals. Although the Constitution granted power to the national government to regulate commerce "among the several states," during its first seventy years it only made one major effort to regulate commerce, and that was the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which actually contributed to the Civil War. The nation did not even have a standing army of any consequence until after World War II. It had something of a Navy, but national armies were demobilized after wars; the nation depended on its distance from other nations to buy time while mobilizing against an attack.

Two late-nineteenth-century efforts by the national government can be considered antecedents of the revolutions in government that were to come during the New Deal and after: regulating monopolies and regulating the railroads. However, these were meek exceptions proving the rule that for the first century and a third of its history, the national government left most of the governing to the states. For example, there were no national property laws;

no national morality, marriage, divorce, child support, or child custody laws; no laws providing for the rendering of contracts, the structuring of firms into partnerships and corporations, or the enforcement of contracts; no national labor laws; no national laws providing for universal compulsory primary and secondary education; no national laws regulating the professions and vocations; no laws concerning vagrancy, dependency, disability, or public obligations to the poor (until the 1930s); and, perhaps most significant, no national criminal laws except for a few strictly limited to interstate crimes. And the list does not end there. *For over two-thirds of American history, the states did almost all the fundamental governing in the United States.*

The American federal system did change after 1933, in what has been popularly designated "the Roosevelt Revolution." But, especially with regard to federalism, it must be considered a mild revolution spread across more than thirty years, within a traditional system that had persisted through two-thirds of the nation's history under the Constitution up until 1933. That traditional system lasted long enough to shape U.S. governmental institutions and political culture. Moreover, despite the growth of the national government since 1933 and the constitutional validation of this growth in 1937 and in the 1960s, the result was addition rather than redistribution of powers: The national government grew, *but not at the expense of the states.*

Two constitutional revolutions in the 1930s established genuine national supremacy in economic affairs. One led to the national regulatory state; the other led to a national redistributive state. The first culminated with *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (301 U.S. 1 [1937]), giving the national government power to confront capitalism and to impose a number of restrictions on corporate power in areas once considered "intrastate" and beyond the reach of Congress. In the second constitutional revolution, also in 1937, the Supreme Court, in *Steward Machine v. Davis* and *Helvering v. Davis,* validated national redistributive powers by refusing to question the goals or purposes for which tax revenues were spent. That is, the national government could spend as it willed, even when taking from the rich to give to the poor, as long as the tax providing the revenues was constitutional (and the income tax had been declared constitutional not by the Court but by the ultimate means, a constitutional amendment, the Sixteenth Amendment, 1913).

The third revolution was delayed until the 1960s (nearly ten years after the 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* [347 U.S. 483] set the stage), when a series of Supreme Court decisions recognized the supremacy of the national government on all questions revolving around the rights of individual citizens. This third constitutional revolution in federalism occurred almost exactly 100 years after what was to have been the revolution in federalism for which the Civil War was fought and for which the Fourteenth Amendment was the instrument of ultimate victory. The *Brown* Court's interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment incorporated virtually all the clauses of the Bill of Rights to apply as protections against state and local governments, whereas up until the 1960s (with the exception of parts of the First and Fifth Amendments), the Bill of Rights only applied to rights against the national government. (Until then, liberty was a matter of geography.) The incorporation of the Bill of Rights became powers enabling the national government to intervene not only against the states and local governments but also against corporations, churches and other private associations, and schools and other public corporations in matters involving exclusiveness, favoritism, harassment, and other forms of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex/gender, and national origin. In other words, a large number of important economic and human rights standards were nationalized and thus made uniform throughout the country.

Not only were state governments now subjected to the same uniform rights standards as applied to all private and semipublic associations, but states were now also subjected to enforceable national standards prescribing *how* they could exercise their powers to control their citizens. For example, powers over persons accused of crimes remained full and plenary, but right to counsel and immunity against forced confession were rules governing *how* to use state power that can (and does) prevent successful state prosecutions. But it is important to add immediately that even with all of that apparently revolutionary change in federalism, almost nothing of *what* states can do was taken away from them. Thus, even as America's third century began, only a small proportion, a tiny proportion, of the *substance* of federalism, the substance of state government power, has changed. With the exception of federal territories like the District of Columbia, there are *still* no national property laws, still no national corporate laws, still no national professions and occupations laws, still no national family laws governing divorce, custody, or morality, and so on and so forth. The states remain supreme in all these areas, and more. In fact, there are still no uniform standards even on crimes or their punishment—which is why thirty-seven states provide capital punishment for various crimes and thirteen states do not, and why possession of an ounce or two of cocaine or heroin can produce very severe sentences in some states and very light sentences or mere probation in other states. This is also why even the sacred practices of electoral democracy are so varied from state to state.

It should be clear on the basis of all this that the *substance* of power distribution between national and lower levels—not the mere division itself—is the significant factor defining federalism and the influence of federalism on political institutions and practices. This also makes federalism the major factor in the answer to why there has been no socialism in America. The variations among state laws on property, exchange, corporations, and accumulation would have presented even the most ardent, imaginative, and ingenious Marxist a forbidding task of mounting a successful and sustained national critique against a nation and an elite of capitalism.

But variations among state laws do not alone explain how federalism in the United States inhibited sustained political critique of and opposition to capitalism. Just as important is the inherent conservatism of state and local governments. This conservatism follows from the responsibility of the states to maintain social order. Thus, just as there is significant variability among states in our federal system, there is an equal measure of continuity, which is imposed on the states by the powers reserved to the states by the Constitution. The powers reserved by the U.S. Constitution to the states are broad and significant. This is precisely what makes the United States far more of a confederated system than most other federal states. In other federal states, principally Canada and Australia, the powers of the states are the enumerated powers, while all other powers are reserved to the national government. In the United States, it is the national government's powers that are enumerated, while all other powers are left to the states. This was the primary method for limiting the national government, on the logical principle that if some powers are enumerated, other powers are not to be included and are therefore reserved for no other government or for some other specified layer of government.

Even more to the point, constitutional law in the United States treats the "reserved powers" of the states as the "police power," whose traditional definition is the power of the sovereign to regulate the health, safety, and morals of the community. It is worth noting that the terms "police" and "policy" are descendants of a common ancestor, *polis*, the Greek term designating the primal source of power and authority in any constituted community. The conservatism of the states and localities arises out of the fundamental responsibility of states and localities to maintain public order, and the maintenance of public order requires keeping people in their places. This is what "states' rights" has always meant. Because this designation originated in the American South and was associated with racial segregation, states' rights was associated with racism, but in recent years it has been sanitized and goes well beyond race. But the conservatism of states' rights remains.

That natural or innate conservatism of the states and their local principalities has been played down by conservatives and overlooked by liberals who embrace the virtues of community and the need for social capital. That conservatism is also overlooked by those who, liberal or conservative, sincerely accept the argument that government is best that is closest to the people. The test of these tendencies can only be observed and assessed in real policy situations, and the best cluster of cases for the test will be found in the liberal urban policies of the 1960s. Devolution of the federal powers to the states and local governments was quite popular in the 1960s and was advertised as a virtue of the popular urban redevelopment programs. What was not appreciated by the most vociferous Democratic supporters of national urban policy was that devolution of federal power and federal money to local governments was the price Democratic policymakers had to pay to get enough conservative support in Congress to pass the programs and to finance them. All during the 1950s and on into the 1960s, as urban policy expanded, the chair of the housing subcommittee of the House Banking and Currency Committee—which had the key influence over the framing, financing, and implementation of all urban redevelopment programs—was Albert Rains, conservative Democrat from a northern Alabama congressional district known at the time for explicit, policy-directed use of federal money to create a Black ghetto in a city that was more than 30 percent Black and that had never had a ghetto before. More subtly, but appreciated by virtually all urbanites, was the fact that every American city was more segregated—along class as well as racial lines—after urban redevelopment than before. Federal money—devolved without clear national standards, based on the virtuous principle of maximum local participation—had simply provided the resources to segregate and resegregate cities (along racial but also class and other lines) to an extent that they would not otherwise have had the resources to accomplish.

Devolution reemerged in the 1980s, but in the hands of conservatives it was much more logically carried out than it had been in earlier efforts. Liberals went along, like lambs to the slaughter, dazzled by the reputed virtues of local autonomy and states' rights, oblivious (despite 1960s experience) to the ideological bias against their own interests. The 1996 welfare reform was the ultimate post-1960s case study of conservative victory with the support of the "false consciousness" of the now-organized and self-conscious Democratic centrists, who had moved rightward to devolution music and globalization cadences, with President Bill Clinton as drum major. The effect can best be seen in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. Its most explicitly conservative feature was the abrupt and complete termination of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and its replacement by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Termination of AFDC meant the end of uniform national standards for entitlement to income support for single parents who meet means tests. Replacement by TANF meant turning over most federal welfare appropriations to the states to dispense and implement at their discretion. National guidelines set conditions states should observe, but these left wide discretion for states to be more restrictive and regulative if they wish. For example, the broadest new federal standard in the 1996 law is a new lifetime limit of five years of eligibility for welfare; and in the process, the recipient must be looking for work and show evidence he or she is working thirty hours per week or trying to find work. The states are disciplined by a national participation quota specifying that 50 percent of a state's recipients must be working thirty hours a week (a participation rate that President George W. Bush's administration wants to raise to 70 percent, notwithstanding its paeans to states' rights). States can meet these requirements by cutting recipients off welfare altogether or by assigning them to some kind of nonsalaried "workfare" calculated at the rate of the minimum wage.

States are given discretion under the federal law to increase the restrictiveness of the welfare requirements, with tighter time limits and more elaborate and discouraging administrative procedures. Federal law also provides financial incentives to states to regulate poor women. The 1996 law's "illegitimacy" bonus, for example, offers additional funds to states that most successfully reduce nonmarital births by encouraging contraception, marriage, or the relinquishment of nonmarital babies at birth. Just as the work requirement forces single mothers to choose between work and child care, so do the federal and state marriage policies force single mothers to choose between the right to privacy even in poverty versus possible escape from poverty through marriage or through compulsory "residential coparentage" with the biological father (who may well have imposed himself on her to produce the child). This returns us to the conservative principle of keeping people in their places: "TANF's pronouncements and punishments regarding childbearing and childrearing by single mothers proceed from assumptions about racial failure and disproportionately affect mothers of color. . . . TANF proponents attribute the need for welfare to the moral or cultural deficits of racialized individuals rather than to racialized opportunities and economic conditions" (Mink 2002, 5).

The 1996 welfare reform has given so much discretion to state and local administration that welfare has been transformed from a welfare assistance state to a welfare police state. This is a throwback to nineteenth-century policies. There was always considerable charity in the United States, private charity through churches and other private philanthropies as well as local governments. But charity was always linked to morality, and morality toward poverty and dependency took the form of a clear and rigid distinction between the "deserving" poor and the "undeserving" poor. From its American beginnings in Buffalo in the 1870s, a charity organization movement spread throughout the cities of the United States. And it was truly a national movement, with local societies linked together through their awareness of each other and through a uniform ideology and operational code. The code had two principles, one scientific and one moral. Scientific charity worked from a causal model that held that the poverty of the deserving poor was caused by misfortune—such as the loss of the breadwinner—and the poverty of the undeserving poor was caused by "idleness, filth and vice." This led directly to the moral dimension, a genuine moral imperative, caught well in an early speech of Reverend S. Humphreys Gurteen, founder of the first American charity organization: "We shall have ourselves alone to blame if the poor, craving for human sympathy, yet feeling their moral deformity, should some fine day wreak their vengeance upon society at large." As the charity organization movement grew through local charity organization societies, it formed a national group in the 1890s, and its name conveys almost everything about its philosophy, its ideology, and its operational code: The National Conference of Charities and Corrections (NCCC). And its chief mechanism for penetrating the slums was "INVESTIGATE," a word published in caps by founder Gurteen. Research for information on the poor was necessary "to apply scientific methods to human relationships." The purpose was "to bring about transformations of character" (Boyer 1978, 115–116, 119, 121) through rewards to the deserving poor and punishments to the undeserving poor.

The purpose of all this is to unmask federalism, in order not to denounce it but to bring objective understanding to it. Constitutional or policy decisions that distribute powers between the national level and the state level are never neutral. The policy direction driven by that choice should be made clear, if not by the policymakers then at least by the policy observers.

After September 11, 2001, there was an interruption of the trend toward devolution because the attack was deemed to be an act of war requiring national mobilization for defense against terrorism and eventually for an all-out world war against it. There was an immediate reassertion of national supremacy, and it mainly took the form of national policies restricting civil liberties and expanding national defense and certain other industries and areas considered strategic. Whether these new national powers are short-lived or permanent, they are specialized. In all other areas, devolution of national government continues. Thus it remains as important now as it was before 9/11 that we understand that *devolution does not mean less government*. On the contrary, devolution means rearrangement of and realignment of powers and functions between the levels of government, which often ends in more government but always ends in government better designed for the needs of an expanding, globalizing capitalism.

The attack on the national level of government, which began in earnest with Ronald Reagan after 1980, was genuinely antigovernment in its effort to eliminate as many as possible of the regulatory rules that were seen as adverse to economic expansion. But a free market, defined as one free of all government, was neither Adam Smith's idea nor American practice. Beyond the many national economic regulations the Republicans left in place, there were many programs they actually embraced: for example, protecting intellectual property, maintaining and extending national standards, protecting trade from cartels and other forms of piracy, keeping currencies stable, and defending, supporting, and often bailing out capital markets.

Still more government was needed and sought at the state level. Globalization involves not only the expansion of the capitalist economies but also their penetration of societies through profit, contract, technology, bureaucracy, science, and other such modernizations that threaten to undermine traditional values and established bases of authority. A proper regard for that social environment requires state provision for statewide laws and local governments strong enough for maintenance of the social order. It is either falsehood or the highest form of false consciousness to embrace the extreme antigovernment laissez-faire cause while also embracing states' rights and strong local government.

Rational citizens need both levels of governing, national and local, and it is normal and probably healthy that the two major parties in the United States are divided along national versus state lines, central versus local lines. But no one should be asked to accept federalism as a virtue in itself. Federalism is not a neutral principle. Federalism is a mask for a substantive, ideological, particular policy-oriented direction. Federalism in real, twenty-first-century time is a particular remedy for a particular problem. Federalism comprehends a variety of arrangements that are useful when properly understood. In other words, federalism is a constitutional medicine that has to be properly labeled with all its ingredients, followed by the warning, NOTE WELL: FEDERALISM CAN BE HARMFUL TO YOUR HEALTH.

Theodore J. Lowi

See also: Charitable Choice; Privatization; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Administration; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare State

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Feminisms

The term "feminism" now refers to a family of ideas and movements that challenged male dominance and fostered women's status, flourishing since the late eighteenth century. The term became common only in the twentieth century and was used widely only in relation to the so-called second-wave women's movement arising in the late 1960s.

At the end of the twentieth century, second-wave feminism was typically understood in the United States as a movement of elite, white, and largely professional-class young women, for whom issues of poverty and welfare were not a high priority. There is a great deal of truth in this characterization, but significant exceptions have been overlooked. Moreover, that judgment rests on a selective and narrow definition of what constitutes a women's movement, disregarding a great deal of grassroots activism among poor women. This activism has remained less visible because its participants were poor, did not always keep records, and were not able to command media or scholarly attention.

The movement usually referred to as second-wave feminism developed in two separate streams: One, a formally structured national set of organizations, coalesced around the National Organization for Women (NOW), organized in 1966. This stream, including primarily adult women and a few men, sought equality for women within such mainstream institutions as government, employment, and labor unions in civic and public life particularly. Another stream, beginning at the end of that decade, never coalesced into a dominant national organization. Informally named "women's liberation," it attracted primarily young women college graduates, many of whom had been active in the antiwar and civil rights movements. Ironically, this larger and more radical stream concentrated on changing personal, social, and cultural life. It focused on issues that had not been previously considered political, such as housework, beauty, reproductive rights, violence, and sexuality. By contrast, the NOW stream, with its greater emphasis on reforming institutionalized sexism, at first focused more on issues relevant to poor women, such as wage and job discrimination. It pursued these reforms primarily through lobbying for legislation and litigating for judicial decisions.

By the 1970s, the radical women's liberation stream, influenced as it was by Marxist theory and civil rights and New Left practice—particularly community organizing—began to challenge the bases of poverty, for example, inequality, exploitation, and racism. In discussions in consciousness-raising groups and in numerous pamphlets and underground press articles, these feminists began to analyze the gendered aspects of poverty. They examined wage and education gaps between men and women, the impact of raising children and doing housework on the market value of women's labor, and the costs of sexual harassment. They showed how the sexual division of labor in the home made women poorer than men, especially when they became lone mothers, because women were almost always the primary parents, because men were irresponsible in providing for children, but also because there were class and race inequalities among men. They showed that violence against women and lack of reproductive control also contributed to imprisoning women in poverty. "We define our best interest as that of the poorest, most brutally exploited woman. We repudiate all economic, racial, educational or status privileges that divide us from other women," wrote the influential radical-feminist group Redstockings in 1969.

Despite this rhetoric, the movement was not adequately committed or prepared to build a cross-class or cross-race movement. Good intentions were not enough. Women of color and poor white women rarely joined feminist organizations, in some cases because they had not been invited and in some cases because they were offended by the whiteness and middle-classness of the agenda as well as the membership. The majority of white, middle-class women simply did not see the race and class nature of their outlook and agenda. Most consciousness raising tended to produce generalizations and even theories about women's oppression that were actually particular to privileged, white, college-educated women. These included antagonism toward the family and the idealization of paid work as liberatory, ignoring the fact that poverty and discrimination drove so many women into low-paying, boring, even dangerous jobs. Women's liberation was primarily a movement of healthy young adults, and its concerns were the concerns of its constituency. It neglected the problems of older women, the disabled, or the ill, many of whom are poor.

The myth that poor women only care about directly economic issues was contradicted by the strongly positive response among poor women to a wide range of feminist ideas. Battered women's shelters have disproportionately served poor women of all races, who have the fewest means of escape from abusive relationships. The women's movement conducted massive consciousness raising about violence against women, through publicizing individual cases, through defending women who had killed their assailants, and through holding speak-outs in which women testified about their experiences. The movement had significant success in forcing police, judges, doctors, and social workers not to trivialize domestic violence or blame the victims. Sexual harassment disproportionately victimizes poor women, as does rape, and many poor women have responded enthusiastically to initiatives against these forms of violence.

The women's movement was particularly influential in the field of health, where neglect of women's particular problems, such as breast cancer, affects poor women more than prosperous women. The women's movement won increased funding for research on women's health and changed medical attitudes toward women as patients, although women who attend public clinics continue to receive inferior care. Feminist pressure forced drug companies to quit testing unsafe drugs on poor and minority women and required them to publicize information about negative side effects. Feminist rhetoric called for community-controlled free health care and child care, but feminist organizations lacked the clout to create such institutions.

The feminist record on reproductive rights is representative of its generally mixed scorecard with respect to poor women. The legalization of abortion brought down the price of abortions and made them safer and more easily accessible to poorer women. But then the Hyde Amendments, attached to annual appropriations bills for the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services yearly since 1977, prevented the use of Medicaid funds for abortion except in cases of extreme danger to a woman's life. The women's movement did not adequately mobilize against these class-based restrictions, and the prochoice orientation of the abortion-rights movement became increasingly individualist and blind to inequality among women. But the radical and socialist feminist streams of the movement initiated two other crusades that changed both consciousness and practice, arguing that women needed not just birth control or abortion but overall reproductive rights, including the right to bear and raise healthy children as well as the right not to procreate. A feminist-led campaign against sterilization abuse—the coerced sterilization of poor women, largely women of color and welfare recipients—was a considerable success. Feminist reproductive rights groups such as Committee for Abortion Rights and against Sterilization Abuse forced state and federal governments to insist on informed consent. Feminists also raised consciousness about women's need for better child care provisions, asserting a demand for free universal high-quality child care, although what was achieved is still far from meeting the need.

Two particular areas—jobs and welfare—need to be examined in evaluating the feminist approach to women's poverty. The feminist movement, along with civil rights, had a significant effect in reviving the union movement. When the feminist movement began in the late 1960s, working women were largely unorganized and confined to the secondary, predominately nonunion, sector. Since then, women have not only formed the constituency of the most successful union drives—as health and hospital workers, clerical workers, and service workers—but have also provided the leadership and energy for organizing. The grassroots advocacy organization 9to5, National Association of Working Women grew out of an organizing project of Boston's Bread and Roses that involved the predominantly female clerical workforce. In 1974, 3,200 women from fifty-eight different unions met in Chicago with great optimism to found the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). CLUW had chapters in many cities, trained women for union leadership, and pressured unions to include women in apprenticeship programs, to make child care a priority, to fight sexual harassment, and to get unions to support abortion rights and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Despite feminism's dominant image as exclusively middle class, it was developing strongly within labor unions. Although CLUW did not long remain a significant force, labor union feminism remains very much alive. Wherever unionization is growing today, it is largely through the recruitment of women, especially women of color, not only as members but also as organizers. Within the unions, feminist consciousness led to numerous challenges to male domination of leadership, some of them successful, and to the injection of new issues, such as child care and parental leave, into bargaining. The women's movement gave rise not only to women's caucuses but also to far more risky gay and lesbian caucuses within unions. The labor movement had opposed the ERA from 1923 to 1976, when feminist pressure changed the position of the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). Although the amendment did not pass, the multiyear battle for an ERA educated many Americans about sex inequality in the workforce. Similarly, feminists perceived the limitations of "equal pay for equal work" regulations, since women could rarely get equal work but, instead, were confined to female job ghettoes, and hence they initiated campaigns for pay equity and "comparable worth."

Feminists' contribution to creating a decent welfare system fell short because these largely middle-class activists did not feel the same personal urgency toward improving the antediluvian U.S. welfare system that they felt toward combating employment discrimination. But in the case of welfare, too, a lot depends on the definition of a women's movement. In the 1960s and early 1970s, a strong welfare rights movement arose from a Los Angeles initiative in the African American Watts neighborhood. The movement quickly spread among both Black and white women, in the South, in Appalachia, in the Northeast, and in the West. The group they formed, the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), always powered by Black women's organizing energy, claimed 20,000 members at its peak in 1968, with many additional welfare recipients participating in local events. NWRO conceived of welfare as fundamentally a women's issue, and its first chairwoman, Johnnie Tillmon, wrote a much-circulated article arguing this point in 1972. Poverty, and particularly the poverty of mothers and children, she argued, is constructed by the gendered division of labor that assigns child rearing to women and then devalues this labor. "Welfare is a women's issue," Tillmon wrote.

> For a lot of middle-class women in this country, Women's Liberation is a matter of concern. For women on welfare it's a matter of survival. . . . If I were president, I would solve this so-called welfare crisis in a minute and go a long way toward liberating every woman. I'd just issue a proclamation that "women's" work is real work. . . . For me, Women's Liberation is simple. No woman in this country can feel dignified, no woman can be liberated, until all women get off their knees. That's what N.W.R.O. is all about—women standing together, on their feet. (Tillmon 1972)

Although the mainstream women's movement remained distant, left feminists took up the fight for welfare rights. Although most NWRO members did not call themselves feminists, in fact they were fighting for women's rights, and some women's liberation groups, notably socialist-feminist organizations, participated in welfare organizing. For example, Bread and Roses contributed to building Boston's Mothers for Adequate Welfare (MAW).

NWRO did not last long, however. In the 1960s and early 1970s, welfare rights activists won some decisive victories in the courts, aided by feminist and civil rights lawyers. The Supreme Court outlawed several standard practices of welfare administration that interfered with recipients' rights and privacy. But as a well-funded conservative revival in the 1980s escalated anti-welfare sentiment and as the women's movement declined, the stigma on welfare grew so much that it became virtually impossible to organize large-scale support to defend welfare from cutbacks. Meanwhile, NWRO experienced internal conflict: Its overwhelmingly female rank and file began to clash with its original head, the veteran civil rights leader George Wiley, on many points.

When the main welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, was repealed in 1996, the women's movement put up little resistance. This absence reflects both the largely middle-class and professional base of feminism at the time and the fact that the continuing struggle to defend abortion rights was claiming such a large proportion of feminist energy.

Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Domestic Violence; Gender Discrimination in the Labor market; NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund; Reproductive Rights; Welfare Rights Movement

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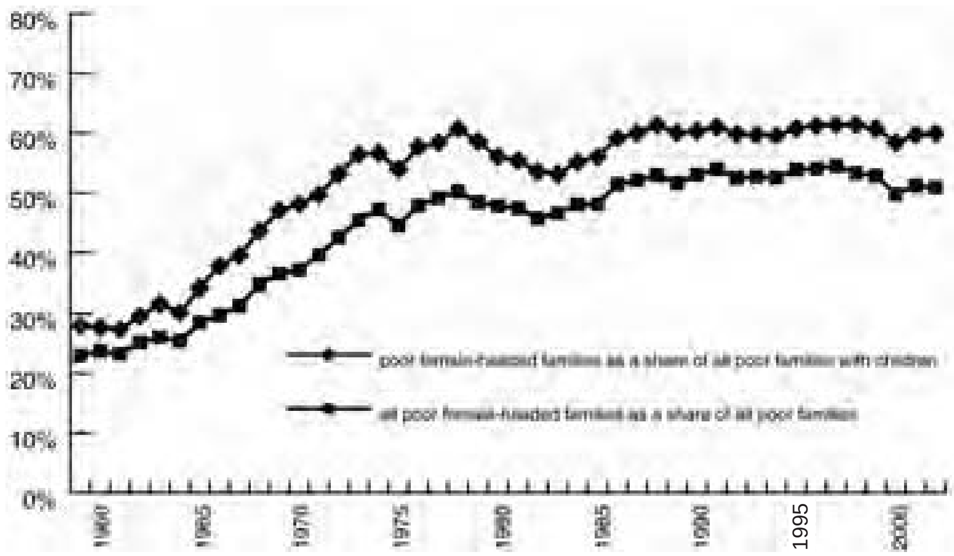
Feminization of Poverty

The feminization of poverty is the concentration of poverty among female-headed families in the United States. Although 28 percent of all poor families with children were female headed in 1959, 61 percent of them were female headed in 1978. Since then, that percentage has tended to

Figure 1

Feminization of poverty, 1959–2001



Source: Data from U.S. Census Bureau, Table 4, "Poverty Status of Families, by Type of Family, Presence of Related Children, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2002." Historical Poverty Tables. http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/histpov/hstpov4.html (October 6, 2003).

fall during recessions (when more married-couple families become poor) and to rise during economic expansions, but otherwise it has been stable (U.S. Census Bureau 2003).

Sociologist Diana Pearce coined the phrase "feminization of poverty" in 1978. At that time, the United States had experienced nearly two decades of rapid demographic change, especially divorce and extramarital childbearing, which left ever-larger numbers of women and children in households without adult men sharing formal responsibility for the family's economic welfare. Departing from prevailing views about the causes of poverty, Pearce argued that greater economic growth, education, and training would not be sufficient to address the poverty of families headed by women alone. Rather, the crux of the problem was that these women bore a disproportionate share of the responsibility for raising children. More children than ever before depended almost exclusively on their mothers for monetary support. Yet women's earnings typically have been insufficient to support families due to labor market discrimination and to the many conflicts between work and family care. The lack of adequate child support payments from the fathers of their children and the low levels and restrictive criteria for public income support have greatly exacerbated mothers' vulnerability to poverty.

Poverty among female-headed families is not new. However, as Linda Gordon (1994) observed, the problem of single motherhood as we know it today emerged in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as wage labor removed men from household production and as geographic mobility and large cities made it more difficult for traditional patriarchal communities to enforce a degree of paternal responsibility.

The "feminization of poverty" concept has been criticized for its insensitivity to racial and class differences in the causes of poverty. As Linda Burnham (1985) pointed out, a one-dimensional focus on gender overstates the vulnerability of professional women to poverty. It also exaggerates the ability of Black men to reduce Black family poverty through marriage, by disregarding their higher rates of unemployment and incarceration. Mary Jo Bane (1986) found that 55 percent of the difference between Black and white poverty rates resulted from higher Black poverty rates for the *same* household type, and only 44 percent from the greater tendency of Black families to be female headed. Burnham also argued that the "feminization of poverty" obscured the roots of poverty in working-class exploitation.

Elaine McCrate

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Child Support; Child Welfare; Family Structure; Feminisms; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Sexism

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Food Banks

Food pantries, food banks, and soup kitchens deliver emergency food assistance to the poor. Although government policy supports and shapes emergency food assistance, food pantries, food banks, and soup kitchens are often represented as providing nongovernmental food assistance to the poor. Technically, food pantries offer groceries directly to the poor, whereas food banks collect and warehouse food for distribution to food pantries. Many programs offering food directly to the poor, however, call themselves food banks. Soup kitchens, in contrast to food banks and food pantries, offer prepared meals for the needy to be eaten on-site in a dining room. The increasingly complex infrastructure of food provision in the United States has been built with government and religious assistance, as well as with huge charitable contributions of time, money, and food.

Soup kitchens appear to have been established first in Ireland with the passage of the Soup Kitchen Act of 1847 to provide soup for the starving during the Great Potato Famine (Glasser 1988). In the early years of the United States, poor relief drew heavily on English models that emphasized local municipal responsibility for the poor. In 1893, soup kitchens sprang up in the United States in response to a financial market collapse. In 1932, in the midst of the Great Depression, desperation for food manifested itself in food store riots and public horror at the destruction of unmarketable produce. At this time, the public concern about food distribution centered on the paradox of scarcity amid abundance, or "breadlines knee-deep in wheat" (Poppendieck 1986). Janet Poppendieck has argued that the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt formulated programs to address not hunger per se but this visual paradox. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, created by Congress under President Roosevelt in 1933, authorized federal relief that sometimes took the form of groceries or even orders for goods. Food deemed surplus because of its low market value was purchased by the government for redistribution to the impoverished via food banks (Poppendieck 1986). To this day, government-subsidized surplus food stocks the shelves of food banks and food pantries nationwide.

Religious organizations have also played a prominent role in food provision, at times operating from a combination of charitable, evangelical, or political purposes, and are increasingly reliant on government subsidy for their services. The Salvation Army and the Catholic Worker movement represent two very different Christian charitable endeavors to feed the poor, and their historical trajectories illuminate the complicated politics of entitlement and paternalism wrapped up in soup kitchens.

Appearing in the United States in 1880 from England, the Salvation Army brought its project of moral and spiritual reform in order to recover what were then widely referred to as "the sinking classes." This form of so-called muscular Christianity aimed to wage a spiritual war on moral deprivation, and most particularly drunkenness, by first extending shelter and food and then saving souls. Recruits to the Salvation Army, mostly men in these early years, were expected to commit themselves to self-discipline and a demanding work ethic. Foreshadowing later patterns in social service delivery, needy recruits might themselves eventually become Salvation Army employees, most commonly not as Salvationists but as civilian employees. During the twentieth century, as the government became more involved in food assistance, the Salvation Army social services programs came to rely increasingly on government subsidies, becoming a "nonprofit for hire" as welfare policy shifted toward privatization and contracting out in the 1980s (Smith and Lipsky 1993). In the fiscal year ending in September 2000, the U.S. Salvation Army reported that 15 percent of its operating budget came from government funding, in line with a report of 17 percent in 1980 (Salamon 1995, 94). Thus, despite its evangelical religious mission, the Salvation Army kitchens reside in what has been aptly called the "shadow state," the voluntary sector responsible for significant social services, existing outside of conventional democratic oversight and yet subject to state oversight (Wolch 1990). The Salvation Army, in keeping with its place within the shadow state, provides not only food assistance but also alcohol and drug treatment and job training as part of its evangelical dispensation. A recent study of volunteers in a Salvation Army social services shelter kitchen found that many of the men volunteering there, often men of color and of working-class or lower-middle-class origins, welcomed the self-discipline of the Salvation Army and its attendant concern for their ability to become good providers for their families (Allahyari 2000).

In 1933, Dorothy Day, a newly converted Roman Catholic and newspaper reporter inspired by the political agitation of Peter Maurin in France, began publication of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper. Day and Maurin advocated "personalist" hospitality, challenging others to work in intimate contact with the poor by living in voluntary poverty, to treat the poor as "the Ambassadors of God" (Maurin 1977), to extend not moral judgment but love, and to feed the poor while agitating for radical social transformation. Day and Maurin shunned involvement with the state, and Day explained to their followers that she intended the Catholic Worker to function as a social movement, not a charity. By the mid 1990s, over 100 Houses of Hospitality had been established to feed and sometimes house the poor. These houses sought to carry on Day's vision of social transformation, but they were not always able to transcend prevailing social norms. Thus, in some cases "hospitality" would be provided in settings graced by flowers and other middle-class touches, where groups of volunteers, often white and middle class, gave of their time and resources to prepare the meal for the guests. Many of these volunteers remained far removed from direct, personalist interaction with the poor and with social change politics, however. A recent study of a Catholic Worker kitchen found that religious and civic groups took responsibility for feeding the poor as a way of giving back to their communities and of putting into practice their moral and spiritual beliefs. Many struggled, however, with the mandate to treat all the poor as the ambassadors of God. The broader cultural imperative to bifurcate the poor into the worthy and unworthy made difficult their loving acceptance of the seemingly able-bodied guests, many of them male. As the examples of the Catholic Worker and the Salvation Army show, the politics beneath food distribution entail welfare ideologies about the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor (Allahyari 2000).

The provision of emergency food accelerated dramatically during the 1980s. The deepest recession since the Great Depression, intensified by decreased federal spending on welfare benefits, resulted in a growing impoverished population. The homeless emerged as a new national concern in the early 1980s. During this decade, food pantries, food banks, and soup kitchens grew explosively as the networks in which they were embedded became increasingly complicated. For example, food banks numbered approximately two dozen at the beginning of the decade but had proliferated to over 100 by the middle of the decade. In New York City, City Harvest established innovative "food rescue" programs to make nearly expired and perishable food available to food distribution programs; by the end of the decade, Foodchain provided such programs with a national organization (Poppendieck 1998). By 2004, America's Second Harvest, the largest self-described national domestic hunger relief organization, estimated it was annually distributing over 1 billion pounds of food to over 23 million hungry Americans (America's Second Harvest 2004). The charitable choice provision of the 1996 welfare reform act may encourage even more faith-based programs to augment and expand their feeding programs with government funds.

Progressive critics of the burgeoning charitable sector have argued that the sanctified nonprofit sector glorifies the Christian commitment to charity at the expense of redistribution of wealth (Wagner 2000) and that when the politics of emergency food distribution displace the politics of entitlement, the moral urgency to social change wanes (Poppendieck 1998). Comparing emergency food distribution programs to the food stamp program reveals that food pantries, food banks, and soup kitchens, even despite attempts to ease class divisions by treating the recipients with dignity in their kitchens or permitting recipients the right to choose and bag their groceries, nonetheless still remove the recipients from mainstream food markets. In other words, the inequalities implicit in the charitable relationship replace the entitlement implicit in the use of food stamps within conventional market settings (Poppendieck 1998).

Rebecca A. Allahyari

See also: Antihunger Coalitions; Catholic Worker Movement; Charitable Choice; Food Stamps; Hunger; Salvation Army; Voluntarism; Welfare State

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Food Stamps

Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the food stamp program has subsidized food consumption for qualified poor families for almost half a century. Although the program has experienced many changes in administrative rules, eligibility requirements, benefit levels, and budgeting patterns, the basic structure has remained relatively the same since its first run from 1939 to 1943 and through its modern manifestation from 1961 to the present. Through the USDA, the federal government has issued food coupons (these "stamps" came in paper form until the 1990s, when debit cards and other electronic formats became more widely used) to low-income U.S. residents, who have used those coupons to increase their ability to buy approved food items and food-producing seeds and plants. Until 1977, largely to encourage recipients to stay in the active workforce, food stamp rules mandated that participants purchase their coupons (which were redeemable at a variable rate higher than the original cash purchase). With the Food Stamp Act of 1977, the federal government eliminated the purchase requirement and began distributing benefits according to a formula based on the difference between a family's income and a federal minimum food budget. Despite troubling allegations of fraud and serious criticism of the program's administration, the food stamp program has been a relatively successful and quietly accepted social welfare program that has served as an important tool for economic management. Over the years, the program has helped enhance the food budgets of millions of participants, while also helping consumer and agricultural markets by expanding consumption of agricultural products, increasing sales at grocery stores, and generating sales tax revenue.

The program has enjoyed substantial support from a broad coalition of interests, including farmers, grocers, food processors, federal administrators, social welfare professionals, antihunger activists, and professional lobbyists. Their support has helped to turn the food stamp program into a pillar of the American welfare state. According to the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (which administers the food stamp program), participation in the food stamp program reached a high of 27 million individuals in 1994, while in 2000 almost 17 million individuals received food stamp benefits. This falloff is due in part to the severe restrictions on eligibility

Massachusetts Application for Food Stamps

Things you need to provide . . . :

1. Proof of Identity. . . .
2. Proof of Residence. . . .
3. Utility Bills. . . .
4. Non-citizen Status. . . .
5. Bank Accounts. . . .
6. Earned Income. . . .
7. Self-Employment. . . .
8. Child Care or Adult Dependent Care Expenses. . . .
9. Unearned Income. . . .
10. Rental Income. . . .
11. Medical Expenses. . . .
12. Child Support Payments. . . .

This food stamp transaction at a supermarket produces a couple of bags' worth of food for the young consumer at left. The day marks the beginning of the federal food stamp program, with the city's 1.1 million persons on welfare and 800,000 other persons eligible to participate. August 31, 1970, New York, New York. (Bettmann/ Corbis)

imposed by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which cut off food stamps for most legal immigrants as a way of paying for its provisions. The approximately 17 million people who receive benefits represented almost 60 percent of the residents eligible for the program. The appropriation for the food stamp program has grown to approximately one-fifth of the total USDA budget. In 2000, the program received an appropriation of over $21 billion, which was down from a high in 1996 of almost $29 billion. Although appropriations have generally increased, benefits remain relatively small. In 2000, the average individual benefit was a mere seventy-three dollars per month.

The growth of the food stamp program involved several phases. The outline of the modern version began with a New Deal effort designed to reduce agricultural surplus and, to a lesser extent, to alleviate hunger. Beginning in 1939, participants could buy coupons to buy certain surplus items. The program enjoyed relatively extensive participation as approximately 4 million Americans took part, but in 1943, the program was discontinued as a result of increased war production and other factors. Several congressional attempts to revive the program in the late 1940s and the 1950s failed. In 1961, however, President John F. Kennedy used executive authority to initiate eight pilot programs loosely modeled after the New Deal program. Over the next three years, the number of projects expanded, and on August 31, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Food Stamp Act, making the Kennedy-inspired program a permanent fixture of American social policy. Institutional and budget constraints kept expansion incremental and slow. In 1967, however, a "rediscovery" of hunger and the highlighting of hunger problems in the Deep South created enormous pressure for the liberalization of eligibility requirements and benefit levels. The pressures of the civil rights movement and the War on Poverty shifted the emphasis of the program away from its agricultural roots toward its future in service to more-urbanized areas. Between 1970 and 1975, policymakers liberalized eligibility, increased benefits, expanded the program to every county in the United States, and replaced state-level eligibility standards with uniform national ones. In conjunction with a rise in unemployment due to an economic downturn, those policy reforms greatly accelerated participation in the food stamp program, especially from 1973 to 1975 and from 1978 to 1980. Expenditures almost doubled between 1974 and 1977. The rise in participation and spending caused concern among fiscal and social conservatives and fueled political attacks against food stamps and other means-tested social welfare programs. Those attacks contributed to major cuts during President Ronald Reagan's first administration. Despite those attacks, the program persisted as an indispensable part of American social policy.

The piecemeal development of the food stamp program reflects many classic features of American social welfare policy. The program has never been universal or comprehensive, many of its formulators have tried to use it as a way to regulate work, and it has depended on local implementation and administration. Like other means-tested programs, it has perpetuated a distinction in the welfare state between social assistance programs and social insurance programs. Moreover, the food stamp program's growth has been motivated most effectively by pity and fear, and it has often reflected serious American racial dilemmas. Throughout its existence, the program has straddled the interests of its various constituencies. From the experimental agricultural relief program of the late New Deal to the pilot program of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier to the

Food Stamp Penalty Warning

- . . . Individuals who make a fraudulent statement or representation about their identity or place of residence to receive multiple food stamp benefits simultaneously, will be barred from the Food Stamp Program for ten years.
- Individuals who trade (buy or sell) food stamp benefits for a controlled substance/illegal drug(s), will be barred from the Food Stamp Program for a period of two years for the first finding, and permanently for the second finding.
- Individuals who trade (buy or sell) food stamp benefits for firearms, ammunition or explosives, will be barred from the Food Stamp Program permanently.
- Individuals who trade (buy or sell) food stamp benefits having a value of $500 or more, will be barred from the Food Stamp Program permanently.
- Individuals who are fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction for a felony or are violating a condition of probation or parole, are ineligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program.
- Individuals who fail to comply without good cause with Food Stamp Work Requirements, will be disqualified from the Food Stamp Program for a period of three months for the first finding, six months for the second finding and twelve months for the third finding. If the individual found to have failed to comply for a third time is the head of the food stamp household, the entire household shall be ineligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program for a period of six months.

enormous entitlement program of the middle 1970s, program formulators had to purchase support from various interests, concede to the wishes of powerful local and state politicians—especially congressional leaders from the South—and contend with severe budget constraints. What began as an experimental program to alleviate the burdens of agricultural surplus traveled a peculiar path to become America's chief program to alleviate hunger.

Kent B. Germany

See also: Antihunger Coalitions; Citizens' Crusade against Poverty (CCAP); Food Banks; Hunger; Means Testing and Universalism; Nutrition and Food Assistance; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/ Welfare Reform

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Foster Care

Foster care is the chief service that the public child welfare system provides to poor children in America. Although foster care typically refers to care by nonrelative families, it also encompasses other types of substitute care for children, including group homes and kinship foster care. Foster care is grounded in a long history of addressing the needs of poor children by rescuing them from their families. Its origins in the United States have been traced to the colonial child indenture system that provided for the apprenticeship of orphaned or indigent children in exchange for their necessities until they reached the age of twenty-one. In the late nineteenth century, charitable organizations began a child-saving movement to remove indigent children from their parents and place them in orphanages and asylums. Beginning in 1853, Charles Loring Brace, secretary of the Children's Aid Society in New York, sent destitute children on trains to work on farms in the Midwest. The first White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children in 1909 recommended that dependent children be placed in local and carefully selected foster homes instead of in institutions. By the second half of the twentieth century, foster care was an established part of child welfare, conceived of as a temporary service for children while their biological parents were rehabilitated. Most experts agree, however, that the foster care system is overburdened and often damaging to children and their families. Foster care also demonstrates the state's willingness to more generously support poor children in the care of strangers than in the care of their parents.

The number of children in foster care remained stable in the two decades following World War II. The foster care population increased steeply after the discovery of battered child syndrome in 1962 and the subsequent passage of state laws that mandate the reporting of child abuse. Child maltreatment began to be understood as a national epidemic caused by parental depravity rather than as a social problem associated with poverty. Foster care was transformed from a largely voluntary refuge for orphans and children whose parents could not care for them to an involuntary system for children coercively taken from parents charged with abuse and neglect. However, family poverty, not the severity of child maltreatment, is the best predictor of placement in foster care.

The foster care system came under criticism during the 1970s for keeping children in substitute care for too many years and for moving children too frequently from home to home. Congressional hearings also revealed that federal reimbursement policy created incentives for state child welfare agencies to place children in foster care instead of providing services to intact families. Congress passed the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, which sought to end foster care "drift" (the problem of children languishing in foster care for extended periods without permanent placements or reunification with their families), prevent unnecessary removals of children, and encourage permanency planning for children in foster care. The foster care population as well as the proportion of the federal child welfare budget devoted to foster care nevertheless skyrocketed in the period between 1980 and 2000. The number of children in foster care climbed to 568,000 by 1999 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2002b). At the same time, the number of children who received services in their families fell dramatically.

As the foster care population grew, so did the proportion of nonwhite children, especially Black children, in the system. The child welfare system virtually excluded Black children until World War II, when services shifted from institutions to foster care and from private to public agencies. In 2000, 40 percent of all children in foster care nationwide were Black, even though Black children constituted only 17 percent of the nation's youth (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2002a). Most Black children who are referred to child protective services are removed from their parents and placed in foster care. Black children also remain in foster care longer, are moved to new placements more often, and are less likely either to be reunited with their parents or adopted than are white children. During the 1990s, Black foster children were increasingly placed in the care of relatives, a practice known as "kinship foster care." Kinship foster care is now the main type of out-of-home placement for Black children in some cities. The exploding foster care population and a shortage of licensed nonrelative foster homes made relatives an attractive placement option for child welfare agencies.

Although federal policy now encourages kinship foster care, it gives states wide latitude in creating the system of financial support for kin caregivers. Relative caregivers can receive benefits under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or they can receive foster care stipends if they are licensed. Foster care payments are much larger than TANF benefits and are multiplied by each child in the relative's care. Some experts believe that this disparity works as an incentive for needy families to seek formal placement of children in kinship foster care instead of relying informally on relatives to help with caregiving. These families must make the children state wards and submit to regulation by child welfare authorities to receive the more generous foster care stipends needed to meet their children's needs.

Dorothy E. Roberts

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Child Welfare; Child-Saving; *The Dangerous Classes of New York;* Orphanages; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Social Work

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Frazier, E. Franklin

See Moynihan Report; *The Negro Family in the United States;* Poverty Research

Freedmen's Aid

Freedmen's aid was educational, material, medical, employment, and related social welfare assistance provided to former slaves, first by private groups and eventually by the federal government, during and after the American Civil War of 1861–1865. In addition to caring for newly emancipated slaves, the freedmen's aid movement became an important venue for female reform and social welfare activism in the post–Civil War period, setting the stage for the creation of the Freedmen's Bureau. An unprecedented extension of federal government authority on behalf of African American former slaves, the bureau and the movement it grew out of were bold experiments in social policy. At the same time, freedmen's aid efforts were limited by the combination of racial paternalism and prejudice that kept even the most committed white reformers from treating Blacks as social and economic equals.

Freedmen's aid efforts began even as the Civil War was raging, initiated by northern teachers, ministers, abolitionists, businessmen, and military personnel. Freed from bondage by the social upheaval of the war, thousands of slaves sought safety and freedom behind Union lines. Though initially reluctant to serve as emancipators, the Union army soon adopted Gen. Benjamin Butler's policy, articulated in May 1861, that considered slaves to be enemy "contraband." Former slaves proved an invaluable source of labor to the Union military, and the army began to enlist Black soldiers in 1862. But the army also faced a humanitarian crisis as it tried to feed and house slave families crowded into army camps. In order to aid the military, northern reformers established freedmen's aid societies, which raised money and sent boxes of clothing and books to the South. In addition, teachers and reformers traveled to the South. Following Union victories in Confederate states, these reformers took over the management of abandoned plantations, established special camps for former slaves, and set up schools, stores, soup kitchens, and employment agencies. Though in many ways an extension of the antislavery movement, freedmen's aid organizations included Republican businessmen, members of Methodist, Baptist, and other denominational missionary societies, and female members of soldier's aid societies as well as abolitionists. The two largest organizations aiding former slaves were the American Missionary Association and the secular American Freedmen's Union Commission.

Northern reformers and the military continued to cooperate during Reconstruction. Their efforts contributed to the transformation of charity in the post–Civil War period, when private associations began working closely with state and local governments, adopting social science methods to evaluate the causes of poverty and to formulate policy. Following the recommendations of the American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission, whose members had observed freedmen's aid efforts throughout the South, Congress established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) in March 1865 as a temporary guardian for former slaves. The bureau was a division of the Department of War, and the military staff of the bureau negotiated employment contracts, oversaw the establishment of freedmen's schools, and distributed relief. The bureau also protected the basic rights of former slaves, fighting such remnants of slavery as the practice of apprenticing freedchildren against the will of their parents. Though the government and the military distributed rations, fuel, and clothing, they focused principally on developing a wage labor system in the South. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, the commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, promoted the partnership between his government agency and private aid societies in the North, arguing that these societies should provide direct relief while the bureau prepared former slaves for participation in a capitalist economy. But freedmen's aid societies also viewed charity with suspicion. Northerners worried that slavery had

Recently freed sick and old slaves line up at the Freedmen's Bureau to receive rations, ca. September 22, 1866. (Corbis)

made freedpeople dependent on whites and the government, and they wanted to promote the self-reliance of African Americans. The military staff of the Freedmen's Bureau and the leadership of the freedmen's aid movement formulated their policies to encourage freedpeople's self-support and independence from public and private charity.

The staff of the Freedmen's Bureau pushed education as the most effective means of preparing former slaves for wage labor and citizenship, and education proved the most successful aspect of its cooperation with northern aid societies. Freedmen's aid societies recruited and paid teachers, while the bureau built schoolhouses and paid for transportation. Hundreds of women served as teachers in schools throughout the South. Most "Yankee schoolmarms" stayed in the South for only a few years, or as long as their parent society could cover their salaries, but others, including Laura Towne, Caroline Putnam, and Sallie Holley, remained in the South for the rest of their lives. Teachers served as intermediaries between the North and former slaves; they also distributed clothing and offered other aid to African Americans in their districts.

Though men such as Edward L. Pierce, Lyman Abbott, J. Miller McKim, and General Howard often served as the public face of the freedmen's aid movement, northern women provided the organizational base as members of aid societies, distributors of relief, and teachers. Applying skills learned in antislavery and soldier's aid societies, women raised funds, hired teachers, and oversaw the daily operations of their associations. Northern societies also employed women as "freedmen's agents" to distribute material aid to former slaves and to work as visitors in cities like Alexandria, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., where refugees had congregated. Soon the Freedmen's Bureau, too, began to employ women as visitors and employment agents, contributing to the growing number of women in the civil service following the war. Nevertheless, women's participation in freedmen's aid proved controversial. As the freedmen's aid movement turned its focus to wage labor, education, and political rights, bureau agents and other reformers viewed women's charitable activities as harmful to the self-sufficiency of former slaves.

Former slaves saw the Freedmen's Bureau as an ally, but the bureau's policies could be detrimental to freedpeople's interests. Former slaves turned to the Freedmen's Bureau for protection again unscrupulous employers and former owners. For as long as the bureau existed, freedpeople hoped in vain to buy or rent confiscated and abandoned Confederate land, viewing landownership as the best means to economic and personal independence. The bureau itself, however, focused on wage labor above other aspects of freedom and often coerced former slaves into signing labor contracts. Bureau agents and former slaveholders expected freedwomen, including married women and women with children, to continue working on southern plantations, impinging upon their desire to care for their families. Despite the poverty of many freedpeople and the evidence of their industry and self-reliance, the Freedmen's Bureau cut back on material aid, fearing its effects on the character of former slaves. Thus, even as reformers advocated for former slaves, their racial assumptions about the indolence of African Americans ultimately shaped their policies.

Frederick Douglass criticized the freedmen's aid movement for its paternalism. Other free Blacks in both the North and the South responded to whites' concern over alleged African American dependency by founding aid societies that emphasized self-help. Northern Blacks realized that their status in American society also depended on the outcome of the emancipation experiment, and they sought to prove their qualification for citizenship through freedmen's relief. Organizations like the African Civilization Society sent teachers to the South, found jobs in the North for southern migrants, raised money, and established orphanages. In the South, mutual aid societies helped the elderly, poor, and sick. By forming these organizations, African Americans stressed their independence from whites and from the government, responding to those who denied their capacity for self-reliance. In both the North and the South, African American women taught school and administered material aid.

After Congress passed the Fourteenth (1868) and Fifteenth (1870) Amendments, granting African American men civil and political rights, public and political support for the freedmen's aid movement diminished due to complacency, the decline of Reconstruction, and massive resistance in the South. Most Americans believed that with the vote, former slaves could protect themselves. Initially established as a temporary agency, the Freedmen's Bureau fought for political support and adequate funding throughout its existence. Opponents rejected both the implied expansion of federal power and the wisdom of a national welfare program for former slaves. The Freedmen's Bureau ceased most of its operations in 1868, finally closing in 1872. Freedmen's aid societies also struggled to raise funds. Since the Freedmen's Bureau had funded a significant part of their educational work, the bureau's demise forced many aid societies to close by 1870. And yet, although the freedmen's aid movement officially ended when the federal government withdrew its support for Reconstruction in 1877, many individuals and denominational aid societies continued to sponsor African American schools in the South through the end of the century.

Carol Faulkner

See also: African Americans; Racial Segregation; Racism; Sharecropping; Slavery

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Friendly Visitors

See Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Society for the Prevention of Pauperism

G

Galbraith, John Kenneth

See The Affluent Society

Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market

Gender is a key factor in understanding poverty, employment, and social welfare. Gender discrimination has affected women differently depending on their class, race, ethnicity, immigrant status, first language, and sexual orientation. Gender discrimination has taken many forms: in laws that govern families, in assumptions that shape opportunities, in social policies that ease economic insecurity, and in the labor market. This entry will discuss gender discrimination in the labor market.

Gender discrimination does not occur in isolation from other statuses and identities. Especially in the labor market, where social forces and statuses interact, gender cannot provide the sole explanation for discrimination because gender itself is shaped by other important social categories, such as race, ethnicity, class, and other dimensions of social difference. Therefore, our discussion of women's wages, occupations, and poverty is placed within the framework of an intersectional analysis—one that works to reveal how the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, and social class come together to influence these aspects of social and economic organization.

The Feminization of Poverty

The term "feminization of poverty" was first coined by Diana Pearce (1978) in an article in which she drew attention to the increasing numbers of female-headed households that were currently living in poverty. This term created a kind of "research moment" whereby a great deal of attention was drawn to the growing numbers of households with only a single (almost always female) parent in the home, as these households became a greater proportion of the poor. Pearce pointed out that there were nearly twice as many poor female-headed families in 1976 as there had been in 1950, and she indicated that this trend showed no signs of abating. Her explanation for the high concentration of single-mother families in poverty stressed women's low wages and marital status as well as the role of welfare in perpetuating the placement of women in low-paying, low-skill jobs.

Critics of the term "feminization of poverty" charge that it obscures some of the continuing differences in who is likely to become and remain poor. Linda Burnham brought an intersectional approach to this topic when she wrote, "These distortions [within the feminization of poverty analysis] are the inevitable result of a theory that abstracts women as a group out of the overall socioeconomic trends in U.S. capitalist development" (1986, 70). Burnham argued that by conceiving of poverty as solely a gendered issue, the causes of Black women's poverty are overlooked, white women's vulnerability to poverty is overestimated, and the perpetuation of a poor working class by capitalist systems is ignored. Pearce herself updated her own work with a subsequent article in 1988 that detailed how "the proportion of persons in poverty who are in families maintained by women has risen for all groups, with the most dramatic shifts occurring in Black families" (1988, 502).

Sara McLanahan, Annemette Sorensen, and Dorothy Watson (1989) investigated the ratio of poor women to poor men, the poverty rates of women and of men (each as a proportion of the total of their respective sex), and finally the ratio of the women's poverty rate to the men's poverty rate. In addition, they also compared data for Blacks and whites in all of these categories. The authors found that Black people are more likely to be poor and that the ratio between Black men and Black women is very similar to the respective ratio between white men and white women. In addition, for women in their early childbearing years (eighteen to twenty-four), living arrangements were found to be significant in increasing poverty ratios between women and men. This article was important in identifying some of the structural connections between gender and poverty. Both race and gender are implicated in the experience of poverty. Nevertheless, more information is needed to explore how women of color might experience this intersection in ways that mutually reinforce the consequences of racism, classism, and sexism. Increasingly, research on gender and poverty examine how race *and* gender *and* class (as well as other dimensions of difference) together explain the causes and consequences of poverty. These kinds of analyses could reveal some of the social processes that reinforce the greater likelihood for women of color to become and remain poor and white women's greater likelihood to avoid poverty or have shorter spells of poverty.

The literature surrounding the feminization of poverty is multifaceted and reflects much of the policy-related debate on the subject. Often, there is an implied blaming of single mothers, either because they did not stay married or, even worse, because they "chose" to have children outside of marriage. Bonnie Thornton Dill, Maxine Baca Zinn, and Sandra Patton have analyzed "racialized political narratives that blame poor single and [Latina] immigrant mothers for social ills like drug addiction, poverty, crime and gang violence" (1998, 6), connecting these media-produced tropes to the maintenance of misperceptions about the causes and the perpetuation of poverty. Dill, Zinn, and Patton's analysis revealed the underlying connections among systems of power (based on race, class, and gender) that privilege a particular family form (that is, white, two-parent, and middle class) through ideological and political manipulation of social institutions.

Zinn (1992) elaborated on some of the consequences of these processes. She showed that even in situations where there are two parents in the home, if those parents happen to be Black or Latino, they are more likely to be living in poverty than they would be if they happened to be white. Mary Jo Bane's (1986) work related this fact to a phenomenon she calls "reshuffled poverty." Families with a lone female head due to marital breakup are often living in poverty, but when this head is a woman of color, it is more likely that the family was already living in poverty prior to the marital breakup. Thus, the family's structure has very little to do with the state of poverty when race is taken into account.

Single mothers of all races are subject to lower pay rates, thus further increasing the likelihood that their families live in poverty. But when the family head is a white woman, it is more likely that the family fell into poverty at the time of a marital breakup. Bane emphasized the import of this finding, writing, "if this argument is correct, child and spousal support may help alleviate the poverty of many white households, but it can only make the smallest dent in the problem of Black poverty" (1986, 231). This illustrates how an intersectional approach can lead to the formulation of policies and interventions. This approach demonstrates that for Black and Latina women, getting or staying married does not offer the same kinds of economic protections that it might for white women. And yet marital status is commonly (mis)understood as a key factor in the feminization of poverty.

The Wage Gap

The gender wage gap is the difference in pay received by male and female workers. Although this difference shrank throughout the second half of the twentieth century, it remains significant. Currently, the gap in median annual earnings between full-time, year-round female and male workers, after narrowing during the 1980s, has closed to approximately 73 percent (see the accompanying table for breakdown by race). This difference is exacerbated for women of color; studies have shown that marital status and children do not change the facts that white women earn more than Black and Latina women and that white men tend to earn more than all other groups of workers.

Table 1

2000 median annual earnings for year-round, full-time workers as a percentage of white male earnings

	Men	*Women*
Black	78%	64%
Hispanic	63%	52%
White	100%	72%

(*Data source:* U.S. Census Bureau, CPS Survey, March 2001, as compiled by the National Committee on Pay Equity)

Education does not ameliorate the gap; for example, according to Randy Albelda and Chris Tilly (1997), men with only a bachelor's degree still earn more than women with a master's degree. This remains true at every level of education: Men earn more for each year of education than do women. These differences in wages persist even when such factors as industry and experience have been controlled.

The causes of income inequality are manifold. Some of the difference between men's and women's wages has to do with human capital issues. Women, on average, have less work experience and job tenure than do men (although this is less true among younger cohorts of women). Yet Paula England, Karen Christopher, and Lori I. Reid (1999) have offered evidence that measures of seniority and experience are most effective in explaining differences in wages among whites but do not readily explain differences in wages among people of color. What they call the "generic" account of gender-based income disparities does not explain the disparities between the incomes of Black women and men, although it can offer insight into Latino/a differences. An alternative explanation that focuses on the organization of work, rather than on the human resources of women workers, is occupational segregation, which is discussed below. Closely related to occupational segregation are discussions of comparable worth that argue that "women's work is regarded as less skilled or unskilled *because women do it*" (Kemp, 1994). Long-term data has shown that once a formerly male-dominated profession opens to women, it quickly becomes a female-dominated one, and overall wages decline. More work is needed in this area to determine how race intersects with gender and class to reinforce segregationist trends. Other factors contributing to the existence of income inequality include the division of labor in the household and lifelong social pressures to conform to standard gender roles.

Reductions in the wage gap have been brought about by various factors; for instance, more white women now remain in the workforce after childbirth, resulting in an increase in overall job experience and tenure (Stevenson and Donovan 1996). A second partial explanation for the reduction in the wage gap is the overall decrease in men's wages. As the manufacturing sector declined in the late 1970s, abolishing many well-paid jobs, the relative difference between men's and women's wages declined as well. Although the income gap has shrunk, it remains likely that it will continue to persist as long as structural factors, such as occupational segregation, play a role in its perpetuation.

"Occupational segregation" is the phenomenon of women and men tending to be concentrated in different types of jobs. For example, Francine Blau and Maryanne Ferber found that women tend to be concentrated in administrative support and service occupations whereas men dominate the operator/laborer jobs and precision craft and repair occupations (1992, 120). In general, the jobs that women hold have less status and are lower paid, even when the jobs require similar skill levels and educational background. Barbara Reskin, in her study of racial occupational segregation among women workers, found considerable evidence that many "women's jobs" are almost as segregated racially as they are by gender. She wrote, "segregation by race and ethnicity . . . preserves racial and ethnic inequality both by maintaining the social distance between groups and by generating earnings disparities" (1999, 200). She argued that both race and ethnicity must be taken into account to understand occupational segregation among women. Albelda and Tilly (1997), using the terms "glass ceiling" and "sticky floor," discussed the kinds of segregation that women and women of color encounter. The term "glass ceiling" refers to the blocking of upward advancement that women often face, and "sticky floor" refers to segregation into low-paying jobs.

In addition, scholars of comparable worth have pointed out that women working in "women's jobs" tend to be paid less than men working in "men's jobs," even when the jobs require similar skills, responsibilities, and efforts, and that this is exacerbated when women of color are the majority of workers in that job: "Occupations with high concentrations of women of color are among the lowest paid in the labor force (e.g., cleaners, child care workers, and sewing machine operators)" (Dill, Cannon, and Vanneman 1987, 63), and yet "male jobs" that have equivalent skill requirements are paid more. Programs aimed at ameliorating these pay inequities, like comparable worth, come under considerable political debate. Dill, Cannon, and Vanneman (1987) have argued that Black women, in spite of being in different kinds of jobs, would benefit from the institution of "equal pay for equal work" laws in multiple ways. First, those Black women who work in occupations similar to those of white women would benefit directly, and those Black women who work in segregated occupations, if rewarded on the basis of the education and experience of the jobholders, would benefit on average even more than would white women. In addition, such a program would benefit men of color, who are more likely to work in "women's jobs" than are white men, both by increasing their own earnings and by increasing household income through increases in the earnings of women of color.

Consequences of the combined effects of occupational segregation by race and gender include stagnation in low-paying, low-skill jobs with limited benefits for Blacks, Latinas, and many immigrant women of color. Women, especially single mothers, often need jobs that can meet their child care needs, but these are exactly the kinds of jobs that are difficult to find and keep. The service industry is where many find jobs that can fit their needs for flexibility, yet those are often dead-end jobs. As a consequence, these kinds of jobs have a high turnover, thus lessening the likelihood that their holders will acquire long-term work experience. In addition to the wage gap and occupational segregation, women also tend to work additional hours at home, doing the majority of household work (Hochschild and Machung 1989).

These terms—"feminization of poverty," "wage gap," and "occupational segregation"—describe some of the unique challenges that women and particularly women of color face in the labor market. As Valerie Polakow wrote, "Many women are poor for the same reason men are poor—because they lack education, skills, live in a poor job area, or are minorities. But women are also poor because they are both nurturers of and providers for their children; and because they are disadvantaged in the labor market" (1993, 61). The challenges women face are even greater when the experiences of women of color are moved to the center of analysis. When this is done, the institutional context, both past and present, must be acknowledged as a major contributing factor. Gender inequality in the workplace remains intrinsically bound to racial and ethnic inequality. Larger national and international trends that document increasing global inequality warn that if the systems of oppression are not ameliorated, current trends that divide the world into the "haves" and the "have-nots" will continue to worsen and exacerbate racial, gender, and class differences.

Amy E. McLaughlin and Bonnie Thornton Dill

See also: African Americans; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Domestic Work; Family Structure; Feminization of Poverty; Heteronormativity; Income and Wage Inequality; Latino/as; Racism; Sexism; "Working Poor"

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General Assistance

General Assistance (GA) is typically defined as programs funded by state or local governments that provide cash assistance or in-kind benefits to very low-income individuals who are not eligible for such federal public assistance programs as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The history of GA is fundamentally about societal judgments about who should work and about American persistence in denying generous and dignified public aid to those who are not working but are deemed able to do so.

Like all U.S. social welfare programs for the poor, GA's roots are found in the traditions of the English poor laws. In the late nineteenth century, public "outdoor relief" (aid to people in their homes, as opposed to "indoor," or institutional, aid) was considered so morally harmful that reformers sought to abolish it. As Josephine Shaw Lowell wrote in 1884, "human nature is so constituted that no man can receive as a gift what he should earn by his own labor without a moral deterioration" (cited in Coll 1969, 45). To ensure that only the most "deserving" among the poor—that is, individuals incapable of or morally excused from work, and their financial dependents—received public aid, officials thoroughly investigated the lives of applicants and monitored recipients. Humiliating treatment and dismally meager benefits discouraged all but the most desperate from seeking assistance.

During the Progressive Era, many states began to adopt public assistance programs for two categories of individuals—widowed mothers and the elderly—deemed worthy of aid because they had socially acceptable reasons for not working. Although "mothers' aid" and especially "old-age assistance" benefits were more generous than traditional "relief," in practice, they often differed little from the harsh programs they were meant to replace. Mothers' aid programs investigated applicants, judged the "suitableness" of their homes, and subjected them to ongoing supervision. Benefits were insufficient to support a family; the majority of recipients engaged in some form of wage labor.

Although the widespread unemployment of the Great Depression highlighted the need for a public safety net, Depression-era rhetoric and policies nonetheless emphasized work as the arbiter of deservingness. The Social Security Act of 1935 institutionalized the provision of public aid based on a distinction between "employables" and "unemployables." Unemployment insurance paid benefits to "employables" experiencing temporary spells of unemployment. Old Age Assistance and Old Age Insurance (that is, Social Security) supported "unemployable" retired workers, and Aid to Dependent Children (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC]) targeted "unemployable" widowed and deserted mothers who lacked a male breadwinner to provide for their children.

With the passage of the Social Security Act, the federal government "quit this business of relief" (Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935, quoted in Coll 1995, 33). Working-age adults without dependents who could not support themselves because of chronic unemployment, barriers to employment, or underemployment—the residual "unemployables"—were left to depend on wildly divergent and unevenly implemented state and local GA programs. But just as important, in the somewhat arbitrary world of public assistance, GA became the program of last resort for individuals who fell through the cracks of other programs, whether working-age adults, children, or the elderly.

In 1950, Congress passed a means-tested public assistance program for individuals who could not work because of permanent disability, picking up about a quarter of the nation's general assistance rolls. Then, in 1972, legislation folded means-tested assistance for the elderly (that is, for those who did not qualify for Social Security), the blind, and the disabled into a single federal program, Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Unlike AFDC, SSI was completely federally financed, and its benefits were more generous than those of AFDC.

By the 1970s, the residual place of state and local GA programs in the U.S. welfare state was set. Unemployment insurance and Social Security provided for individuals with strong labor force attachment who found themselves in need because of temporary unemployment or old age. These socially acceptable reasons for being in need were rewarded by social insurance programs with strong federal oversight and relatively predictable and generous benefits. Individuals without strong labor force attachment were forced to rely on less generous, means-tested public assistance. The most "deserving" among this group—impoverished elderly, blind, or disabled individuals—could turn to the federally controlled SSI program. Single mothers—whose children were considered deserving even though their own deservingness was in doubt—could apply for federal-state AFDC benefits, which, though meager, provided a legal entitlement until 1996. The most "undeserving" of all—working-age adults, men and women alike, without dependents—were left to the vagaries of chronically underfunded state and local GA programs. GA continued to serve its traditional role as the safety net of last resort for other groups.

States began to crack down on GA in the 1980s, restricting eligibility, strengthening work requirements, and establishing time limits for those deemed employable. The trend accelerated with federal efforts to replace AFDC with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, to make work requirements the centerpiece of reform, and to establish time limits for receipt of federally subsidized public assistance. In the late 1990s, GA caseloads reached their lowest levels in twenty-five years. As unemployment rises and more families are denied access to TANF because of time limits and penalties, it remains to be seen whether states and localities will expand GA programs to meet the growing need or whether increasing numbers of very low-income people will be left without a safety net of any sort.

Nancy K. Cauthen

See also: Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Federalism; Great Depression and New Deal; Poor Laws; *Public Relief and Private Charity;* Relief; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Work Ethic

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See Progress and Poverty; Property; Wealth

G.I. Bill

The G.I. Bill is the informal name used to refer to a set of social programs initially established for returning veterans of World War II and later extended to those who served during the undeclared wars in Korea and Vietnam and in the all-volunteer military since 1984. These programs continued the American tradition of extending generous social benefits to those who had fulfilled what was considered the highest obligation of citizenship: military service. In contrast to the direct, retrospective cash payments ("bonuses") that were granted to veterans of the wars from the American Revolution through World War I, which were paid only years after the military service, the G.I. Bill offered immediate assistance to veterans as a way to improve their long-term economic prospects. The most popular features included educational and training benefits that enabled veterans to attend college or vocational schools or to receive on-the-job training at government expense, and a loan-guarantee program to assist in the purchase of homes, farms, or businesses.

The formal title of the original G.I. Bill was the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (Public Law 78–346). Public officials sought measures to ease the readjustment of veterans to civilian life, but they worried that the end of the war would bring a return to Depression-era unemployment levels as veterans reentered the job market. Fearful of instigating more veterans' protests like that of the Bonus Army in the early 1930s—during which thousands of World War I veterans camped in the U.S. capital for months until forcibly evicted—planners in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration suggested that veterans who had served for at least six months should be eligible for one year of education and training, with a limited number selected on a competitive basis to continue for more years. After the administration's bill was introduced in Congress, the American Legion crafted a far more sweeping alternative that promised up to four years of education for all veterans. The organization mobilized an enormous grassroots and public relations campaign in support of the legislation. Other veterans' groups disputed the legislation, advancing more-traditional programs targeting disabled veterans alone. Some university officials testified before Congress that the educational provisions would degrade their institutions by allowing unqualified individuals to pursue further education. Southern representatives opposed extending extensive benefits to African American veterans. Nonetheless, a blend of the most generous features of the administration and American Legion bills was enacted and was signed into law by Roosevelt on June 22, 1944.

The original G.I. Bill offered a wide array of benefits to World War II veterans. All veterans were entitled to a "mustering-out" payment of $100 to $300 per person. In addition, they could draw twenty dollars per week in "readjustment allowances," for as many as fifty-two weeks, until they found a job; these benefits were far more accessible than those available through unemployment insurance, which varied from state to state and was characterized by restrictive eligibility criteria. Although policymakers had worried that veterans would use what became known as the "52–20 Club" benefits to their full extent, in fact only 14 percent did so; the average veteran drew the benefits for 19.7 weeks. The loan guaranty provisions were utilized by 29 percent of veterans. The construction industry received an enormous boost as 4.3 million veterans purchased homes at low-interest rates through the program, and 200,000 purchased farms or started businesses. By 1955, nearly one-third of the new housing starts nationwide owed their backing to the Veterans Administration (President's Commission on Veterans' Pensions 1956, 275, 300–304).

The educational and training benefits were used by 51 percent of veterans—7.8 million individuals. Among beneficiaries, 28 percent attended colleges and universities, 45 percent went to schools below the college level, especially trade and vocational training programs, and the remainder utilized on-the-job or on-the-farm training (President's Commission on Veterans' Pensions 1956, 287). Any veteran with an honorable discharge who had served for at least ninety days of active duty was eligible. Beneficiaries could attend the educational institution of their choice, as long as they gained admission through the standard procedures. The G.I. Bill covered all tuition and fees up to a total of $500 per year, and veteran students also received monthly subsistence payments of $75 if single, $105 with one dependent, and $120

A new crop of ex-soldier students acquires school supplies on January 28, 1945. Books and notebooks, as well as tuition and other fees, up to a total of $500 for an ordinary school year, were furnished to World War II veterans under the G.I. Bill. (UPI/Bettmann/Corbis)

with two or more dependents. Veterans who had served for ninety days qualified for one year of education at government expense, with an additional month of education for each additional month of service up to a maximum of forty-eight months.

Colleges, after having struggled to survive the lean years of the Depression and the war, were inundated with new students: Veterans made up half of the undergraduate population nationwide by 1949. Many institutions adjusted to space shortages and to the different needs of veteran students, who were older and more likely to be married and to have children, by building new temporary housing for veterans and their families. Veterans were most likely to use the higher education provisions if they were younger, had higher levels of education prior to the war, and had been encouraged to pursue an education while growing up. Prior to the war, higher education had been limited primarily to white, native-born, higher-status Protestants; the G.I. Bill helped include more Jews, Catholics, immigrants and children of immigrants, and individuals from working-class and lower-middle-class families. Although the G.I. Bill made college affordable to many who could not have attended otherwise, it also permitted individuals who could have attended regardless to go to more-expensive and often higher-status institutions than they could have otherwise and to attend full-time, completing their degrees more quickly than they would have otherwise. Veterans could use the benefits to study in whatever field they wished. The G.I. Bill produced professionals in a broad array of fields, including 450,000 engineers, 238,000 teachers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors, 22,000 dentists, and 17,000 writers and editors. The program boosted educational attainment among beneficiaries by three years. The government financial assistance served to ameliorate the effects of socioeconomic factors that had long determined who went to college and how much education they ultimately received.

Although the higher education provisions were administered easily through existing colleges and universities, the demand for vocational training spurred the widespread development of new programs. The number of trade schools tripled within six years of the G.I. Bill's enactment. Administrators experienced challenges in ascertaining the quality of such programs, and they uncovered many cases of programs overcharging the government for the service provided. Nonetheless, such programs enabled veterans to acquire training in a wide array of vocations, including accounting, auto mechanics, plumbing, masonry, refrigeration, pipe fitting, small engine repair, electrical work, and television or telephone repair. In addition, thousands of veterans attended flight school or business school or completed their primary or secondary education. Veterans who had less education prior to military service and whose parents had less education were especially likely to use the vocational training benefits.

African American veterans' experiences of the G.I. Bill differed from those of white veterans and varied by specific program and by region of residence in the postwar era. Many found that the Veterans Administration was less likely to approve their claims for readjustment allowances. Those who sought low-interest mortgages often found that banks turned them away. African Americans' use of the educational provisions was impeded by the fact that the vast majority lived in the South, where they faced a segregated educational system. The historically Black colleges were overwhelmed by the influx, nearly doubling their 1940 enrollment levels by 1950. These institutions enjoyed neither the resources nor the accreditation bestowed on the white universities, and nowhere did they provide students the opportunity for graduate study at the doctoral level or for an accredited degree in engineering. Nonetheless, in all regions of the country, including the South, African American veterans used the education and training benefits at higher rates than did white veterans (Mettler 2005). Thousands of others migrated to the North and West and utilized the provisions in integrated institutions. Regardless of region, Black beneficiaries of the education and training program were especially likely to regard it as life-altering, inasmuch as it provided them with opportunities to which they would not otherwise have had access.

The G.I. Bill elevated the status of American men relative to women largely because of the composition of the military and because tuition benefits were limited to those who had served. Although more women served in the military during World War II than in any earlier period, they made up less than 2 percent of the armed forces (Mettler 2005). Women who had served in the Army Air Force were not granted full military status and thus were ineligible for the benefits. And yet, despite the prevalent cultural messages about domesticity that confronted women in the postwar era, 40 percent of female veterans used the educational provisions (U.S. Senate, Committee on Veterans' Affairs 1973, 163). Sixty thousand attended college on the G.I. Bill, and others used the vocational provisions to learn bookkeeping, cosmetology, and secretarial skills. Married women veterans using the benefits were denied subsistence payments for their husbands. Unlike prior forms of veterans' benefits, the G.I. Bill was not provided to wives or widows of veterans. Due to the increased access to higher education for men and the perpetuation of obstacles to women's enrollment in some schools and programs, women's presence among undergraduate students declined from 40 percent in 1940 to 31 percent in 1950 (Mettler 2005).

Besides extending generous rights of social citizenship to beneficiaries through expanded access to education, the G.I. Bill also prompted higher levels of involvement in civic and political activity during the postwar era. Veterans who used the educational benefits joined greater numbers of civic organizations and became more active in politics than did veterans with the same level of education and socioeconomic background who did not use the G.I. Bill benefits. The policy design of the program, featuring universalism and treating beneficiaries as rights-bearing individuals, appeared to have positive effects beyond elevating socioeconomic status. These effects were most pronounced for those from low to moderate socioeconomic backgrounds, since they experienced full incorporation into the polity as first-class citizens. In addition, some developed a sense of owing back to society in exchange for the generous program from which they had benefited. The extended educational levels facilitated by the G.I. Bill helped cultivate the skills, networks, and resources that allow individuals to engage in public life. All of these dynamics enhanced individuals' predisposition to participate in civic activities (Mettler 2002).

The original G.I. Bill quickly gained popularity among citizens and policymakers, and it served as a template for subsequent policymaking. Congress extended comparable benefits through the Korean G.I. Bill (Public Law 82–550) in 1952, the Cold War GI Bill (Public Law 89–358) in 1966, and another version (Public Law 90–77) for veterans of the undeclared war in Vietnam in 1967. Each version's educational and training benefits were extended on somewhat less-generous terms than those of its predecessor. The Korean and post-Korean versions limited training to a maximum of thirty-six months and permitted veterans to be trained for one and a half times as long as they had been on active duty. Veterans of Vietnam had to have served a minimum of eighteen months to qualify for the benefits. In 1984, Congress established a system of educational benefits comparable to the G.I. Bill for veterans of the all-volunteer military. This program was regarded as a recruitment tool, but it required contributions from those who served.

The G.I. Bill continued to foster greater social inclusion of those who had engaged in military service. The percentage of veterans using the educational and training programs hovered around 40 percent in the 1950s and 1960s, and growing proportions of beneficiaries attended college, including 51 percent among those who had served during the Korean War and 57 percent among those who had served in Vietnam (U.S. Senate, Committee on Veterans' Affairs 1973, 161–174). The end of legalized segregation in the United States enabled African Americans to become more likely to use the G.I. Bill benefits than other veterans and to experience the greatest increase in their subsequent earnings after program usage.

Suzanne Mettler

See also: Bonus Army; Education Policies; Veterans' Assistance

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Globalization and Deindustrialization

In the 1970s, profound transformations began to occur in the shape of the world economy, with enormous consequences for world poverty, inequality, and social policy. The two most widely used concepts to describe this restructuring are *globalization*, the increasing interdependence of the world's national and local economies, and *deindustrialization*, the diminishing importance of manufacturing to the world's most advanced economies.

Both of these developments have roots that predate the 1970s—world historians have traced the ebbs and flows of truly world-spanning economic connections back to the voyages of Columbus, if not earlier, and industrial employment declined in certain regions of Europe and North America in the 1920s. However, since about 1970, two factors have accelerated both processes and given them some unprecedented characteristics. Advances in transportation and communication technologies—including long-distance jets, giant container ships, satellite networks, and the Internet—have made connections across the globe much faster and easier, increasing the sheer volume and density of flows of money, goods, people, ideas, and political influence. More important, a dramatic shift in world politics has transformed the ways the world economy is governed. Supporters of government regulation of markets and redistribution of wealth through welfare states lost influence to supporters of neoliberal economic philosophies, so-called because they were inspired by the classical, liberal free-market ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Neoliberals have called for an end to government interference in the world's markets in the interest of global growth and prosperity. In practice, they have reconfigured the role of governments—and of other institutions that set the rules for the world economy—to prioritize the interests of multinational corporations and financiers. As a result, contemporary neoliberal forms of globalization and deindustrialization have increased economic inequality worldwide.

Deindustrialization was the first concept to enter the public debate about global economic restructuring, as news of dramatic plant closings increased in North America and Europe during the 1970s and intensified during the worldwide recession of the 1980s. Commentators coined the term "Rust Belt" to denote the empty hulls of factories strewn across the urban landscapes of the U.S. Northeast and Midwest, the British Midlands, the German Ruhrgebiet, and other historic heartlands of the Industrial Revolution. In the United States, factory closings were quickly linked to worldwide transformations, first to America's increasing competition with Europe and Japan over the products of heavy industry like steel and automobiles. Later, textiles, electronics, and other consumer items imported from Southeast Asia and Latin America gained visibility, and the loss of factory jobs in the United States was linked to corporations' practice of moving or outsourcing their production overseas and to free-trade treaties. In the 1990s, the word "globalization" gained currency as a way to highlight these broader contexts of deindustrialization, and globalization played an important role in the fierce debate over such free-trade institutions as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA).

Economic statistics give some indication of the increasing magnitude of contemporary deindustrialization and its link to the globalization of trade and investment. In the United States in 1947, manufacturing was the largest sector of the economy, employing 26.5 percent of the workforce. By 1996, that figure had diminished to 15 percent, half the size of the rapidly growing service sector, smaller than that of the retail sector, and about equal to government employment. The decline began slowly, and it accelerated in the late 1960s, when Europe and Japan rebuilt industrial plants destroyed in World War II and began to compete effectively with U.S. industry. It is important to remember, though, that in 1995, this "triad" of advanced economies together still accounted for nearly three-quarters of the world's exports of vehicles and other machinery and two-thirds of its steel and other metals (Levy 1999; Smith 1999).

The flip side of deindustrialization in the wealthiest countries has been the dramatic increase in industrial activity in the world's developing and transitional economies. Between 1980 and 1995, their share of vehicle and machinery exports rose from about 5 percent to 22 percent, and their share of textile exports surpassed half of the world's total. This increased export activity was part of a general growth in global trade. The world's total exports, measured as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), grew by a fifth from 1973 to 1992. During that time, Asia's GDP nearly doubled and Latin America's grew by a half (Baker, Epstein, and Pollin 1998). Much of this trade was between different foreign subsidiaries of multinational corporations based in the West, often involving unfinished goods and auto parts heading toward the next appointed location on the "global assembly line." Foreign direct investment in such things as factory buildings and equipment, another critical measure of the interconnectedness of the world economy, also increased during the same period, from 4.5 percent of world output in 1975 to 10.1 percent in 1995 (Baker, Epstein, and Pollin 1998). It must be noted, however, that both the volume of trade and foreign direct investment were about as high or higher in the free-market world economy of the nineteenth century, suggesting that today's globalization represents a new expansionary phase in a much longer historical pattern of global integration, which has been interrupted by periods of relatively decreasing or slower-growing numbers of connections.

The character of deindustrialization in advanced economies like the United States also reflects movements of goods and investment capital within the country, particularly from central cities to suburbs and from the Rust Belt toward the Sun Belt of the South and Southwest. As a result, American deindustrialization was very uneven, and in some places manufacturing actually expanded. Cities whose economies were highly focused on heavy industry suffered the most. In 1947, 340,000 people worked in Detroit's factories, heavily concentrated in auto making. Thirty years later, the number had dropped by almost two-thirds, to 138,000. Buffalo, another bastion of heavy industry, lost 41,000 factory jobs, a third of the city's total, in the recession years 1979–1983 alone (Sugrue 1996; Perry and McLean 1991, 361). By contrast, New York City, which has a more diversified economy and little heavy industry, more closely followed the national average. Many suburban areas, even in the Rust Belt, actually saw gains in industrial employment. Though the city of Philadelphia, for example, lost almost two-thirds of its industrial jobs between 1958 and 1986, manufacturing in its suburban ring actually continued to rise throughout the period and by the 1990s had more than two and a half times as many factory jobs as the historic city (Stull and Madden 1990, 28).

Cities in the South and Southwest also followed different trends from those of the country as a whole. Houston's industrial employment expanded dramatically during the oil boom of the 1970s, when the rest of the country stagnated, but then plummeted during the 1980s as oil prices declined. The Los Angeles region lost many heavy industry jobs related to aerospace and defense during the late 1980s and early 1990s, but its overall manufacturing employment has climbed continuously, and in 1990 its 1.3 million factory jobs made it one of the largest centers of industrial employment in the world (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996, 219). Finally, it is important to remember that the overall flight of manufacturing from the United States masks the resurgence of particularly low-paid work in "sweatshops," especially in apparel, electronics assembly, and food processing, which are predominantly staffed by women and immigrants. Such sweatshops in the United States reflect uneven racial and gender patterns within the transformation of manufacturing worldwide. Once a high-wage white male preserve, the factory has increasingly become a low-wage ghetto for women and people of color.

In the United States, debates over the social impact of globalization and deindustrialization have focused on the relatively specific question of free-trade treaties, as enshrined in NAFTA and the WTO and as proposed in the FTAA. There is a consensus that such treaties do cause many older plants to close and that deindustrialization results in immediate pain to the individuals, families, and communities involved. Neoliberal supporters of free trade argue, however, that this pain represents a cost American society must bear if it is to benefit from unfettered capitalism's promise of greater economic efficiency and a long-term upward cycle of global growth. They argue that blue-collar workers and the American economy as a whole will reap much richer rewards from specializing in higher-skilled "knowledge-based" work such as that offered in the dynamic service sector and in export-oriented jobs. According to neoliberals, benefits will also come from the greater variety of ever less expensive consumer goods available in the globalized marketplace. The poor of the developing world, meanwhile, will be able to give up subsistence agriculture for factory work, ultimately narrowing the gap between the first and third worlds. In their most triumphal moments, especially after the fall of the Soviet bloc and again during the late 1990s, neoliberals proclaimed the "end" of history's endless ideological conflicts and heralded a "new economy" made possible by new technologies and global connections, blessed by upward-spiraling stock market indexes, a reconciliation of low unemployment and low inflation, and a victory over the boom and bust of the business cycle.

Critics of this story argue just the opposite. They argue that free trade treaties, rather than creating a rising tide that lifts all boats, result in a "race to the bottom" by forcing first world workers to compete directly with workers receiving vastly lower wages in developing countries. Even the *threat* of a plant closing—ever more credible in the age of globalization—has forced workers and their unions to make wage concessions, while corporate practices of outsourcing production to foreign suppliers cause other wage and job declines. As a result, critics argue, a quarter century of expanding global trade and investment has fulfilled few of the free-marketeers' long-term promises. The economic booms of the 1950s and 1960s, the period of regulated world markets, produced a large increase in wages in the United States, a dramatic decline in poverty, and a decline in inequality of income and wealth. By contrast, during the free-trade 1980s and 1990s, economic booms have been accompanied by stagnating wages and poverty rates and by soaring inequality, only minimally redressed during such fragile episodes of hypergrowth as the high-tech bubble during the late 1990s. Even the celebrated low unemployment rates of the 1980s and 1990s were higher, on average, than those from 1950 to 1970. Meanwhile, the world's average annual economic growth rate has slowed down, not accelerated, since the expansion of trade and investment in the 1970s and 1980s. Inequality between the advanced economies and developing economies has also widened. In 1960, according to the

World Bank, the richest 20 percent of the world's population earned about thirty times more than the poorest 20 percent. By 1993, that gap had grown to a factor of seventy (U.N. Development Program 1999). In almost all of the wealthiest countries and in the majority of developing countries, disparities of income and wealth have also grown.

However, confining the debate about global economic restructuring to trade treaties and migrating factories understates the breadth of the *political* roots of contemporary economic inequality, not only in declining barriers to trade but throughout all the institutions that govern the world economy. Neoliberals often maintain that globalization is an impersonal and unstoppable process; as British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher put it, "There Is No Alternative." But "TINA," as this rhetorical strategy is called, obscures the extensive and deliberate, if often internally divided, campaigns of political mobilization that neoliberals have organized from 1970 to the present to promote their vision for the world economy. The first of these political efforts were ideological and occurred within universities, think tanks, and the mass media. A second strand of mobilization occurred within the structures of international finance. From these bases, neoliberals had numerous successes in transforming government policy and corporate practice worldwide, culminating in attacks on workers' rights, antidiscrimination law, and welfare states and contributing to the wage declines and growing inequality that is often attributed to economic restructuring.

Before 1970, the custodians of nineteenth-century classic liberal laissez-faire were largely confined to academia in the United States, most notably the University of Chicago. Their first political successes came in that world of ideas, as neoliberals such as Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman gradually pushed the economics profession to the right and then extended their influence into law schools and business schools. In the 1970s, highly active and well-connected conservative think tanks emerged in the United States and Britain, gaining ever more influence within the mass media. Ultimately, these efforts contributed to the victories of President Ronald Reagan in the United States and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom, at which point neoliberal influence reached into two of the world's most powerful governments.

Meanwhile, neoliberals gained another set of political victories within the often-overlooked but vastly powerful realm of global finance. In 1973, the future Federal Reserve chairman, Paul Volcker, helped President Richard M. Nixon dismantle the system of regulated international currency markets, which were themselves a legacy of free-market critic John Maynard Keynes and the international Bretton Woods Agreement he helped broker in 1944. As the value of the world's monetary denominations began to "float" freely in relation to each other, huge new opportunities opened up for short-term speculation in what has been called the "global casino." Currency markets began to grow as traders bet huge sums on minute fluctuations in currency values. The amount of money that switched hands in these frenetic "hot money" markets exploded from $15 billion a day in 1973 to $1.3 trillion a day in 1993—a staggering sum equal to the value of an entire year's worth of global trade in goods and services (Baker, Epstein, and Pollin 1998). In the process, the interests of financial markets achieved considerable power over governments, as traders kept an eye out for local trends and policies the financial press deemed "unsound" or "inflationary," including wage growth and increases in social welfare spending. When conditions were not to their collective liking, they could sell off currencies with frightening speed. Such a "run" on the U.S. dollar in 1979 forced President Jimmy Carter to appoint Volcker as Federal Reserve chairman. Volcker's "monetarist" solution to inflation, inspired by Friedman, created the deepest recession since the 1930s, probably closing more U.S. factories in a few years than any single free-trade treaty, and dramatically undercutting the power of organized labor.

That recession also had enormous consequences for poverty the world over. The Fed's high interest rates precipitated the Latin American debt crisis and the inauguration of the structural adjustment programs (SAP) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Under these agreements, debtor nations across the world received rescheduled loans in exchange for giving up sovereignty to IMF or World Bank advisers and their neoliberal "bitter medicine." Countries undergoing structural adjustment would invariably cut wages, public payrolls, and social welfare, education, and health budgets. They would also focus on expanding exports; by the 1990s, the cumulative effect of SAPs across the world was to glut markets in raw commodities and some industrial goods, often undercutting the fragile national economies they were designed to save and increasing the debt burden on the developing world. Meanwhile, currency traders in the "hot" deregulated global money markets helped precipitate terrible financial crises in Mexico, Southeast Asia, Russia, Brazil, and Argentina during the late 1990s, wiping out in a few days many of the gains achieved by the expansion of manufacturing in those economies.

Events like these have bolstered arguments that globalization has rendered the nation-state obsolete. But it is clear that national governments have not retreated at all from the management of the world economy, as free-market doctrine itself would suggest. Instead, when neoliberal political leaders gained power, governments—and the U.S. federal government above all—played a giant role in *promoting* free-market global policies, most often in the interests of multinational corporations and financiers. Very often these policies required building broad electoral coalitions, and many of the world's most important political parties have made it an important part of their business to sell neoliberal orthodoxy. These developments are not confined to traditional parties of the right: The U.S. Democratic Party under Bill Clinton and the British Labour Party under Tony Blair both enthusiastically supported many neoliberal economic policies as part of their ostensibly centrist "third way" political efforts.

As neoliberal ideas increasingly dominated all sides of the official political debate in the United States since the mid-1970s, the U.S. federal government has made many contributions to free-market global restructuring—so many that the phrase "Washington consensus" was coined as a synonym for orthodox neoliberalism. The United States led the way in deregulating international financial markets in the 1970s and was among the first to abrogate so-called capital controls on foreign investment. The U.S. Treasury Department is a major force behind the policies of the IMF and the World Bank, and the United States is the single most important member of the WTO. Its support of lower trade barriers has been stalwart, from the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs (GATT) to NAFTA to the FTAA to the new "Doha round" (named for the WTO's fourth ministerial conference, held in Doha, Qatar) of multilateral trade talks on investment, agricultural goods, and services. But more important than tariff reductions have been the skewed ways such trade treaties seek to govern world trade. Minimal protections for labor and the environment coexist with heavy emphasis on protecting corporations' intellectual property rights and—as in NAFTA's Chapter 11—an insistence on corporations' right to sue governments over social and environmental regulations deemed injurious to their investments. Meanwhile, the U.S. government has also been among the world's most avid proponents of "privatization," the selling of government assets to corporations, often at bargain prices. It has spent untold billions of taxpayer dollars on such "corporate welfare" expenditures as subsidies, tax breaks, military contracts, investment protection insurance, export promotion, and bailouts. And its hands-off approach to urban and industrial policy allowed corporations to play local and state governments against each other as they scrambled to attract investment through ever more lavish inducements, thus depleting already-strapped public coffers and further straining municipal welfare and education budgets.

But the U.S. government's neoliberal global policymaking has not been confined to trade agreements and corporate welfare. It has also been instrumental in undercutting labor regulations, civil rights protections, and welfare programs worldwide, with measures that have probably contributed the most to overall stagnation in wage rates in advanced economies and to the growth in economic inequality. Indeed, although globalization and deindustrialization have become catchall explanations for wage declines in the manufacturing sector, they do not explain similar stagnation in all sectors of the economy, including the knowledge-based and export-related sectors and the less globally transportable service sector—the very kinds of jobs neoliberals believed would provide prosperity for the great majority of Americans.

The rollback of workers' rights across all sectors of the U.S. economy was probably the most significant political victory of corporate neoliberalism and the most important contributor to wage stagnation. It was the result of intense electoral organizing by such business groups as the National Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and their various very active political action committees (PACs). Ronald Reagan's firing of striking air traffic controllers in 1981 set the tone for federal policy that was heavily sympathetic to employers in their battles with labor unions. Under Reagan, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) became a willing vehicle for decertifying unions, and so-called right-to-work laws that undercut labor organizing spread throughout the states. Employers meanwhile pressed forward with their project of creating an ever more "flexible" workforce, not only using the threat or the practice of moving abroad but also investing much more heavily in nonunion factories than in union ones, establishing parallel production plants in different locations so that production could be sustained during strikes, celebrating CEOs who specialized in "downsizing" firms, and hiring increased numbers of temporary workers. Between 1970 and 1994, union membership rates in the United States fell by half, from 27 percent of all workers to 14 percent. The downward pressure on wages caused by deunionization was compounded by successful corporate opposition to hikes in the minimum wage, which fell by a third of its real value during Reagan's presidency and in the early 1990s bottomed out at a hair above what it could buy in 1948 (Levy 1999).

Corporate neoliberals have also targeted civil rights law and affirmative action, a crusade that allows them to combine their distaste for government intervention in society with the politically popular argument that African Americans and other people of color have received too much help from the federal government. During the 1980s and 1990s, Presidents Reagan and George H. W. Bush weakened the scope of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) by forcing plaintiffs in racial discrimination suits to prove biased intent on the part of employers. Such policies allowed racial discrimination in job markets to persist, sustaining the racial inequalities in the job market that overlap broader patterns of economic inequality. In addition, efforts were made to undercut the Community Reinvestment Act, the only federal effort to reverse a long history of racial discrimination by banks in housing credit.

The project to weaken the U.S. welfare state, finally, reflects one of the basic tenets of neoliberal philosophy. Volcker's high interest rates during the 1980s and early 1990s, along with Reagan's expensive corporate tax cut, his trillion-dollar military expansion, and the ballooning federal deficits that resulted, created a general sense that government was at the limit of its resources. This, in turn, provided an exploitable backdrop for attacks on welfare. In addition, the vocabulary of racial and gender conservatism—the basis for Reagan's "welfare queen" stereotype—was also indispensable in creating the impression that such relatively modest programs as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) were a threat to national well-being. As the actual value of welfare payments declined—by 40 percent during the 1980s alone—antiwelfare rhetoric grew, and in 1996, under President Bill Clinton's policy to "end welfare as we know it," poor people's entitlement to federal assistance was repealed. The saga of welfare reform overshadowed a whole array of cuts to the broader fabric of the welfare state, including unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, public housing, and health care.

These same trends of decreasing worker protection, declines in civil rights, and declines in welfare states have parallels in societies around the world—whether under the auspices of the IMF in the developing world, in the face of financial crises such as those in Latin America in 1995, 1998, and 2001, in Southeast Asia in 1997, and in eastern Europe in 1998, or under the stewardship of American-inspired neoliberal or "third-way" governments in wealthier societies such as Britain, Canada, Italy, Spain, Australia, and New Zealand. Deliberate, globalized political efforts to suppress wages and welfare programs have caused the principal pipelines that distribute the world's economic resources throughout society to silt up considerably, and the enormous pools of wealth and privilege at the very top of society have grown.

The realization that this kind of global restructuring is not only the result of technological change and the "invisible hand" of the market but also the product of political choices has inspired a growing movement opposed to neoliberal globalization in recent years. Margaret Thatcher's claim that "there is no alternative" to today's forms of economic restructuring implies that anyone who opposes such changes is either parochial (antiglobalization, and hence against all international connections) or foolhardy, resisting what amounts to a force of nature. However, the tenuous alliances of resistance that have developed across countries, among labor unions, nongovernmental organizations, environmentalists, civil rights activists, the women's movement, and advocates of the poor, actually represent an alternative form of globalization. In protests against structural adjustment throughout the developing world during the 1980s and 1990s; in the "battle in Seattle" in 1999 against the WTO; in the "summit-hopping" demonstrations in Cancun, Genoa, New York, Prague, Quebec City, and Washington, D.C., and at the World Social Forum in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil, coalitions of labor, environmental, and human rights activists have advocated a more equitable, more sustainable, and more democratic global restructuring. Political struggles, which cross oceans and boundaries, have always crucially determined the nature of global economic restructuring, and struggles between neoliberals and their emboldened opposition will no doubt do much to shape the next stage in world history.

Carl H. Nightingale

See also: Capitalism; Industrialization; Liberalism; New Right; Trade/Industrial Unions; World Bank

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"Gospel of Wealth," Andrew Carnegie

Described by historian Robert Bremner as "the most famous document in the history of American Philanthropy," Andrew Carnegie's article "Wealth" detailing his philosophy on philanthropy appeared in *North American Review* in 1889 (Bremner 1988, 100). Retitled by critics and more popularly known as "The Gospel of Wealth," this article contained musings and advice to peers on the "proper administration of wealth" (Carnegie 1889, 653).

During his lifetime (1835–1919), self-made industrialist Carnegie, like many of his Gilded Age contemporaries, accumulated many millions of dollars. In his later years, Carnegie contemplated how to dispose of his wealth before death. "Wealth" celebrated accumulated wealth, defending the growing distance between the rich and poor in American society and tying it to the benefits shared by all in a growing consumer society. A strong supporter of individualism, private property, laissez-faire economics, and American democracy, Carnegie did not seek to challenge the social order or government of his times; rather, he outlined the best way for the rich to support the maintenance of American society through the careful distribution of their wealth.

Carnegie believed there were three options for wealthy persons: Wealth could be passed on to family, handed out as bequests, or distributed through the active donation of money during one's lifetime. The first two options, he believed, would lead to great evils. Inheritance created a class of idle, spoiled children; bequests often led only to the establishment of memorials. The third, however, would allow for great men of business to apply their skills and knowledge to the disbursement of wealth for the betterment of society.

Carnegie encouraged the wealthy to live frugally, to provide only as necessary for their heirs, and to administer the remainder of their wealth as would the trustees of a charitable fund. Extolling the suitability of wealthy men for this job, Carnegie described "the man of wealth [as] thus becoming the mere agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer, doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves" (Carnegie 1889, 662). Carnegie encouraged careful charitable choices, helping those who were worthy.

His emphasis was on "help[ing] those who will help themselves" (Carnegie 1889, 663). He advocated funding projects that facilitated self-improvement, including the creation of parks, the support of art, and the building of public institutions—especially, by his own example, libraries.

Although Carnegie's contemporaries did not follow his suggestions, living lavishly and passing on a great deal of wealth to their heirs, "Wealth" has become an anthem for the Gilded Age. For his part, Carnegie did follow his own instructions, establishing major philanthropic institutions, including the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the Carnegie Corporation in the early 1900s and giving away some $350 million during his lifetime.

Laura Tuennerman-Kaplan

See also: Philanthropy; Social Darwinism; Wealth; Wealth, Distribution/Concentration

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The Grapes of Wrath, *John Steinbeck*

John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath,* published in 1939, chronicled the massive Dust Bowl migration to the West Coast during the Great Depression by telling the story of the Joads, an extended family of Oklahoma tenant farmers pushed off the land by a combination of drought and agricultural consolidation, who park all their belongings on a makeshift truck and head out to California in search of work and a new start. On one level, it is a powerful story of one family's personal struggle for survival amid devastating loss, hardship, and relentless disappointment as they meet with hostility and watch the promise of gainful employment disappear. On another, it tells the story of a generation forced to suffer the outcome of the horrific economic collapse that left one-fourth of America's labor force unemployed by 1933. In the novel, we see this generation questioning the justice of the capitalist system and the morality of the nation. Through characters like the ex-preacher Jim Casey and Rose of Sharon Joad, we see how the human spirit endures even in the face of hopelessness and the loss of faith in God and all that has held their lives together before.

Even as he personalized the migrant experience, Steinbeck used it to offer a structural critique and to warn of where mass desperation might lead. Those who, like the Joads, sought work in the promised land of California found themselves surrounded by thousands of others as desperate and hungry as they. These masses lived together in poverty and fear—and later in anger—in makeshift communities formed at the edges of cities and dubbed "Hoovervilles" in recognition of President Herbert Hoover's policies of neglect. The Joads make the abstraction of surplus labor come alive, as they join the abundant supply of people desperate to work and as they watch their wages continue to fall until a family could not earn enough to survive. They absorb mounting hatred and hostility, and they are sneeringly dubbed "Okies" by resentful and nervous Californians. And they witness the worst injustices of the capitalist system, which Steinbeck starkly portrays through the eyes of his characters: "A homeless, hungry man, driving the road with his wife beside him and his thin children in the back seat, could look at the fallow fields which might produce food but not profit, and that man would know how a fallow field is a sin and the unused land a crime against the thin children" (Steinbeck [1939] 2002, 319).

Such stark realism is tempered only by the glimpses of strength in the men and women who cling to one another and to hope in order

A family, one of many left homeless by the Great Depression, goes about their daily business outside the tent where they live. Photographer Horace Bristol was with John Steinbeck when he interviewed this family, among others, during research for his book* The Grapes of Wrath. *(Horace Bristol/Corbis)

to go on. Ma Joad and her daughter, Rose of Sharon, are two of the most memorable women characters in American literature. Ma Joad is willing to make any sacrifices to keep her family together, and Rose of Sharon's great act of generosity at the close of the novel indicates Steinbeck's continued belief that such people could never be defeated so long as they had their compassion and anger to keep them alive.

The heartbreaking truth of the novel, winner of the 1940 Pulitzer Prize and a major element in Steinbeck's receiving the 1962 Nobel Prize for Literature, shook the nation and led many to accuse Steinbeck of communist sympathies. Since publication, *The Grapes of Wrath* has sold over 14 million copies and has left an indelible, even if controversial, impression on the American consciousness.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Dust Bowl Migration; Economic Depression; Great Depression and New Deal; Poor Whites; Rural Poverty

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H

Hagood, Margaret

See Mothers of the South

Harrington, Michael

See Catholic Worker Movement; *The Other America;* Socialist Party; War on Poverty

Harvest of Shame, *Edward R. Murrow*

Noted journalist Edward R. Murrow created *Harvest of Shame*, a documentary chronicling the plight of migrant farmworkers, for CBS television in 1960. Originally broadcast on Thanksgiving Day, the hour-long film succeeded in shocking middle-class Americans about the living and working conditions of those who actually produced the nation's food supply. The film follows families on their annual treks between Florida and New York and up the West Coast and presents interviews with migrant workers and representatives of advocacy groups, government agencies, and grower organizations. It also captures the hardships faced by migrant workers as they deal with miserable shelter, lack of schooling for their children, the disruptions of constant travel, and pitifully low wages. Using documentary techniques to underscore the shame of such conditions amid great bounty, the film advocates for better regulation of living and working conditions. *Harvest of Shame* is credited with using an appeal to common sense, decency, and the American conscience to create pressure for such reforms as the congressional repeal of the Bracero Program—the U.S.-Mexican agreement that brought Mexican workers to fill the demand for cheap labor on American farms—in 1964. Nevertheless, migrant labor conditions remain unevenly regulated at best. Considered pathbreaking as a documentary, *Harvest of Shame* was named number eleven in New York University's School of Journalism list of the 100 most influential pieces of journalism of the twentieth century.

Sarah Case

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Bracero Program; Dust Bowl Migration; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Picturing Poverty (I); Picturing Poverty (II); Rural Poverty

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Head Start

See Child-Saving; Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; War on Poverty

Health Policy

Poverty is a powerful predictor of poor health, early mortality, and disability. In the United States, the poor are disproportionately women and children and from communities of color. Researchers have documented the relationship between poverty and many health problems, including infant mortality, cardiovascular and heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and AIDS. In 1990, the probability of Black inner-city male adolescents surviving to age forty-five was lower than the probability that white adolescents nationwide would survive to age sixty-five (Geronimus 2000, 1). In 1990, the infant mortality rates for African Americans (17.9 per 1,000), Native Americans (10.7 per 1,000), and Puerto Ricans (10.2 per 1,000) far exceeded those for whites (7.4 per 1,000) (Wingard 1997, 41). Although researchers disagree about why poverty and poor health are correlated, the correlation is probably a combined result of material hardship, inequality, and inadequate health care. Public policies affecting health care access and delivery can attenuate the relationship between poverty and poor health.

Health policy includes government measures affecting individual and public health as well as the organization, financing, and regulation of health care services. The United States, the only major Western industrialized country without national health insurance, has a mixed private-public health system dominated by private services and financing. Government programs to increase access to health care developed primarily in the twentieth century. In a system governed by the principle that health care is a commodity rather than a citizenship right, economically disadvantaged groups face limited access to preventive health care and medical services *and* to resources that promote health (such as good jobs, safe housing, and healthful nutrition). In the late twentieth century, health care was the largest U.S. industry, accounting for one-seventh of the gross domestic product. This industry included about 6,000 hospitals, 1,200 insurance companies, and over 600,000 physicians (Byrd and Clayton 2000,16). These powerful interests wield vast power to shape health policy, although activists from labor, civil rights, women's, welfare rights, homeless, disability rights, and AIDS movements have effected major health care reforms benefiting the poor.

Explicit federal health policy was limited before the Civil War, but de facto policies resulted from the economic, social, and military activities of all levels of government. Beginning at the time of early European settlement, the health of indigenous peoples, slaves, women, children, workers, and racial-ethnic and sexual minorities was sharply affected by economic exploitation, political disenfranchisement, and relative exclusion from the mainstream health system. Most people, except the wealthy, relied on families, healers, and midwives for health care before the nineteenth century. Until the late nineteenth century, hospitals served more as social welfare institutions than as medical ones, and they were widely regarded as places of last resort. The first public hospital was established in 1798, when the Merchant Marine Health Services Act mandated care for sick and disabled seamen.

An era of intensified government participation in health policy began in the mid-nineteenth century. State governments established requirements for medical licenses and for licensing medical schools; the federal government regulated patent medicines. The medical infrastructure grew during the Civil War to handle civilian and military casualties. After the war, health care devolved back to states and localities, with two exceptions: the network of Freedmen's Bureau clinics and hospitals that provided care to ex-slaves until they were closed in 1872 and a medical division in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) that, for eighteen years, provided minimal health care for Native Americans. Previous Native American experiences with nonindigenous health care had been through missionaries and the army.

As the health care system expanded in both size and complexity, physicians were firmly at the helm. Following the founding of the American Medical Association (AMA) in 1847, the medical profession was transformed to the high-status, powerful, affluent group it is today (Starr 1982). Modern private facilities and medical advances transformed public attitudes about hospitals, ushering in an era in which hospitals became more numerous and powerful. The Flexner Report (1910) led to an upgrading of medical education by reducing the number of medical schools and graduates, both outcomes endorsed by the AMA. Health care was largely a fee-for-service enterprise, and many low-income people had limited access to medicine's improved services except through public health facilities. Health care was highly segregated by race. In 1910, African American physicians represented 2 percent of the profession (Byrd and Clayton 2000, 384), but Black health professionals and patients, like other people of color, faced segregation and discrimination in the health care system.

The federal government's more active involvement in health policy was in part a response to the mobilization of social reformers, especially progressive women. They organized for improvements in public health, regulation of factory and other working conditions, improved sanitation in urban slums, and protections for consumers. In 1899, congressional legislation led to the hiring of physicians and personnel for the growing public health system. In 1912, the U.S. Public Health Service was formed, replacing the Marine Hospital Service. New scientific knowledge about the sources of infectious disease led to a new emphasis in public health on personal hygiene and medicine rather than social and environmental reform. Congress passed exclusionary immigration laws with "medical excludability" provisions. Although the development of public health services increased access to medical care for low-income people, support for public health was generated by fears of contagious disease, anti-immigrant sentiment, and racism.

Early-twentieth-century labor and other progressive activists constituted a powerful political force that organized to change the appalling working and living conditions of the poor. Organized labor won important victories, but few men of color or women benefited because unions neglected them and the jobs they held. Maternalist activists secured an important victory in the aftermath of women winning the vote when Congress passed the Maternity and Infancy Act of 1921 (the Sheppard-Towner Act). This bill established a grant-in-aid program to subsidize health services for mothers and their children. The program was terminated less than a decade later, mainly due to AMA opposition. Activists such as Margaret Sanger fought for legalization of family-planning services, especially for poor women, a campaign that would take decades to be successful.

In 1921, Congress passed the Snyder Act reauthorizing the BIA to provide medical services. The BIA retained this role until 1954, when the Indian Health Service (IHS) was created as a division of the Public Health Service. Many Native organizations criticized BIA health services for their inadequacy, insensitivity, and eugenic policies.

The role of the federal government in funding and providing medical care developed further in the context of World War I, when Congress provided compensation to disabled military veterans. In 1921, the U.S. Veterans Bureau was created, an agency that today, as the Veterans Administration (VA), operates a vast network of hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and special programs to serve eligible veterans.

The AMA became a staunch opponent of government involvement in medical provision and joined the American Hospital Association (AHA) in the 1920s to oppose such measures as national health insurance. Fearing that inclusion of national health insurance would mean defeat of the Social Security Act of 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declined to include it in the legislation. The Social Security Act had two health-related titles: Title V established grants to states for maternal and child health care, and Title VI allocated funds to state and local public health programs. The federal government supported the growth of the health care infrastructure with resources for public hospitals and clinics and for the training of health care personnel and with growing support for biomedical research. The National Institutes of Health was created in 1930.

Private, voluntary health insurance developed as an alternative to national health insurance. During the Depression, the "Blues" were established when revenues for health were scarce. Hospitals slowly began to offer prepayment plans (Blue Cross) beginning in 1929. State medical societies followed suit with insurance plans (Blue Shield) to pay for physician services in the late 1930s. Most poor families could not afford these plans and were reliant on Depression-era relief programs that began to provide more assistance for medical care.

Health insurance became more widely available after World War II when unions used collective bargaining to win employer-provided health insurance as a benefit for members and their dependents. By late 1954, 12 million workers and 17 million family members had health insurance as a result of collective bargaining (Starr 1982, 313). However, before the victories of the civil rights and women's movements, women of all races and men of color generally had limited access to jobs that offered health insurance benefits. Tying health insurance to employment also disadvantaged the elderly who were not employed.

In 1960, many poor people lacked access to primary and preventive health care services, especially the poor of color, the rural poor, and poor women, children, and elderly persons. Low-cost services were available mainly from public hospitals, located primarily in cities; from local health departments; from some private practitioners, especially rural or minority practitioners, who provided free or low-cost care to the indigent; and from federal programs, such as the Indian Health Service, that served specific populations. Because the IHS served only those enrolled in federally recognized tribes, many Native Americans were ineligible for these services. In 1960, Congress passed the Kerr-Mills Act, a voluntary program of medical assistance for the medically indigent elderly. Only about half the states participated in the program.

Certain veterans also received medical services. Veterans with extensive service-related disabilities are automatically eligible for VA health services. Other veterans can receive VA services if they are enrolled with the VA. Eligibility for enrollment is based on criteria determined by Congress (extent of disability, recipient of a Purple Heart, former prisoner of war, medical indigence, and the like) and the level of service allowed by congressional appropriations. Some veterans, especially veterans of the wars in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, struggled for coverage for medical conditions that the VA has refused to recognize as service-related, especially those related to exposure to toxic substances. Spouses and dependents of former military personnel who died or who became 100 percent disabled due to service-related injuries have, since the early 1970s, received reimbursement for many medical expenses through health coverage provided by the VA.

In the 1960s, a new generation of health activists from the civil rights, women's, and antipoverty movements demanded more from the government. Their activism paid off with President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of a War on Poverty, inaugurating the Great Society programs that greatly expanded access to health care. Most significant were two Great Society programs passed in 1965: Medicare and Medicaid.

Medicare is a social insurance program for those sixty-five or older who are eligible for Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits or who are permanently disabled. Eligibility is based on having forty required quarters of covered employment, a prerequisite that was phased in yearly increments beginning in 1965. Coverage is also extended to those who have been totally disabled for a period of two years and who have become eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance. Medicare is financed by payroll taxes paid by both employers and employees.

Medicare has uniform national standards for eligibility and benefits and is financed and administered by the federal government. The program has two parts: Part A reimburses hospital costs and selected other costs and is financed through payroll taxes. Part B reimburses fees paid to physicians and is financed by premiums and general tax revenues. Medicare pays for hospital bills, physician services, outpatient hospital care, and some home and ambulatory care and skilled nursing facility costs. It does not pay for prescription drugs, long-term care, or vision or dental services. Beneficiaries pay a deductible for services and coinsurance for physician services. Medicare is not a means-tested program. Program goals include increasing the access of the elderly to medical care and protecting the elderly from extensive medical debt. It has been very successful in achieving these ends. A 1963 study showed that half the elderly had no health insurance (Rowland 1993, 15). Almost all the elderly now have Medicare coverage, and Medicaid supplements the program for those elderly whose incomes are below the poverty line. However, those elderly who have not worked enough paid quarters in the Social Security system or who have not been married to such workers remain ineligible for Medicare. This group is disproportionately made up of women and people of color who have either not been employed in covered occupations, not worked enough quarters, or lost eligibility because of divorce or who are married to someone over sixty-five but are not yet themselves age sixty-five. If they are not eligible for Medicaid, they will fall through the cracks of the unraveling medical safety net.

Medicaid is a means-tested program financed by both federal and state governments on a matching basis. Medicaid is administered by the states, which set eligibility and coverage criteria. Because states determine eligibility and other rules and benefits, there is wide variation in benefits and rules across states. Medicaid is the major source of public assistance for health care services for low-income families and for long-term care services for the elderly and the disabled. It was intended to create expanded health care access for recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and other persons who met eligibility criteria. However, many physicians do not participate in the program because reimbursement rates are often low, lower than for Medicare. This creates hardships for recipients, particularly in rural areas where there are few physicians. But the program has greatly increased access to health care for the poor. In 1964, the poor averaged 3.8 physician visits per year, compared to 4.7 for other families; similarly, the poor averaged 179 hospitalizations per 1,000, compared to the nonpoor who averaged 202 hospitalizations (Rowland 1993, 110). By 1978, the differences between the poor and nonpoor in utilization of health services had narrowed considerably (Rowland 1993, 110). Despite its success, the program is far less popular with the public and politicians than is Medicare.

Congress passed at least seventy-five other health-related bills during the 1960s and 1970s, many designed to improve both access to and the quality of health care for the poor and for the nation as a whole. Some legislation targeted the health needs of "medically underserved" groups (for example, migrant workers, schoolchildren, the mentally ill, and the rural poor). Others sought to improve health through federal regulation of the environment, pollution, drinking water, tobacco products, and occupational health and safety. One of the earliest and most successful federal health initiatives of this period was the national immunization system, created in the early 1960s, that has dramatically decreased vulnerability of children and adults to nine vaccine-preventable diseases. Yet a persistent gap in immunization levels exists: Children and adults who live in areas of concentrated poverty or who are homeless, immigrants, or families of migrant workers are significantly less likely to be fully immunized.

Congressional support for family planning in 1970 and legalization of abortion in 1973 followed feminist activism for reproductive choice, and both have led to improved maternal health outcomes. Funds for health manpower training and affirmative action policies helped diversify the health professions by race, ethnicity, and gender. Never before or since has health policy done so much to expand access to health care and address social and environmental health risks.

Credit for this era of health reform belongs to activists from the civil rights, welfare rights, women's, consumer health, and environmental movements and the responsiveness of the Democratic Party. Health activism went beyond access issues to advocate and model change in health service delivery. Grassroots health programs—free clinics, community clinics, and women's clinics—were founded by and secured some of their revenues from federal social programs. Health care advocacy also led to changes in or the defense of hard-won policies. Feminists defended women's right to abortion. Communities of color and some women's health advocates sought protection of poor women of color from sterilization abuse and from medical experimentation without informed consent. Groups demanded and won community-controlled health clinics in poor communities. Feminists made visible the issue of violence against women and secured changes in the legal and health care systems for survivors of rape, domestic violence, and sexual assault. An important policy setback in 1976 was passage of the Hyde Amendment, prohibiting the use of federal Medicaid funds for abortion. Although some states use the state portion of Medicaid to pay for abortion, poor women's reproductive rights were severely curtailed by this and other legislation sought by the powerful antichoice movement.

In the 1980s, rising health costs and the fiscal and social conservatism of the administrations of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush brought a halt to the era of progressive health policy. Since 1980, health policy has been preoccupied with containing costs and with reducing the federal commitment to social programs. Public-sector health programs have had their budgets slashed. State revenues for health care diminished as the combined effects of conservative-driven "taxpayer revolts," devolution policies, and escalating costs for Medicaid and Medicare strained state budgets. Policies of the 1980s and 1990s have led to "corporatization" of medicine and health policy (Starr 1982; Navarro 1994). The Reagan administration's 1981 and 1982 budgets reduced expenditures for social programs (including Medicaid and Medicare) dramatically; these expenditures fell from 11.2 percent to 10.4 percent of the gross national product (GNP) between 1981 and 1985. Total grants to state and local governments (which included funding for health care) declined from 1.6 to 1.2 percent of the GNP (Navarro 1994, 29). These reductions were part of a larger trend in policy that shifted federal expenditure away from social programs to increased military spending and led to an unprecedented redistribution of wealth upward, economic polarization, and reduced economic security for low- and moderate-income people.

Despite these cutbacks, expenditures for health care, including Medicaid and Medicare, have soared since the 1980s. Intensified competition, "managed care," and reductions and changes in federal financing of Medicaid and Medicare emerged as the policy solutions to a health care "crisis" that was defined in terms of runaway costs and excessive government involvement. In addition to outright cuts in Medicaid and Medicare, other policy changes included switching from an actual cost-based reimbursement policy to a prospective payment system (PPS), which specifies predetermined rates for diagnosis categories for Medicare hospital reimbursements. Many categorical health and social programs were consolidated into state block grants, with a 25 percent reduction in funds. Medicare deductibles were increased, and a host of administrative and financing rule changes in both Medicare and Medicaid strained the ability of health care providers, states, and localities to sustain the health care safety net for the growing populations of the poor, the uninsured, and the elderly.

Nevertheless, the costs of both private and public insurance programs continued to skyrocket. The reasons are complex. Growing rates of poverty and unemployment, a reduction in the number of families covered by private health insurance, the overall aging of the population, and general population growth have multiplied the numbers who are eligible for publicly subsidized coverage. Expensive medical technologies, medical litigation, the consequences of heightened health care competition, and costly diseases, such as AIDS, were among the additional factors. Health insurance companies offset rising costs with higher health care premiums. Some employers shifted to lower-cost (and lower-benefit) health plans, stopped offering insurance, and hired more part-time or contingent workers, who rarely receive health benefits. Between 1980 and 1992, there was a 22 percent increase in the number of uninsured and a 42 percent increase in the amount Americans paid for out-of-pocket medical costs (Navarro 1994, 198). Low-income families were the hardest hit by these changes, but higher health premiums and loss of coverage have affected many other families.

In the mid-1980s, "managed care" began to replace fee-for-service health delivery, a trend encouraged by government policies. Managed care encompasses preferred provider organizations (PPOs), health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and other arrangements. PPOs accept discounted payment from insurers in return for guaranteed revenues, and consumers retain some choice in providers. HMOs require members to receive care from a select group of providers and hospitals in their network. Managed care has transformed many health providers into employees or contractors, constraining professional autonomy and imposing caps on their earnings. By 1998, 85 percent of employees with employer-provided health coverage and more than half of Medicaid beneficiaries were enrolled in managed care plans (Lewin and Altman 2000, 16, 29).

Health care advocacy took on new urgency as health care inequities intensified and access shrank for many. A 1985 report by the federal Task Force on Black and Minority Health exposed glaring health inequities between people of color and whites. The Pepper Commission Report (1988) documented the problem of long-term care for the elderly and disabled. A 1990 General Accounting Office report revealed systematic gender inequities in medical research and health care. AIDS activists were vocal about the inadequacy of health services and health coverage for people with AIDS, disproportionately the poor and members of racial or ethnic minorities. In public opinion polls and in commissioned studies, many health providers and consumers expressed dissatisfaction with managed care.

Upon election to the presidency in 1992, Democrat Bill Clinton promised that health care reform would be a top priority. Advocates for national health insurance and a single-payer health plan hoped the time had come for universal health coverage. But the powerful health insurance, business, AMA, and AHA lobbies opposed both of these ideas, advocating instead managed care solutions. After heated debate, Congress failed to pass health care reform. There were limited policy reforms. The 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act provides job protection for unpaid leave to care for family members, and the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act helps employees keep group health insurance coverage when they change jobs, become self-employed, or are temporarily unemployed. Neither of these bills was much help for the poor, who can rarely afford to take unpaid leave and who seldom have employer-provided insurance.

Congressional passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996 profoundly affected both health care access and health in poor families. Legal immigrants to the United States after 1996 are now ineligible for most forms of public assistance except for emergency medical services. Medicaid, formerly available to welfare recipients, was decoupled from the new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, a change supposed to promote coverage for poor families with employed breadwinners. However, the proportion of low-income families insured by Medicaid fell almost 25 percent between 1995 and 2000 (Broaddus et al. 2002). Slight increases in the household incomes of many working families left them ineligible for Medicaid even when they had no employer-provided health coverage. In addition, new federal waivers to the Medicaid program (1115 and 1915b) contributed to falling Medicaid enrollment, since states were permitted to put aside certain Medicaid requirements if doing so generated cost savings and were budget neutral or made it easier to implement mandatory managed care for certain categories of individuals. Because states set their own standards for Medicaid eligibility, coverage can vary significantly from state to state. In addition, whether or not states reach out aggressively to eligible populations and whether or not they inform eligible former welfare recipients that they may continue to receive Medicaid both affect the degree to which poor people receive medical benefits in each state. As a result, the number of poor covered by Medicaid in the mid-1990s ranged widely, from a high of 60 percent in Washington, D.C., to a low of 29 percent in Nevada.

Welfare-to-work policies have created hardships for welfare-eligible families in which a breadwinner or child suffers from a disability. A recent study found that of the single-mother population receiving TANF in 1997, 46 percent included either a mother or child with a disability (Lee, Sills, and Oh 2002, 5). In addition to the problems these families face from restrictive welfare-to-work policies, many also lost Supplemental Security Income (SSI) when stricter definitions of disability were introduced. The income from SSI had been part of the safety net for the poor since the mid-1970s, but the new regulations cut millions of disabled children, adults with substance abuse problems, and legal immigrants from the program. This combination of policies has left many families without the resources they need to care for children with disabilities and has forced many disabled adults to try to find and keep jobs despite their disabilities.

In 1997, Congress passed the State Child Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP), a program that increases health coverage for low-income children in households with incomes just above the poverty line. Since the inception of the program, the percentage of poor children with health coverage has risen modestly. On the other hand, poor adults are now less likely to receive health coverage, a problem that has only worsened with the economic woes of 2001–2002. In 2000, only 20 percent of low-income families received Medicaid (Broaddus et al. 2002). Since the mid-1990s, the growing number of uninsured and underinsured Americans must rely on a weaker health safety net. A recent study issued by the Institute of Medicine concludes that the nation's health safety net has been deeply compromised by growth in the numbers of uninsured individuals, the impact of mandated Medicaid managed care, and the decline in federal and other funds available to support public health and subsidized health programs (Lewin and Altman 2000, 8).

Sandra Morgen

See also: Birth Control; Disability Policy; Epidemic Disease; Maternalist Policy; Mental Health Policy; Reproductive Rights; Social Security; Supplemental Security Income; Welfare Capitalism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity refers to the ideological system that confers legitimacy exclusively upon kinship networks that conform to the marital heterosexual nuclear family model.

In contemporary American public policy, the citizen is often treated by the government as a lone individual. The right to vote, for example, is conferred upon the individual adult, while professional licenses are granted to individuals who possess the appropriate credentials. But in welfare policy, the government usually considers the recipient as a member of a "household" or a "caregiver/dependent" relationship. Under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) law, the adult applicant must show not only that she or he is needy but that she or he is the custodial parent of a dependent child and that the sum total of the household's income and assets do not exceed subsistence levels. Welfare policy, however, does not just situate the needy individual in a household; it also attempts to transform that household into the ideal marital heterosexual family. Single mothers in the TANF program cannot receive benefits unless they assist the government in identifying the biological fathers of their dependent children and in obtaining support payments from them. The men in question often lack the economic resources needed to lift their children's households above the poverty line. The women themselves do not have any choice in the matter, and the government's demand for their cooperation can be especially problematic when the TANF recipient is fleeing domestic abuse. Welfare policy experts from across the political spectrum nevertheless champion the child support system on ideological grounds, since it makes the single mother's kinship network conform more closely to the traditional heterosexual model.

In 2002, in an even more blatant example of heteronormativity, President George W. Bush's administration proposed a new initiative in the TANF program, namely, the promotion of marriage as a solution to poverty. Indeed, several states were already using TANF funds and state welfare monies to award cash bonuses to welfare recipients when they get married, to support marriage preparation classes for the poor, and to provide resources to religious leaders coordinating statewide promotion of marriage campaigns. Again, the economic rationale fails to account for this policy development. Many married heterosexual couples fall below the poverty line, while many single-father-headed households are relatively well-off. Furthermore, the academic literature suggests that a child's well-being does not depend on the marital status or sexual orientation of his or her parent. In the end, the support for the marriage promotion welfare initiative is grounded in the ideological belief that children should be born and reared only in the context of a family headed by a heterosexual married couple.

The term "heteronormativity" was coined by "queer theorist" Michael Warner. Drawing inspiration from radical lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender activism, Warner argued that genuine social change requires much more than the mere tolerance of sexual minorities and the passage of antidiscrimination legislation. It necessitates, more fundamentally, a radical transformation of the dominant culture that celebrates reproductive marital heterosexual relationships. For Warner, heterosexuality—like all sexualities—is socially constructed, but where heteronormativity is hegemonic, heterosexual culture misrecognizes marital heterosexuality not only as "natural" but as essential to the perpetuation of any possible social order. The queer critique of heteronormativity, then, is profoundly anti-assimilatory. In its view, lesbians and gays should not seek to become "just like" heterosexuals, since heterosexual culture is deeply problematic. Queer critique goes beyond the struggle for equality for lesbians and gays by challenging the infinite number of ways in which biological reproduction, the family, gender roles, child rearing, social relationships, and public policies are conceptualized as if there were no alternative to the marital heterosexual nuclear family (Warner 1993).

Heteronormative critique takes in a much broader range of subjects than the analysis of sexism and homophobia. The latter terms refer exclusively to the discriminatory treatment of discrete classes of individuals: women and lesbians and gays. The concept of heteronormativity refers to the entire social, cultural, and political system that privileges marital heterosexuality above all other forms of intimate relationships. The term "heteronormativity" can be used, for example, to address the sociocultural and political tactics used to discipline heterosexuals themselves: It can identify the symbolic and material rewards that are given to heterosexual men and women who marry and restrict their sexual expression and reproduction to the marital context. The ambitious scope of the term is reminiscent of Monique Wittig's notion of the "straight mind" (Wittig 1992) and Adrienne Rich's "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich 1993). Social policy literature tends to focus exclusively on political and legal analyses. Heteronormativity theory usefully directs our attention to the fact that social change must entail broad-ranging and deep-seated cultural transformation.

There are, nevertheless, several limitations to this critical discourse. First, heteronormativity theory, as it was originally developed in the lesbian, gay, and bisexual studies literature, constructs society according to one all-encompassing division: heterosexuals versus homosexuals. It assumes that heterosexuals are a basically homogeneous group that enjoys substantial material and status advantages over homosexuals. In its original form, then, the theory was not well positioned to understand the ways in which single mothers on welfare have been demonized not in spite of their heterosexuality but precisely because of their reproductive heterosexuality. Although heteronormative critique implicitly sheds light on the celebration of marital heterosexuality over all other kinship networks, including single parenting, the extension of the theory to the discriminatory treatment of nonconforming heterosexuals was stalled at first by many queer theorists' insistence on the overwhelming power of heterosexual privilege (Cohen 1997). Queer theorists appear to have learned from their critics on this point, and they are now taking into account the exclusion of nonconforming heterosexuals—namely, the nonmarried—from heterosexual privilege (Warner 1999).

On a more abstract level, heteronormativity theory suggests that the sphere of dominant ideas about the primacy of marital heterosexuality and the sphere of values—"normativity"—are one and the same. This construction situates all deviants and rebels "outside of society," as it were. Since all rebellion takes place outside *the* corrupt value system, all rebellious acts are equally valid. A more complex approach to ideology and power, such as Gramscian hegemony theory, is a useful antidote here insofar as it directs our attention to the fact that every subject—even the most excluded—is always working within some sort of value system and is always negotiating within various networks of power.

Finally, heteronormativity theory conflates the concepts of legitimization and normalization. Michel Foucault uses the latter term to refer specifically to the way modern institutions, such as schools, the medical profession, government agencies, and so on, use statistical methods to measure trends in the population and to compare each individual to the population average, or "norm." Because the application of demography and causal social theory models—such as the widely rejected notion that marriage causes an increase in household income, so that we ought to promote marriage to solve poverty—remain quite influential in welfare policy debates, it is important that we retain this Foucauldian insight.

Anna Marie Smith

See also: Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Homophobia; Sexism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Highlander

Established in eastern Tennessee in 1932, Highlander has been the site and source of adult education programs that have trained thousands of rural and industrial grassroots leaders seeking to create a new social, economic, and political order that simultaneously enriches the indigenous culture of Appalachia and the South. Through residential workshops, extension projects, and community-based initiatives, the Highlander staff has acted on the belief that poor and working-class adults can draw upon their collective experiences to define their concerns and determine for themselves the most effective course of action to address them. Using this approach, the school helped unionize southern workers during the 1930s and 1940s. It anticipated and reacted to the dynamics of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. It cultivated an Appalachian citizens' network connected to similar groups in the Deep South and other parts of the world in the 1970s and 1980s. Its most recent programs have grappled with intersecting economic and environmental crises while promoting points of unity among culturally diverse groups. Highlander's sustained record of activism testifies to its ability to employ its core pedagogy to help others resist exploitation and to empower communities so that they might achieve economic justice.

During its first thirty years, what was originally known as the Highlander Folk School, located near Monteagle, Tennessee, worked through the organized labor and civil rights movements to address the systemic roots of poverty and inequality in the South. The school allied itself with the burgeoning labor movement, aiding striking coal miners, woodcutters, textile mill hands, and government relief workers. In the late 1930s, Highlander joined the southern organizing drive of what would become the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). It also directed large-scale labor education programs in eleven southern states and developed a residential program that sought to support a broad-based, racially integrated, and politically active southern labor movement. Frustrated by the declining militancy of the CIO after World War II and by the labor movement's inability to forge a sustained farmer-labor coalition, staff members broadened their focus by launching a series of interracial workshops on desegregation almost a year before the U.S. Supreme Court's historic ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]). The school thereafter became an important educational center of the civil rights movement, and its Citizenship School program, initiated on the South Carolina Sea Islands, helped thousands of Black southerners gain not only the literacy skills needed to register to vote but also the capacity to mobilize new voters in support of political and economic reform. These programs made Highlander the target of a barrage of attacks by antiunionists and segregationists that eventually resulted in the revocation of the folk school's charter by the state of Tennessee in 1961.

Despite the demise of the folk school, Highlander was able to secure a charter for the Highlander Research and Education Center in 1961 and had already begun operations in Knoxville, Tennessee, advocating the development of a multiracial poor people's coalition and giving greater attention to the complex troubles facing the poor and powerless in Appalachia. Moving the center to its present location near New Market, Tennessee, in 1972, the staff pursued the goal of democratizing economic and political power in Appalachia, though without the frames of reference that had been offered by the more defined labor and civil rights movements. Increasingly, the center's workshops, participatory research projects, and long-term leadership development efforts led to the realization that such issues as land ownership, taxes, toxic substances, health care, and economic dislocation crossed regional as well as national lines. In response, Highlander sought to establish links to local struggles around the world. Though timely, informative, and often effective, such work confronted new dilemmas as grassroots organizations received diminishing support, dissent became more diffused, and the economies of both Appalachia and the South declined.

Highlander has persisted nonetheless, building its current programs upon its seventy-year history and more consciously providing a space for extending connections across race and nation, class and gender, languages, and sexual orientations. Its staff continues to work with groups from African American, Latino, and white communities experiencing economic displacement, demonstrating how the knowledge and skills gained during workshop experiences can be translated into action back home. By not attaching itself to a single issue, organization, or movement and by recognizing and learning from the shortcomings of earlier reform efforts that left the basic problems facing the poor largely untouched, Highlander has been able to remain true to its mission of using education for fundamental change.

John M. Glen

See also: African Americans; Appalachia; Civil Rights Movement; Community Organizing; Poor Whites; Racial Segregation; Rural Poverty; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Home Health Care Work

Home health care is the often low- or unpaid labor involved in attending to the needs of sick, disabled, and elderly people. Historically provided by women as part of family or community responsibilities, throughout the post–World War II decades, the work of caregiving has increasingly been contracted out to a low-paid, disproportionately female health care workforce. Considered a "labor of love" when provided by a family member, this kind of work is demanding, requires a variety of skills, and can be emotionally draining. Socially and economically undervalued though it is, caregiving work remains essential to the well-being of individuals, families, and society writ large.

Caring for sick and disabled kin dominated women's lives throughout the nineteenth century. Beginning as early as girlhood and extending into middle and old age, caregiving simultaneously exacted a terrible toll and conferred significant benefits. A constellation of forces has transformed the content and cultural meaning of care.

Although many men participated in caregiving during the nineteenth century, the primary responsibility for family and community nursing rested with women. Few formal services relieved their obligations. Most families were reluctant to entrust ill relatives to the few hospitals that existed. Without telephones and automobiles, summoning physicians involved considerable time and effort, even if the family could afford the fees physicians charged. Skepticism about physicians further deterred many people from relying on them.

Nineteenth-century caregiving work had three recognized and socially valued components: instrumental, spiritual, and emotional. Only later would their importance be diminished, as health care came to be increasingly medicalized and professionalized. Instrumental caregiving services in the nineteenth century included not just cooking, cleaning, and assisting sick people with feeding and mobility but also delivering skilled medical care. Women dispensed herbal remedies, dressed wounds, bound broken bones, sewed severed fingers, cleaned bedsores, and removed bullets. At the time, knowledge acquired through practical education was considered to be as important as that gleaned in the laboratory and taught in schools. Consequently, some women could translate caregiving skills into paid employment as nurses and midwives.

Struggling to establish themselves as professionals, nineteenth-century doctors denigrated women's healing knowledge and tried to restrict the information available to the public. But many doctors were well aware of their own educational deficiencies. A few later acknowledged how much they had learned from older women caregivers.

Because sickness and death were religious as well as medical events, caregiving had an important spiritual dimension. Enslaved healers in the antebellum South sought to address both the metaphysical and the natural causes of disease. The healers also sought to connect patients to their ancestors. Although fewer whites associated healing with spirituality, white women routinely reported reading the Bible to care recipients, praying with them, and urging them to accept death openly and peacefully.

Nineteenth-century medicine also dignified the emotional component of care. Most doctors agreed that attention, sympathy, and reassurance facilitated healing. In addition, prevailing medical beliefs encouraged doctors to value personal relationships as a source of knowledge.

The forces that altered caregiving between 1890 and 1940 included the mass production of goods and services for the home, the increase in the rate of women's participation in the labor force, the rise of the formal health care system, and the growth of physicians' authority. Such changes affected different groups of caregivers in different ways. Caregiving remained grueling for women who could not afford the new domestic technologies. The job of mediating between family members and health care services also was especially difficult for low-income women. Because few hospitals and clinics were located in poor neighborhoods, women had to travel long distances to take patients to the doctor or to visit them in the hospital. Some caregivers had no access to relevant services. And some had to fend off the medical assistance that charity workers, public health nurses, and government officials sought to impose.

The new scientific optimism undermined the cultural value of these three major components of caregiving. Caregivers' knowledge was increasingly denigrated as superstition, acceptance of God's will was disparaged as resignation, and solicitude was condemned as indulgence. This shift in cultural values had the most serious consequences for the least privileged women. Although the increased confidence in medical science created a pretext for physicians to lavish attention on the education of all mothers, poor women, immigrant women, and women of color were especially likely to be perceived as needing instruction. Such women also were considered especially likely to be discouraged and resigned and to be swayed by excessive emotion and thus to indulge sick and disabled family members. White middle-class women, as charity workers, public health nurses, and occasionally government officials, helped construct the portrait of poor women, immigrant women, and women of color as superstitious, fatalistic, and irrational. Such a depiction not only skewed the services provided to those groups but also contributed to the denigration of an activity with which all women were associated.

Caregiving has continued to undergo profound transformation since 1940. As the rate of women's participation in the labor force has soared, women have increasingly faced the conflict between jobs in the paid labor force and care. The aging of the population has meant that growing numbers of women must provide elder care.

The growth of health care financing programs after World War II led to a dramatic upsurge in the use of institutions. But the movement between home and medical facilities has not been unidirectional. The population of the nation's mental hospitals plunged between 1955 and 1975. Since the mid-1970s, states have attempted to curb Medicaid expenditures by keeping people out of nursing homes. And the growth of managed care since the early 1990s has led to a drop in the length of stay in hospitals, again shifting care back to the home.

The high-tech equipment that often follows patients out of the hospital and into the home setting has transformed caregiving work. Some technologies must be constantly monitored, and many require family caregivers to perform extremely complex tasks. Nineteenth-century women struggled to retain jurisdiction over skilled medical care, but caregivers today complain about being entrusted with responsibilities that far exceed their capabilities.

Caregiving remains especially onerous for poor women today. The low-status jobs they can obtain tend to have little or no flexibility in hours or days worked. Despite the growth of health care financing programs, many continue to confront barriers to such assistance. Very few can purchase medical equipment or supplies, retrofit their homes to accommodate a sickroom or wheelchair, or "buy out" of their obligations by hiring other women. Meanwhile, home health care workers are disproportionately women of color and are among the lowest paid of all workers in the United States.

Emily K. Abel

See also: Disability; Domestic Work; Epidemic Disease; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Health Policy; Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing

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Homelessness

Destitute people living without permanent shelter have been a part of the American experience since the early colonial period, but the size and demographics of the homeless population, as well as the causes of homelessness, have varied over time. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the number of homeless moved jaggedly upward in a cyclical pattern inversely related to general economic conditions, reaching a high point in the 1930s. After World War II, the homeless population sharply declined and became confined to deteriorating skid row sections of cities. Homelessness remained at a fairly low level until the late 1970s, when the sudden appearance of large numbers of destitute "street people" in urban areas marked the beginning of a surge in the homeless population that would continue into the early twenty-first century. Although homelessness today is not nearly as significant as it was during the 1870–1940 period, it is much nearer the historical norm than was true of the immediate post–World War II era.

Prior to the 1730s, "sturdy beggars" or "the wandering poor" (as the homeless were called before 1800) were relatively rare. Much of the homelessness at this time was sporadic, the result of dislocations caused by disasters, plagues, or, especially, warfare, such as the Indian-white conflict of 1675–1676 in Massachusetts known as King Phillip's War. The second half of the eighteenth century, however, saw the emergence of a more conspicuous homeless population, especially in New York, Philadelphia, and other cities along the eastern seaboard. Although the French and Indian War (1756–1763) and the American Revolution were responsible for some of this increase, fundamental economic and social changes were more-important causes. As the American economy became more tied to the world market, inequalities of wealth grew, and the number of poor people at risk of falling into homelessness increased. Prior to 1820, former indentured servants, apprentices, and unskilled laborers made up the majority of the homeless population. Although white males made up a majority of this group, there were also significant numbers of homeless women. Relative to their share of the population in the cities, African Americans were overrepresented among the homeless because of the number of runaway slaves and desperately poor former slaves in the North who became homeless after being freed between 1790 and 1815.

In the decades preceding the Civil War, nascent industrialization and urbanization created new conditions that fostered homelessness. Mechanization of some industries increased productivity but drove down wages and led to a decline in artisanal independence. Fluctuations in the economy also became more frequent. The unemployment and general economic insecurity resulting from the depressions of 1817–1823, 1837–1843, and the late 1850s increased the levels of homelessness significantly, especially in northern cities. During the 1830–1860 period, women, many of them widows, continued to make up as much as a third of the urban homeless, but the number of homeless Blacks declined sharply as Black communities in the North matured and Black churches began to provide rudimentary assistance to the poor. Instead, by the 1850s, destitute Irish immigrants, male and female, made up as much as half the homeless population in many locales. The homeless of the antebellum period were not distributed equally across all regions of the country. In the South, the institution of slavery impeded the growth of homelessness by placing the poorest segment of the population under the control of individual slaveholders. In the North, vagrancy was much more prevalent in the East Coast metropolitan corridor and surrounding areas than in the thriving small towns and rural areas of the Midwest.

Throughout the colonial and early national period, charitable groups and local governments responded to the homeless in both positive and negative ways. Harsh vagrancy laws existed but were only sporadically enforced. Vagrants were sometimes imprisoned, but more often they received a public whipping followed by expulsion from the community. Citizens sympathetic to the homeless responded in equally irregular fashion, setting up ad hoc committees to provide food for the destitute, then disbanding when the immediate crisis had passed. Such intermittent, largely unplanned activities were typical of premodern approaches to homelessness. After 1820, the growth of large private charities in New York and other cities led to the first significant organized response to the homeless. Organizations like the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor (founded in 1843) dominated public debate over the increasing number of vagrants and beggars on city streets. Charity theorists, espousing a harsh, moralistic view of poverty, criticized traditional, haphazard ways of responding to the homeless as "sentimental" and "unscientific." Ignoring the economic causes of much homelessness, they largely blamed the homeless for their own condition. In an effort that was only occasionally successful, the large philanthropies campaigned to eliminate outdoor poor relief (that is, relief not provided in institutions such as poorhouses) and replace it with workhouses in which all able-bodied paupers, homeless or not, would be incarcerated.

Homelessness remained predominantly local until the severe depression of the 1870s, when for the first time large numbers of men began riding illegally on trains. The use of railroads by tramps brought the specter of homelessness to every area of the country and inaugurated an intense debate over how to deal with a group now perceived as a national problem. The homeless of the industrial era (1870–1940) were greater in number than at any other time in American history and were distinctive in a number of ways. Some went "on the road" in search of work, while others became long-term residents of a particular city. There was considerable overlap between the two groups, but the mobile homeless tended on the average to be much younger than those who remained in one locale. This duality would continue to define homelessness until the 1940s, when riding the freights fell off sharply.

The post–Civil War decades witnessed a steady decline in the number of female homeless, primarily because of the growth of urban charities aiding women and, after 1910, the institution of mothers' pensions for single women with children. By the early twentieth century, women made up no more than about 10 or 15 percent of the urban homeless, and until the 1930s, it was rare for women to ride the freights. African Americans, who until about 1915 had remained mostly in the South and had worked primarily as sharecroppers or servants, also were underrepresented among the homeless. After World War I, however, the incorporation of a sizable number of Black migrants into the industrial economy of the urban North brought with it a substantial rise in Black homelessness.

Regardless of their gender or race, the homeless at this time were overwhelmingly drawn from the ranks of blue-collar workers. Skilled laborers were almost as likely as the unskilled to experience homelessness, but until the 1930s even lower-level white-collar workers were usually able to avoid this fate.

It is not surprising that there were so many tramps and beggars during the industrial era, a time when there was no unemployment insurance, no workmen's compensation (prior to 1910), and no government-sponsored old-age pensions. The unemployment accompanying periodic economic depressions, a natural result of an unregulated economic system, was a major underlying cause of much homelessness. Unemployment also arose from automation, seasonal work, strikes, or simple overproduction. Industrial accidents, which rendered tens of thousands of workers unemployable each year in the early twentieth century, also played a significant role in creating homelessness. An unemployed or disabled worker was most likely to become homeless, however, if he lacked sufficient family or community support. It was for this reason that immigrants from China or southern and eastern Europe, despite wretched poverty, seldom experienced homelessness. Relatively large families and high levels of community cohesion among these groups acted as support systems that prevented many at-risk individuals from falling into complete destitution. Partly because of the much smaller size of their families, native-born whites were more likely than other groups to become homeless during the 1870–1940 period.

During the Victorian era, the attitude of government and large urban charities toward the homeless was often distrustful or punitive. Beginning in the 1840s and 1850s, city governments began to set aside rooms in police stations where the destitute could sleep overnight. These decrepit, filthy accommodations represented a minimalist policy of dealing with the homeless population, a group that many believed deserved nothing better. In the 1880s and 1890s, local branches of the Charity Organization Society (COS) set up privately run lodging houses for tramps. The primary purpose of these "wayfarers' lodges" was to separate the "worthy" unemployed workman from the disreputable tramp by requiring a "work test" of those who stayed overnight. Before receiving breakfast, the male lodgers were required to chop wood or break stone for one or two hours. In COS lodges that provided accommodations for both sexes, women were also required to work, usually by doing laundry or scrubbing floors. Although the accommodations in the wayfarers' lodges were more humane than the police station tramp rooms, the homeless who used them complained of the poor food, humiliating treatment, and rules that limited a lodger's stay to only a few days.

In the 1870s and 1880s, hostility to tramps also led to the passage of harsh vagrancy laws and a concerted effort by police to round up and arrest street beggars. It soon became evident, however, that it was not possible to legislate the homeless out of existence. The size and mobility of the homeless population made enforcement of such laws difficult, but equally important was the fact that the average citizen did not always share the antagonistic views of public officials and the middle-class press toward this impoverished class. For the most part, the homeless of the industrial era survived not through assistance from government or the COS but because there were many local neighborhood charities, religious groups outside the mainstream, and individuals who sympathized with the down-and-out. Despite their own poverty, immigrants and racial minorities were reputed to be generous in feeding tramps, and the Salvation Army (established in the United States in 1891) and evangelical Protestant groups who established "gospel missions" for the homeless in inner-city areas usually made no distinction between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor. Attempts by police and the COS to eliminate street begging were largely unsuccessful because too many Americans, especially from the working class, sympathized with panhandlers.

Progressive-Era reformers broadened the middle class's understanding of the causes of poverty and promoted a more humane approach by city governments to the homeless. Robert Hunter's *Poverty* (1904), Alice Willard Solenberger's 1914 Chicago study, *One Thousand Homeless Men,* and Nels Anderson's *Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man* (1923) all stressed the diverse causes of homelessness and argued that the homeless, like other poor people, deserved to be treated as individuals. The professionalization of social work at this time also promoted a less-punitive approach to the homeless and a greater recognition of the effects of unemployment, work accidents, and poverty in creating homelessness. Between 1900 and 1920, most large cities outside the South established municipal lodging houses. While retaining some of the negative features of the wayfarers' lodges, these facilities for the homeless usually eliminated the work test and the three- or four-day limit on use of the shelters. The South's approach to homelessness remained distinctive. Most southern cities did not have municipal shelters. Where they did exist, they were racially segregated, and smaller southern communities continued to use draconian vagrancy laws against the homeless (especially African Americans) much more frequently than did police in the North.

After a decade of relatively moderate homelessness during and after World War I, the Great Depression brought this issue back to the forefront of public consciousness. Homelessness touched people from all walks of life in the 1930s. Although white males still made up a majority of the down-and-out, there was a substantial increase in the numbers of homeless women, families, and, especially, Blacks. For the first time, a significant number of white-collar workers showed up in soup lines. Illegal train riding became more commonplace than at any time since the 1890s, shantytowns constructed by the homeless sprang up in cities across the nation, and officials struggled to deal with unprecedented demands on private and public shelters. Out of this crisis came a New Deal agency, the Federal Transient Service (FTS), the first federal program in American history designed specifically to aid the homeless. Established in 1933 as a part of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the FTS organized 300 urban centers and over 300 rural camps for "federal transients" (defined as anyone who had lived less than one year in a particular state). The general treatment of and facilities for the transients, especially food and sleeping quarters, was far superior to that of most private or municipal shelters, and the FTS made a significant break with past neglect by making free medical and dental care available to the homeless. In addition, FTS urban centers developed a wide range of educational programs for residents, and the rural camps provided much on-the-job training. In a little over two years, about 1 million people took part in FTS programs.

In the fall of 1935, the FTS was abruptly phased out, as the New Deal shifted its attention to public works projects, Social Security, and workers' rights. The result, across the country, was a sharp rise in the number of street beggars, people sleeping in parks, and men riding the rails. Within two years, they would be joined by destitute farm families attempting to make their way from the Dust Bowl states to California. This resurgence of visible homelessness, however, was short-lived. By 1941, war preparedness allowed some of the destitute to regain employment, and American participation in World War II further drew many formerly homeless persons into the regular workforce. Postwar economic expansion, coupled with benefits from Social Security, Aid to Dependent Children, and the G.I. Bill, reinforced this trend, helping many who had temporarily become homeless during the Depression to avoid becoming so again. A core group of the homeless, however, consisting mostly of older men, were unable to adjust to the new economic circumstances. These individuals' irregular work histories prevented them from receiving pensions and limited their Social Security benefits. Increasingly in the 1950s and 1960s, this aging homeless population, no longer mobile and now limited to short-term employment as casual laborers, became confined to the deteriorating skid row sections of the nation's cities.

In the 1960s and 1970s, urban renewal programs led to the demolition of most of the old lodging-house districts, forcing their residents to seek shelter in other poor sections of the city. Obliterating the skid rows did not end homelessness, however. The "new homeless" who began to appear in the late 1970s were much younger, more likely to be racial minorities and women, and more numerous and visible than their skid row predecessors. The homeless population continued to expand during the deep recession of the early 1980s, but as with the sudden upsurge of tramps a century before, their numbers did not fall off that much once prosperity returned. Instead, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, these "street people" seemed to have become a permanent part of the postindustrial order. The reappearance of highly visible, mass homelessness encouraged some political leaders to advocate a return to the punitive tactics of the past in dealing with the down-and-out. In the 1990s, for example, a number of cities passed "quality of life" ordinances that allowed the police to arrest homeless individuals for trivial offenses. To some extent, local governments provided food and shelter to persons on the street, but to an even greater degree than had been true in the industrial era, private organizations of concerned citizens remained the most important source of assistance to the homeless.

In the postindustrial era, as throughout most of American history, the causes of homelessness are intertwined with many aspects of society that affect domiciled citizens as well. These include unemployment and a changing job structure, the lack of affordable housing for the poor, inadequate health care provisions, and the lack of family support. The negative consequences of divorce or desertion and of abusive spouses have emerged as particularly important causes of homelessness among women, who now make up a larger proportion of the homeless population than at any time since the Civil War. Historically, the line between the homeless and the working poor has always been a porous one, and there continues to be much movement back and forth between the two groups. Homelessness remains a serious problem because, in many ways, it has always been an integral part of a society riven with many inequalities.

Kenneth L. Kusmer

See also: Charity Organization Societies; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Dust Bowl Migration; Economic Depression; Food Banks; Housing Policy; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Relief; Salvation Army; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal; Vagrancy Laws/Settlement Laws/Residency Requirements

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Homophobia

Homophobia is a form of oppression that is aimed against lesbians and gay men. Homophobic myths conceal the fact that many homosexuals can be found among the poor. In fact, the social science data suggest that some specific groups of lesbians and gay men are overrepresented among the poor. Lesbians and gay men are sometimes neglected or badly served by social welfare programs, and homosexuals are particularly vulnerable to the moralistic and religious orientation of emerging public policies.

Opponents of lesbian and gay rights often argue that lesbians and gays constitute a wealthy elite and that they therefore do not need protection from discrimination. One study, however, found that after controlling for education, age, and other relevant factors, gay men earned between 11 and 27 percent less than similar heterosexual men (Badgett 1997, 69). A random poll of voters conducted in 1992 found that lesbians tend to be overrepresented among the very poor and underrepresented in the highest income group (Badgett 1997, 68). Another recent study found that partnered gay men earn substantially less than married men and that lesbians earn more than heterosexual women. Partnered lesbians and gay men are less likely than married heterosexual couples to own a home. Within the home-owner group itself, however, lesbian and gay men are better off; the homes belonging to homosexuals tended to be more expensive than the ones owned by heterosexuals (Black et al. 2000, 152–153).

Many different factors seem to be producing these conditions. Gay men often seek out a supportive cultural milieu. Generally, they tend to prioritize migration to the urban areas that have vibrant gay male communities over career advancement. They may, therefore, be confronted with more-constrained job opportunities and a higher cost of living than heterosexual men from the same class background and age cohort. Biological families continue to play a pivotal role in the reproduction of economic class. Teenagers and young adults often depend upon their parents for college tuition; access to family-based career networks; financial gifts, personal loans, and entrepreneurial investment capital; and wedding gifts, home purchase capital, and estate inheritance. Gay men and lesbians are often excluded from their biological family because of their parents' homophobia and thus are at a distinct disadvantage in this respect. "Family-wage" ideology—the notion that the best-paying jobs should be reserved for married male workers because they are the ones who ought to be supporting their families—may be working in tandem with homophobia. Child rearing by lesbian and gay parents is significant, even if the rate of child rearing is less than among married heterosexuals. Although 59 percent of married heterosexuals have at least one dependent child, 21 percent of lesbian households and 5 percent of gay male households do so as well (Black et al. 2000, 150). Yet despite their responsibility for children, lesbian and gay employees do not receive a family wage. Many Americans believe that homosexuals should not raise children; other Americans believe that lesbians and gay men are not interested in having families. Employers may be influenced by these views and therefore may be overlooking the fact that many of their homosexual employees are actually supporting dependents in their households.

They may presume that heterosexual men, and married heterosexual men in particular, are the only employees who need to earn a family wage.

The data also suggest that sexuality, gender, and class work together in a complex manner. Given the fact that men typically earn more than equally qualified women, one would expect to find that gay male couples typically earn even more than heterosexual couples, since the effect of the gender gap would be doubled in a two-male household. Once the gender gap is taken into account, it is particularly striking that heterosexual couples appear to be better off than gay male couples. The gay men and lesbians in the survey samples also tend to be better educated than their heterosexual counterparts. Further research is needed to find out whether this is actually the case or whether homosexuality is more accurately reported among individuals with higher educational credentials.

Finally, the survey data suggest that income and wealth disparities may be more pronounced within the lesbian and gay male communities than in the population as a whole. Lesbians and gay men are located in every economic class and in every poverty program. But the small number of homosexuals who do belong to the home-owner group seem to be extraordinarily well off. The fact that child rearing is less common among the wealthiest homosexuals than among the wealthiest heterosexuals probably contributes to this difference. It may also be the case that poor and middle-class gay men are exposed to the most costly forms of homophobia. Perhaps the wealthiest gay men are using their symbolic and material capital to "purchase" better protection from discrimination and to locate themselves in more-supportive employment and wealth-generating environments. The wealthiest lesbians may be benefiting from "mommy tracking." Heterosexual women holding professional and managerial positions are often less valued as employees than their male counterparts because it is assumed that they will put a greater emphasis on meeting their family's needs than on their careers. Because lesbians are constructed in homophobic ideology as nonmothers, however, employers might assume that professional and managerial lesbians have no caregiving burdens whatsoever and that they are therefore better suited than their heterosexual women colleagues for career advancement.

The presence of a significant number of lesbians and gays in poverty programs tends to be ignored by social policymakers. Poor homosexuals were certainly overlooked when welfare reformers decided to promote heterosexual marriage and abstinence education for teens as a solution to poverty. Lesbian mothers have special needs. The courts often refuse to grant them custody of their children solely because of their sexuality. Some lesbian mothers are fleeing former male partners who reacted in a violent and abusive manner when they revealed their sexual orientation. The poverty programs and the child welfare system, however, have not taken adequate steps to address these issues. The rapid integration of religious institutions into the welfare system during the 1990s will probably result in homophobic discrimination and exclusion for poor homosexuals, since many of the faith-based organizations that are winning service delivery contracts believe that homosexuality is a moral wrong.

Although the homosexual community has done much to stop the sexual transmission of the HIV virus, gay men—and especially men of color who engage in same-sex activity—remain strongly overrepresented among the people with AIDS (PWAs). With the introduction of new drug therapies, AIDS has been transformed from an acute disease into a manageable chronic condition. Today, PWAs need protection from discrimination as well as access to medication, Medicaid, nursing homes, and hospices. But they also require much more flexible health care policies that support the emerging day treatment and home health care programs. The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP), the gay male–led anti-AIDS protest organization, has also changed the face of public health politics by inventing patient-oriented direct action. This form of protest has served as a model for breast cancer activists and has introduced much more democratic accountability into the areas of medical research and public health policy.

Anna Marie Smith

See also: Christian Fundamentalism; Family Wage; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Health Policy; Heteronormativity; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Housing Policy

Housing policy comprises a broad array of programs designed to promote home ownership and make affordable housing available to low-income families, and measures to assure access to and prevent discrimination against racial minorities. Because shelter is the largest aspect of the household budget for the vast majority of people in the United States, housing policy affects a huge number and variety of people across the socioeconomic spectrum. Indeed, the most sizable and widespread government housing benefits have historically gone to all home owners, regardless of income, in the form of government mortgage guarantees and tax deductions for mortgage interest. Nevertheless, the most visible—and controversial—aspect of American housing policy has been that aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing for the poor. These programs have been plagued by a combination of resistance to government "interference" in the private housing market, politically charged accusations that public housing advocates have "socialist" leanings, and, most troubling of all, deep-seated racial animosity that makes the United States a nation, especially in the area of housing, profoundly segregated by race as well as class.

Although building regulations date back to the colonial era, the first significant efforts at American housing policy began during the Progressive Era in the early decades of the 1900s. At the time, and with few exceptions, most policymakers viewed construction of decent housing for the poor as a task for private enterprise, but reformers attempted to increase the quality of housing through regulation. During the 1930s, the New Deal witnessed the establishment of the bifurcated housing policy still in place today: mortgage guarantees for middle- and upper-classes and small amounts of funding for publicly owned housing for the poor. Despite constant attack and chronic underfunding, efforts to construct public housing and improve poor people's access to decent housing increased through the Great Society of the 1960s. Since 1970, housing policy has been marked by a consistent decline in government support for public housing combined with inconsistent support for other housing programs that serve the poor.

Although the housing problems of the poor had been well-known for decades, the nineteenth century witnessed few significant policy innovations. Reform societies focused primarily on the moral health of the poor. In 1854, the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor produced the first "model tenement," based on the principle that decent housing could and should be provided through the private market and make a profit. For the rest of the century, reformers promoted the model tenement, but these efforts produced only a small amount of housing for the poor.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, several cities passed tenement laws in an effort to establish minimal health standards and prevent overcrowding, but government regulation remained ineffective throughout these years. Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives*, published in 1890, increased public demands for government action. Progressive reformers like Jane Addams and Lawrence Veiller lobbied for greater regulation of city tenements. Chicago, New York, and other cities created tenement commissions to investigate complaints about inadequate housing. Although reformers in the Progressive Era realized that the lack of affordable housing was in part a supply problem, they focused in particular on the moral and health hazards of bad housing. Reformers continued to rely on the private market to produce housing for the poor and did not push for government support for housing construction.

The other major housing policy in the early 1900s was the city beautiful movement. Led by urban elites concerned about the increasing squalor in large cities, the movement sought to bring order to the city through the demolition of tenements and factories and the creation of wide boulevards and public buildings. The production of affordable housing was not a significant focus of this movement, but it did result in the destruction of thousands of units of rundown, but affordable, housing.

World War I provided the impetus for a short-lived expansion of government-sponsored housing. To meet the needs of the war production workers, Congress created the U.S. Housing Corporation in 1917. Business leaders argued that home ownership for the working class was the solution to labor problems, while urban planners and reformers focused on community building. In one year, the agency built more than 16,000 mostly single-family homes and several dozen complete communities. The armistice in 1918, however, brought a swift attack on government housing production that resulted in its cessation; political opponents, playing on the postwar Red Scare, launched congressional investigations into the "socialist" influence of the program.

During the 1920s, housing reformers in New York began to experiment with government support for housing production. New York's Housing Act of 1926 created the Limited Dividend Housing Program, which provided eminent domain powers (the right to acquire land for development or related uses for public purposes) and tax exemptions to private developers who agreed to limit rents in the housing. Several limited dividend projects were built in New York City, but this program did not attract much support elsewhere in the nation.

Central to the emergence of a modern national housing policy was Herbert Hoover during his term as secretary of commerce (1921–1928) under Presidents Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge. Through his support for professional, voluntary, and commercial housing organizations, Hoover increased the focus on home ownership as the answer to Americans' housing problems. Hoover's early advocacy of zoning, planning, and building standards was instrumental in the development of modern, large-scale suburban communities. Like other businessmen, Hoover saw individual home ownership as a bulwark against socialism and as a means to secure economic growth. He supported the nationalization of the home-construction industry and the growth of the home-furnishing industry. The housing programs of the New Deal, particularly the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), built upon this legacy.

Modern American housing policy was created during the New Deal administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The dramatic increase in foreclosures and homelessness during the Great Depression opened the door for government intervention in the housing market. Housing reformers like Catherine Bauer argued that achieving adequate housing for the working class required government subsidy. In 1933, the housing emergency, combined with the desire to increase employment, spurred Congress to include public housing in the legislation creating the Public Works Administration (PWA). Over the next four years, the agency built or funded the construction of 25,000 units of housing. These developments were noted for their success in nurturing community and in attracting moderate-income residents.

Although many of President Roosevelt's advisers recommended a large-scale program for the construction of public housing, he was reluctant to commit significant amounts of funding to such a project. Instead, he proposed the FHA, a government insurance agency that would support home construction for the middle class by guaranteeing private mortgages and making home ownership more affordable. By nationalizing the mortgage market, decreasing the required down payment for home purchases, and increasing the amortization period, the FHA expanded access to home ownership to the middle class and parts of the working class. The organization received widespread public and political support and quickly became the centerpiece of federal housing policy.

Despite Roosevelt's reluctance, liberals continued to push for the construction of public housing. Concerned that the PWA was only a temporary measure, they demanded a permanent program. Real estate and other interests violently opposed the program, saying it was communistic. Nevertheless, after heated debate and negotiations that made the program more attractive to the private construction industry, among others, Congress passed the Wagner Public Housing Act in 1937, creating the U.S. Housing Authority, which funded locally developed public housing. Several important restrictions were imposed on the program. Public housing was linked directly to slum clearance: The law required one substandard unit to be demolished for each new unit constructed. The legislation also imposed strict cost ceilings on the housing produced. These restrictions had serious long-term implications for the program.

World War II resulted in the expansion of the public housing program, which was linked to providing shelter for war production workers. To increase production, Congress passed the Lanham Act in 1941, authorizing the Federal Works Administration to build projects in defense areas. Despite congressional restrictions, program administrators experimented with new types of architecture, building, and forms of ownership, creating several innovative projects. Federal housing programs were merged in 1942 to create the National Housing Administration (NHA). As war production increased, real estate interests took hold of the program, and the majority of units produced were cheaply constructed, short-term buildings. Over 700,000 units of housing were built during the war, but the majority of them were temporary. Postwar legislation required the NHA to dispose of the permanent units. The majority were sold to the inhabitants or to private developers.

Wartime efforts to control inflation also resulted in the imposition of rent controls by the Office of Price Administration. To protect tenants in war production areas, Congress froze rents at 1942 levels for the remainder of the war. After the conflict ended, many housing activists pressed for the continuation of rent controls. Throughout the late 1940s, rent control was a major political issue. Real estate and conservative interests opposed the continuation of controls, arguing that they stifled the production of affordable housing, while advocates argued that rent controls should continue until housing shortages declined. In a series of legislative acts, Congress granted greater control to states and localities to regulate rents. By the early 1950s, however, only New York had a significant rent control program, reflecting the influence of powerful private-sector opponents.

After the war ended, housing reformers and urban elites formed a coalition to press for permanent federal involvement in housing and urban development. Their efforts resulted in the passage of the Housing Act of 1949, which established the goal of "a decent home for every American," expanded federal support for mortgage insurance through the FHA, set a target of building 135,000 units of public housing a year for six years, and created the urban renewal program. Because of opposition to public housing from real estate interests, it took four years to secure the passage of the act.

The act spurred the production of hundreds of thousands of units of housing, particularly single-family homes in the suburbs. During the 1950s, thousands of units of middle-income housing were built through the urban renewal program. Public housing construction also increased, but it was constantly under attack during the 1950s. Although many smaller cities created successful projects, opposition and corruption inhibited the program in many areas. Citing concerns about its impact on property values, many cities refused to build public housing. Voters in Los Angeles, for example, approved a referendum directing the city not to build any public projects.

More explosive, and often just beneath the surface of rhetoric about socialism and property values, was the volatile mix of racial prejudice, fear, and politics that fueled widespread white opposition to public housing, increasingly viewed as housing for Blacks as post–World War II African American migration to urban centers continued. Federal authorities did little to challenge segregationist norms; during the 1930s and 1940s, most public housing authorities maintained racially segregated projects, and minorities gained access to public housing only after civil rights activists mounted campaigns to eliminate discrimination in housing. Blacks continued to be denied access to private housing, however, particularly in newly developing suburbs, because FHA underwriting guidelines considered African Americans to be adverse influences. The guidelines actively encouraged private lenders to deny mortgages to African Americans and in heavily minority or racially mixed neighborhoods. This practice, known as "redlining" because of the official color coding used to designate undesirable lending areas, effectively denied African Americans access to one of the most substantial and expansive benefits of the U.S. social welfare system. Moreover, because Blacks and other minorities were denied access to private housing, public projects became increasingly minority.

Public housing also became increasingly tied to urban renewal during the 1950s. That program, meant to replace slums with upper-middle-class housing or public amenities, resulted in the demolition of thousands of units of affordable housing and the dislocation of hundreds of thousands of residents. In large cities like New York and Chicago, the displaced residents were overwhelmingly Black and Latino. Although the majority of these tenants were forced to fend for themselves, many found shelter in public housing. Racial change in public housing, coupled with increases in crime in the projects and in the surrounding neighborhoods, contributed to the further marginalization of the program.

By the late 1950s, public housing was criticized from both the right and the left. Catherine Bauer, focusing on the sterile architecture and the negative impact of large projects on surrounding areas, decried the "dreary deadlock of public housing" in an influential article by that title (Bauer 1957). President Dwight D. Eisenhower, never a fan of the program, refused to request appropriations for additional units, and federal allocations decreased dramatically. Despite the fact that the Housing Act of 1949 had called for the construction of 810,000 units by 1956, by 1960, only 250,000 units had been completed. At the same time, supported by federal mortgage insurance and highway building, suburban development continued to increase dramatically. As single-family suburban home ownership became accessible to increasing numbers of white Americans, urban neighborhoods lost their middle-class populations and large proportions of their white working-class populations. In the absence of measures to generate alternative sources of tax revenue, this led to housing decline and abandonment and to increasing pressure on city finances.

The 1960s brought increased attention to the need for affordable housing. The Housing Act of 1961 increased support for the construction of housing for seniors and for public housing and created a new program providing incentives to private developers to build low- and moderate-income housing. President John F. Kennedy also attempted to increase the housing access of African Americans by signing an executive order prohibiting discrimination in some federal housing programs.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration created several new initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing. In 1965, Johnson proposed a rent supplement program, providing subsidies to housing developers in return for their agreement to keep rents below market rates. The Johnson administration also pushed Congress to create the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to coordinate federal housing and other urban programs. Led by Robert Weaver, the first Black cabinet secretary, HUD initiated several programs to increase the supply of housing. The Model Cities program, an effort to coordinate services and redevelopment in the inner city, also promoted housing development by nonprofit, community-based organizations. The administration also organized several commissions to study methods to decrease the cost of housing and increase housing supply.

The Johnson administration's major housing initiative, the Housing Act of 1968, expanded funding for affordable housing, both for rental and for purchase, and further shifted away from government construction of public housing to private development. Section 235 of the act relaxed FHA income standards and enabled lower-income persons to purchase homes. Section 236 provided subsidies to developers who built rental apartments available to low-income persons. Meant to spur private construction for public purposes, both these programs succeeded in increasing the supply of affordable housing. However, corruption and other management problems in the early 1970s brought about their demise.

During the 1960s and 1970s, housing decline in older American cities increased dramatically. Increased maintenance costs, combined with declining revenues, led many apartment owners to abandon their buildings. The South Bronx became a symbol of the decline of urban society as arson and abandonment created a landscape that some compared to a war zone. Public housing also faced increasing difficulties in this period. An amendment sponsored by Senator Edward Brooke (R-Massachusetts) to the 1968 Housing Act, requiring that rents be capped at 25 percent (later increased to 30 percent) of income, made public housing more affordable but also diminished rental revenue. This, combined with decreasing government subsidies and increasing costs, resulted in lower maintenance. Several housing authorities abandoned some of their oldest and most troubled projects. The 1972 demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe project in Saint Louis, featuring a filmed and widely reproduced implosion of the tall, dreary, warehouse-like structures, became symbolic of the decline in public housing during this era.

In the early 1970s, President Richard M. Nixon's administration, citing housing scandals and budget problems due to inflation, imposed a moratorium on all federal housing programs. The administration argued that the federal government had become too deeply involved in directing housing and urban policy, and it proposed that the major housing programs be consolidated into a block grant to be provided to states and localities. Nixon further argued that the government should focus on increasing the income of the poor instead of expanding the supply of housing. In 1974, Congress passed the Housing and Community Development Act, which adopted most of the president's proposals. The act created the Community Development Block Grant program, which provided funds to states and localities, based on a complicated formula of population, poverty rate, and other criteria. Local governments are required to use these funds to produce housing and other vital services, but unlike the Model Cities program or other efforts of the Great Society, federal oversight is minimal.

The act also increased subsidies to low-income tenants through the Section 8 program. This program provides subsidies to local housing authorities that give poor families housing vouchers that can be used to find housing in the private market. Recipients pay 30 percent of their income for rent, and federal subsidies pay the difference between that amount and the fair market rent. Meant to increase the access of the poor to private housing, the program has replaced public housing as the major source of federal funding for shelter for the poor. Critics have argued that the program does not expand the supply of housing and has led to increased rents in existing housing.

President Jimmy Carter's administration increased funding to modernize aging public housing projects, and low-income housing starts hit their high point in the late 1970s. Carter also used the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977 to increase support for private development of affordable housing. The administration's urban agenda, released in 1978, argued that the federal government could not rebuild American cities and envisioned an expanding role for private enterprise. Budget pressures, however, inhibited the full implementation of these efforts.

Since 1980, federal support for affordable housing has witnessed a consistent decline. Federal expenditures for subsidized housing decreased from $31.5 billion in 1978 to $6 billion by 1989. The only significant initiatives in the decade were the passage of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which provided credits to those who invest in affordable housing, and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, passed in 1987, which provided funds to states and localities to produce housing for the homeless. These laws have supported the construction of several thousand units of affordable housing.

The 1990s witnessed a further shift in housing policy away from public-sector efforts to reliance on the private sector to produce affordable housing. Initiatives focused primarily on increasing opportunities for low-income people to become home owners. In 1990, Congress created the Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE) program, which subsidizes the private construction of home ownership units. The HOPE program also provides funds to local public housing authorities to demolish aging projects and rehabilitate the remaining units, and it gives incentives to sell units to low-income buyers. However, no new public housing construction was funded in this program. This initiative supported the revitalization of many public housing developments, but it also resulted in the demolition of thousands of units of public housing.

In 2002, the congressionally created Millennial Housing Commission released the results of a two-year study of the nation's housing. Although the report celebrated the increasing percentage of home-owning households, the report concluded that housing remains unaffordable to millions of Americans.

Wendell E. Pritchett

See also: African American Migration; Homelessness; *How the Other Half Lives;* Public Works Administration; Racial Segregation; Racism; Tenant Organizing; Urban Renewal; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Photojournalist Jacob Riis's* How the Other Half Lives *portrayed life in the slums of the Lower East Side, a life often scarred by crime, darkness, insecurity, danger, and poverty. Riis's work proved effective in the burgeoning movement for tenement reform. (Library of Congress)

How the Other Half Lives, *Jacob Riis*

In 1890, photographer and journalist Jacob Riis published a work that would open the eyes of his fellow New Yorkers to the abominable conditions under which three-quarters of that city's population were living. *How the Other Half Lives,* a combination of muckraking and photojournalism, portrayed the harshness of life in the slums of the Lower East Side, a life often scarred by crime, darkness, insecurity, danger, and, nearly always, poverty. Riis's specific reform focus, however, was on the physical conditions of the tenement buildings that had become the most widespread form of housing for the poor and working-class masses streaming into the cities in search of employment. Largely thanks to his work in this area, New York's Tenement House Commission was convened in 1884, and his continued struggle to make the better-off of the country see "how the other half lives" continued long after.

Riis's horror at the conditions in the tenements, his disgust at the corruption and greed that allowed landlords to profit so handsomely from the vulnerability of their tenants, and his simultaneous compassion for and critical attitude toward the largely immigrant population of New York's slums were based on his personal experience. Like the 300,000 people crowded into each square mile of the city's worst tenement districts, Riis had come to the United States as a poor immigrant, leaving his native Denmark in search of a livelihood and future. Unlike most of them, Riis did eventually climb out of abject poverty to claim gainful employment and a voice in the public debate about the conditions under which immigrant and other disenfranchised groups were forced to live. He began photographing these conditions—the tenement houses, stale beer halls, sweatshops, and back alleys that comprised the brutal world he had known since coming to America—while working as a police reporter for the *New York Tribune*. This work later formed the basis of *How the Other Half Lives*, known as much for its heartbreaking photographs as for its searing indictment of the New York slums.

The book does betray the prevalence of the racial stereotypes that the largely segregated immigrant communities of the day encountered at every turn. Riis depicted Chinatown as a den of immorality and opium, raising the specter of the "crafty Chinaman" seducing white women into a life of evil. Italians, he claimed disparagingly, were "content to live in a pig-sty" (Riis [1890] 1996, 123, 92). At the same time, Riis's photographs also played into—and helped foster—popular prejudices and stereotypes about the poor as abject, pathetic, slovenly, potentially dangerous, and, above all, alien or "other" in the eyes of his comparatively genteel, native-born white readership. Although presented as raw photojournalism, many of his photographs were staged, with lighting used to emphasize the drabness of living conditions as well as the darker skin tones of his subjects.

For all its sensationalism, however, Riis's documentary did prove effective in the burgeoning movement for tenement reform. In his book and in specially mounted exhibits of the photographs, Riis placed the great blame for the inhumane conditions at the feet of a neglectful government and a better-off citizenry that was in a position to demand reform. He proposed the construction of model tenements that would safely and adequately house the working classes in American cities at rates both profitable and fair. With such measures, he argued, immigrants' behavior and life chances, closely linked to their living environments, would improve, and all New Yorkers, rich and poor, could again begin to respect their city and themselves.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Housing Policy; Immigrants and Immigration; Picturing Poverty (I); Tenant Organizing; Urban Poverty

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Hull House

Hull House was a settlement house located in Chicago's multiethnic West Side. It was founded by friends Ellen Gates Starr and Jane Addams in 1889, and many innovative approaches to supplying community-based social services to the urban poor were pioneered there. It stood at the forefront of the American settlement house movement, which by 1910 included over 400 neighborhood settlements nationwide. The settlements were a response to the dire needs created by rapid urbanization and industrialization in the late nineteenth century. Chief among these were the crises in urban housing, sanitation, and child mortality and the low pay rates and hazardous workplace health and safety conditions that working-class Europeans faced as they immigrated to find employment in U.S. factories and trades.

Hull House flourished until the Depression era and had an impact on many levels. As an experiment in communal living and a close-knit network of support for political activism and progressive ideas, the settlement attracted many talented women and men as residents and volunteers. Most were native born, middle class, and college educated, and many brought professional skills to bear on social problems. Tens of thousands of impoverished people of various ages and nationalities from the neighborhoods of the Nineteenth Ward actively participated in the multifaceted educational and cultural programs Hull House offered. Working-class activists and labor organizers also found in Hull House a friendly sponsor for their enterprises, and intellectuals from many countries visited the settlement. And as Hull House leaders had an increasingly high profile in public affairs, the influence of the settlement widened. It became a clearinghouse for many of the urban and social welfare reforms of the Progressive Era.

Under the prevailing vision of Jane Addams (1860–1935) and the many reformers and activists who were involved in the settlement over the years—including Florence Kelley, Julia Lathrop, Alice Hamilton, Sophonisba Breckinridge, Edith Abbott, Grace Abbott, Alzina Parsons Stevens, and Mary Kenney O'Sullivan—Hull House did much to advance the role of women in social welfare policy and to change public perceptions of poverty and ideas about the best means for its amelioration. Addams's copious popular writings, her leadership in national reform organizations, and her skill as a speaker were particularly effective in changing public opinion. Through her many books and articles (including, most famously, the best-seller *Twenty Years at Hull-House*), she helped encourage a shift in thinking from earlier Victorian models of charity and philanthropy, with their moral concepts of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. She also challenged the Social Darwinist notion that poverty was the inevitable result of individualized pathology and a highly stratified laissez-faire economy. She posited instead a new ethical paradigm that emphasized collective responsibility and social justice. In that new model, the causes of socioeconomic inequity were understood to be systemic, and it was ultimately the responsibility of a democratic government to address them. Hull House leaders also had a hand in drafting key pieces of social reform legislation on the state and federal levels. In instituting formal social services, they pushed for standardization and training, monitoring, and protective regulation. Their ideas, and the progressive policies they did much to engender, helped lay the foundation for the modern welfare state.

As the Hull House settlement grew in scope in the 1890s and early twentieth century, it attracted low-income women, men, and children, many of them Irish, Italian, Greek, Russian, Polish, or immigrants from other eastern European regions. Subsequent waves of migration brought Mexicans and some African Americans as well. They took part in myriad social programs and services that were designed to mitigate the suffering of the urban working poor; to lift the spirit, improve the body, and train the mind; and to provide for freedom of expression for political convictions and artistic abilities.

From its original building on Halsted Street, Hull House expanded over the next decades into a large multipurpose complex covering an entire city block. It was an extremely active place. It had a coffee house and a residents' dining room, theater space, gymnasium facilities, a dispensary, classrooms, baths, art studios, and meeting rooms for a variety of men's and women's, boys' and girls' clubs, workingmen's debate groups, and unions. It offered symposia, plays, and musical performances, which were open to the public and to community participation. Hull House leaders challenged city politicians. They lobbied for public art and public space, cleaner alleyways, and garbage removal. Neighborhood women enrolled in parenting, nutrition, home economics, and sewing and dressmaking classes. There was an excellent free kindergarten, day care, and afternoon recreation and arts programs for working parents' children, as well as field trips and summer school sessions that brought urban youth into museums and healthy rural landscapes. Women workers gathered in the Jane Club dormitory. Support for striking garment workers was planned from Hull House, and women bookbinders held their first union meetings under Hull House auspices. Ital-

Exterior view of Hull House. The founders of Hull House were Jane Addams, internationally known social worker, and Ellen Gates Starr. (Bettmann/Corbis)

ian girls and Mexican men studied English, civics, and citizenship with Hull House tutors. Pottery was fired in Hull House kilns. Children could read books in the reading room, an annex of the public library, and tenement mothers could check art prints from Hull House out on loan or get help with an ailing baby. Demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts in the settlement's Labor Museum, art appreciation courses, and art workshops were designed—in keeping with the Christian Socialist ideas of John Ruskin, William Morris, and others—to offer transcendence and to counteract the brutalizing and demoralizing effects of industrialization and assembly-line manufacture.

In developing all these programs and facilities, Hull House leaders built on the precedent of preexisting neighborhood benevolent associations, progressive churches, women's clubs, workingwomen's organizations, and activist groups such as the Illinois Woman's Alliance. From the beginning, their concern was directed at all the working poor, but they were especially attuned, in a maternalist fashion, to championing the plight of women and children. The first major Hull House program was a kindergarten, and well-baby workshops became a regular feature. Many of the efforts of Hull House activists were directed at curbing child labor and limiting the working hours of women. They also advocated unionization for women (who were then largely excluded from the trade unions that represented men in skilled positions) and a fair or living wage. Their unflagging support for protective labor legislation sometimes put them at odds with the very workingwomen they sought to help, since factory women viewed these measures as limitations upon their right to work and to serve the immediate needs of their families. Patrician attitudes toward vice, leisure, alcohol consumption, and the sex industry also brought Hull House activists into conflict with working-class mores. Despite real changes in visions of poverty, many Hull House reforms involved the imposition of middle-class values upon working-class people. In addition, ethnic women were largely excluded from pathways to leadership within the settlement house and from its higher policymaking echelons.

In developing tools to combat poverty, Hull House residents were in the forefront in the use of new techniques in social science research as well as in the establishment of the fields of social work, occupational health and safety, and workplace inspection. *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895), a collaborative work by early residents of Hull House, was a landmark publication and the first of many social survey studies that would be conducted in the Nineteenth Ward. Residents and their students conducted house-to-house censuses, casework, and field observations to assemble data that demonstrated variety and trends in ethnicity, occupation, health, languages, skills, and residential patterns among the area's poor. This data was in turn used as evidence of the need for remedial action.

Of importance also was the role of many Hull House activists as public administrators and as founders and leaders of major social change organizations—including the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), the National Consumers League (NCL), the National Committee on Child Labor, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Progressive Party—as well as their part in shaping some of the key developments in social welfare policy and public health. Hull House resident Florence Kelley became the first chief factory inspector of Illinois and was later head of the NCL. Child welfare advocate Julia Lathrop inspected county-run institutions for the mentally ill, orphaned, homeless, and sick in Illinois and helped found the Chicago Juvenile Court before she became the first director of the U.S. Children's Bureau in 1911. Lathrop drafted the Sheppard-Towner Infancy and Maternity Protection Act (passed in 1921), and her friend Grace Abbott did much to implement it. Abbott in turn helped shape the Social Security Act of 1935, especially the Aid to Dependent Children, and was also a backer of the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938). Many of these reformers' long dedication to the ideas of regulated protection of women and of women's special vulnerability to impoverishment led them to oppose fellow feminists in their campaign for an Equal Rights Amendment. Meanwhile, in Chicago, physician Alice Hamilton pioneered the study of infectious and industrial diseases among the poor, especially the toxic effects of what she termed the "dangerous" trades. Sophonisba Breckinridge and her close colleague Edith Abbott founded the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago and the influential *Social Service Review.*

Many of the functions of Hull House were supplanted in time by the professionalization of social work, new realities in fund-raising, and the operation of government agencies. Almost all of the original Hull House complex was demolished with the construction of the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago. The original Hull House building on Halsted Street was preserved and is now a university-run museum, with exhibitions, conferences, and programs. The Jane Addams Hull-House Association continues to function as a community-based social service agency in the Chicago area, now serving a primarily African American clientele.

Barbara Bair

See also: Child Labor; Child Welfare; Employment and Training; *Hull-House Maps and Papers;* Immigrants and Immigration; Juvenile Delinquency;

Maternalist Policy; Progressive Era and 1920s; *Social Service Review;* Social Work; Trade/Industrial Unions; *Twenty Years at Hull-House;* Urban Poverty

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Hull-House Maps and Papers

Hull-House Maps and Papers (HHMP) was a groundbreaking text published in 1895 by the residents of Hull House, led by Jane Addams and Florence Kelley. They described and measured group patterns associated with immigrants, working conditions, specific laborers, labor unions, social settlements, and the function of art in the community. Women's moral agency was central to their use of social science to improve democracy and the lives of the disenfranchised.

Charles Booth's seventeen-volume study *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1892–1902) served as the model for *HHMP. HHMP,* in turn, became the model for studies of African American communities. Isabel Eaton, a young Quaker who had published a chapter in *HHMP,* helped make this connection through her association with W. E. B. Du Bois on *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899). Other African American scholar-activists, notably Monroe Work and Richard R. Wright Jr., were inspired by this latter book to map life in other African American communities.

Hull House residents continued to map cultural, social, political, and demographic information in their neighborhood for the next forty years. As the neighborhood was increasingly studied (for example, by occupations, family size, housing, milk quality, food use, and epidemiology), the findings were charted and hung on the walls of Hull House for the neighbors to see and discuss.

The mapping of social and demographic characteristics of a population within a geographical area became the core methodology of sociologists at the University of Chicago during the 1920s and 1930s. Acknowledgment that this methodological technique was associated with Hull House residents is singularly lacking in academic sociology. The Hull House residents' empirical studies also helped establish the major topics for academic sociology from the 1890s until the present.

The use of mapping by Hull House residents was radically different from its scholarly use by white male sociologists of the Chicago school. The academics' maps revealed the lives of the people of the neighborhood to an audience of experts and decision makers. The Hull House maps revealed to the people of the neighborhood that their lifestyles had patterns and implications that could be used to make more-informed decisions about community issues and interests. Repeatedly, the Hull House residents and neighbors initiated major social changes as a result of this information; for example, they worked to establish the eight-hour day, the minimum wage, and the elimination of child labor. They also worked in numerous social movements, for labor unions, women's suffrage, and arts and crafts.

Mary Jo Deegan

See also: Hull House; Poverty Research; Settlement Houses

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Hunger

Hunger is the cutting edge of poverty, its most urgent and immediate hardship. An observer impressed with the obvious abundance and widespread waste that characterize the American food system might easily assume that hunger is rare in the overnourished United States. In fact, however, because official poverty income thresholds are derived from the cost of a minimally adequate diet, virtually all households with incomes below or near the poverty thresholds are at risk of hunger unless they are receiving significant food assistance. A long dispute over the measurement, and indeed the measurability, of hunger in America has been substantially resolved in the last decade with the creation of the Household Food Security Survey administered annually by the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The most recent such survey found 33.6 million Americans living in food-insecure households; about a third of these were categorized as "food-insecure with hunger." Although hunger-related programs are on the whole less controversial than welfare and are therefore less visible to the general public, hunger has elicited relatively large investments by governments at the federal, state, and local levels. More than a dozen federal programs currently address hunger, and hunger-specific outlays are a sizable portion of overall antipoverty expenditures. In 1996, for example, the last year that the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program provided an entitlement to cash assistance for dependent children and their caregivers, federal outlays for food assistance programs totaled about one and a half times the combined federal and state expenditures for AFDC. In fact, food stamp spending alone exceeded AFDC spending by several billion dollars. Hunger has also evoked extensive activity in the voluntary sector; it has prompted the creation of an extensive network of private charitable food assistance programs and has become a primary focus of both policy advocacy and grassroots organizing. In short, hunger in America is a significant social issue with its own set of institutions, organizations, measurements, activities, and public policies, a separate sphere within the larger arena of poverty.

Hunger has always been a part of the American experience. Game shortages and crop failures plagued Native American civilizations, and severe deprivation troubled the early settlements of European colonists. Colonial poor laws, following the English model, set amounts of relief in terms of the cost of food and fuel or provided these items directly, in kind. Municipal soup houses appeared in the coastal cities of the new republic, supplied in part from the stores of the almshouses. But hunger did not become a public issue, an outrage and a scandal, until the abundance of American agriculture and the malfunctions of the market made the means for the relief of hunger obvious to all. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, enormous farm surpluses threatened the profitability of agriculture and placed the issue of hunger firmly in the context of waste and overproduction: the paradox of want amid plenty. The contradiction became irresistible and resulted in public action when large food surpluses accumulated in government hands.

Under the early Depression-era administration of President Herbert Hoover, huge purchases of wheat by the Federal Farm Board failed to stem the downward spiral of grain prices but succeeded in evoking impassioned pleas for release of the wheat to feed the unemployed. Eventually, Congress donated millions of bushels of Farm Board wheat to the Red Cross for relief. In the early years of the New Deal, the threat of bumper crops in the cotton and corn-hog markets led to dramatic efforts by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration to forestall price-depressing surpluses by plowing under standing cotton and slaughtering millions of unripe piglets. The resulting waste evoked a public outcry that was quieted only by the creation of a high-profile alphabet agency—as the major relief agencies came to be known—charged with "resolving the paradox of want amid plenty" by purchasing farmer's surpluses and distributing them to people on relief (Poppendieck 1986, xii). The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation and its successor, the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, pioneered the nation's food assistance programs: surplus commodity distribution, food stamps, and school meals. Little effort was made, however, to establish minimum standards for the food programs; with the problem defined as the "paradox of want amid waste," the programs were doing their job if some of the food that would otherwise go to waste reached some of the people who would otherwise go hungry. Meanwhile, the donation of foods that had been removed from the market in order to help support prices became an essential tool in the management of farm income.

When World War II eclipsed the relief activities of the New Deal, hunger slipped from public view. The food assistance activities of the alphabet agencies were quietly transferred to the Department of Agriculture. As war eliminated the surpluses, food distribution activities were cut back, and costs were transferred to the state and county governments. The popular food stamp program was terminated altogether, and county participation in commodity distribution was made a local option. In food assistance, the legacy of New Deal policy and politics was a set of programs administered by the Department of Agriculture, overseen by the Agriculture Committees of the Congress, and not available at all in many of the nation's poorest counties. Even when a food stamp program was re-created in the early 1960s at the insistence of President John F. Kennedy, it was severely constrained by the agricultural establishment's prioritizing of farm-income enhancement.

Hunger became an issue once again in the late 1960s, but this time, in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, hunger was defined as a failure of the federal government to protect the rights of poor and hungry Americans. A dramatic "rediscovery" of hunger occurred when a team of U.S. senators took a tour of the back roads of the Mississippi Delta, where they encountered hunger in its starkest and most visible forms. Hunger was on the nightly news. A Physicians Task Force dispatched to Mississippi by the Field Foundation confirmed the senators' reports. Almost overnight, hunger became a national issue, and a series of high-profile investigations was undertaken, revealing a food assistance safety net full of holes. Food programs reached far too few of those in need, they provided far too little assistance to those they reached, and they failed to embody standards of equity or protect basic rights of participants.

In the wake of these revelations, a process of expansion and reform was undertaken that gradually undid the New Deal legacy and created rights to food assistance. Food stamps were extended to every county in the nation. Eligibility and benefit levels were linked to a standard, albeit meager, of nutritional adequacy and were made uniform across the nation. The purchase requirement was eliminated so that the stamps were distributed free of charge, making food stamps an entitlement. The School Breakfast, Special Supplemental Nutrition for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Child Care Feeding programs were created. The School Lunch and Summer Food Service programs were expanded. Administration remained in the Department of Agriculture, but the programs were transferred from the old agricultural marketing agencies to a new office focused on the needs of consumers. In Congress, first the Senate and later the House created select committees dealing with hunger, food, and nutrition. Federal spending on food assistance grew dramatically.

The transformation of federal food assistance was at once a product of the efforts of a network of skilled advocates and a spur to its expansion and institutionalization. In Washington, the Food Research and Action Center, the Community Nutrition Institute, the Children's Foundation, Bread for the World, and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities conducted research and public education, collaborated with members of Congress and their staffs, filed class-action suits against the Department of Agriculture and recalcitrant county and municipal governments, lobbied for legislation, mobilized pressure from the grassroots, and made full and effective use of opportunities for participation in the federal rule-making process that shaped implementation of the programs. Labeled the "antihunger network" or the "hunger lobby," these national-level advocacy groups and their affiliates in state and local hunger coalitions and academic institutes and centers kept hunger on the congressional agenda and on the desks of public officials. By the end of the 1970s, advocates were looking forward to an end to hunger in America, and a new investigation by the Physicians Task Force revealed substantial progress toward that goal.

Hopes for victory over hunger proved short lived, however, as the election of Ronald Reagan brought a significant cutback in federal programs assisting low-income people in the midst of a severe recession. One result was a marked increase in the number of people seeking help from local food shelves and food pantries, mostly small, informal operations run by churches, civic associations, and labor unions. Meanwhile, the spread of homelessness generated rising demand for meals at soup kitchens. When the mayors of several large cities, caught between declining revenues and escalating needs, began talking about a "hunger emergency," the concept caught on, and new "emergency food providers"—soup kitchens and food pantries—began springing up in large numbers. Hunger became a public issue once again, but this time the prevailing discourse defined it as an "emergency," a temporary aberration that would soon subside. Once again an agricultural surplus, this time of dairy products, prompted large-scale federal donations, inciting the establishment of yet another round of pantries to handle the cheese distributions. The creation of new pantries and kitchens was further facilitated by the development of food banking, the creation of large warehouse-style food storage operations that receive food donations from both government sources and the private grocery industry and then redistribute them to frontline providers. Food banking was quickly supplemented by food rescue, the process of collecting and distributing prepared foods donated by school, hospital, and government cafeterias, restaurants, hotels, and food vendors at sporting and other public events. Within a decade, an extensive and well-organized charitable food network had emerged, led by America's Second Harvest on the food-banking side and Food Chain for food rescue and claiming more than 50,000 affiliated organizations and agencies. In 2001, Food Chain and America's Second Harvest merged into a single national organization.

The proliferation of emergency food programs provided many well-fed Americans with easy and convenient ways to do something about hunger. Walkathons and canned-good drives became common; churches, synagogues, and temples of all faiths established food donation opportunities embedded in religious ritual and practice. Boy Scouts and letter carriers undertook large-scale national food drives. A donated can of food became part of the price of admission to everything from rock concerts to presidential inaugural balls. All of this activity, however, may have served to obscure the reduction of entitlements to food through public programs—serious cutbacks in both child nutrition and food stamp programs, culminating in the massive reductions in food stamp eligibility and benefits that were part of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (welfare reform). As the end of welfare was implemented, local kitchens and pantries across the nation began reporting increases in demand despite an improving economy. The arrival of recession accelerated this process, leaving the emergency food system counting numbers of people turned away empty-handed in addition to numbers of people supplied with aid. Projected local, state, and federal budget deficits have the charitable food sector bracing for another escalation of need. The emergency definition has faded as programs have aged and institutionalized, but the private, charitable model continues to dominate public perceptions: hunger as an opportunity for private virtue rather than hunger as a symptom of public policy failure.

This balance may be shifting once again, however, as charitable food providers themselves become integrated into the policy advocacy project through collaboration among the major national organizations active in both arenas. Increasingly, food pantry and soup kitchen personnel are being enlisted to bring their expertise and credibility to bear on public policy issues. It remains to be seen whether the potential for a social movement to demand a real end to hunger in America, long the dream of antihunger activists, will be realized. It seems fairly certain, however, that antihunger activism, and thus the hunger issue, will continue to play an important role in the politics of poverty in America.

Janet E. Poppendieck

See also: Antihunger Coalitions; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; Charity; Citizens' Crusade against Poverty (CCAP); Economic Depression; Food Banks; Food Stamps; Homelessness; New Deal Farm Policy; Nutrition and Food Assistance; Poverty Law; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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See Poverty, Statistical Measure of; *Poverty;* Poverty Line; Poverty Research

I

Immigrants and Immigration

The vast majority of immigrants entering the United States during the last two centuries left their home countries because of poverty and continued to live in poverty long after their arrival in the United States. Poor immigrants, arriving in the United States from nearly every country in the world, have brought with them a diversity of racial identities, work experiences, levels of education, and expectations of life in their new home. These factors, combined with the timing and place of arrival of an immigrant group, have shaped—and often hindered—immigrants' placement in the economy and social life of the United States.

In spite of the diverse profiles of different immigrant groups and the differing circumstances of their arrival and integration into U.S. society, there are important similarities among immigrant groups' strategies for dealing with poverty. From Germans and Scots in the mid-nineteenth century to Dominicans and Albanians in the twenty-first century, immigrants have quickly established both formal and informal networks to help more-recent arrivals find housing and employment. In addition, immigrant groups have organized mutual benefit societies to provide social and economic support to members during hard times following a death in the family, the onset of disability, or the loss of a job. Outside of immigrant communities, the institutions available to recent immigrants have varied, sometimes speeding and sometimes deterring immigrant groups' incorporation into the polity and the economy. During the century before World War II, for example, local machine politicians promised certain immigrant groups patronage jobs and other forms of economic and social protection in exchange for electoral support, in effect offering politics as a path to assimilation and mobility for individuals in those groups. Likewise during this period, unions offered membership to workers from some immigrant groups while excluding those from others, in effect improving the wages and job security for workers from some immigrant groups while also nurturing leadership among them.

Poor immigrants' single most important resource upon arrival in the United States has always been other immigrants—typically members of the same national group, often friends or relatives of the new arrivals—who can offer temporary housing, assistance with finding housing, and contacts for seeking employment. Building on such informal networks, immigrants since the nineteenth century have settled in communities that frequently become known by the name of the group's country of origin. San Francisco's Chinatown, Philadelphia's Germantown, and New York's Little Italy were all well-established neighborhoods by 1900; more recently—and especially since the opening up of immigration laws in 1965—communities called "Little India," "Little Odessa," and "*El Barrio*" have made a permanent mark on the maps of many American cities. In such communities, poor immigrants can pool resources for housing, share information about jobs, provide a ready market for entrepreneurs in the community who provide goods from the home country, and function without needing to speak English.

One of the most enduring strategies of immigrants facing marginalization in the U.S. economy is the development of an "immigrant enclave" or an "ethnic niche" in the larger local economy. Long before these terms were coined by postwar social scientists, entrepreneurial members of different national groups, usually motivated by discrimination in the primary labor sector, fought to gain an economic foothold in the United States by starting their own businesses. Seeking out a gap to fill in the local economy, entrepreneurial immigrants would hire compatriots to work in their business and would help finance the entry of friends and family into the same business. The example of Chinese immigrants' participation in the laundry industry highlights the historic origins of some stereotypes about immigrants in the labor market: Even in the early twentieth century, the majority of Chinese workers listed in New York's manuscript census reported that they worked in laundries. More recently, a variety of other immigrant groups have forged enduring and often-prosperous ties to particular industries, creating new ethnic niches (and new stereotypes): Indians in the motel industry, Pakistanis in the mini-mart industry, Koreans and Dominicans in the corner-grocery industry. However, most immigrants in the United States have not managed to acquire their own businesses. Even among those groups that have established an economic enclave—such as the Chinese laundry or the Indian motel—the majority of individuals work for wages, many outside of the relatively protected niche established by a few of their compatriots. In addition to the classic model of the small business ethnic niche, certain immigrant groups have achieved predominance in certain industries, not as owners but as workers, sometimes to the point that stereotypes arise associating the group with a particular sector of the economy. The mid-nineteenth century, for instance, had the stereotype of the Irish maid; in the early twentieth century, the garment industry in New York City was populated mostly by Jewish and then Puerto Rican women, and many midwestern steelworkers and meatpackers were immigrants from Poland or elsewhere in eastern Europe; and throughout the twentieth century, "farmhands" were stereotypically Mexican.

Immigrants who arrive in the United States as single men or women have only their own fortunes to consider when looking for work; without dependents, a period of unemployment or a layoff may be difficult but is not disastrous. For poor immigrant families, however, loss of wages, especially those of a primary wage earner, could be perilous for the health and well-being of the family, especially its children. For these immigrants, then—indeed, for all families living on the brink of poverty—the "family economy" is key to survival. In the past, when it was less common for women with children to work outside the home (and still today, among some immigrant groups for whom it is the norm for women to stay home with children), women found ways to generate income while staying at home. Taking in boarders is one way that women managed to add to the family income without working outside the home. Even in tiny apartments already bursting with the activities of many children and perhaps additional members of an extended family, women would set aside a room—most often the more private and formal front room of a tenement apartment, for instance—to rent to one or more boarders, usually members of the same immigrant group. For the price of a week's or a month's rent, a woman would pro-

Hungarian immigrant family hoeing beets in Corunna, Michigan, 1917. Many immigrants entering the United States during the past two centuries left their home countries because of poverty and continued to live in poverty long after their arrival in the United States. (Library of Congress)

vide a certain number of meals for the boarder, cooking in a kitchen that often had become a bedroom and living room for her family in order to make way for the renter.

Taking in sewing or embroidery piecework is another way that many immigrant women—from Russian Jews in the nineteenth century to Puerto Ricans in the 1950s and 1960s—earned an income from home. Women would accept sewing work, paid by the piece, as private subcontractors to small-scale clothing manufacturers or distributors of crocheted and embroidered handiwork, providing these businesses with low-cost, off-site labor. They were paid very poorly for their work, but the benefit was that women could work for wages while caring for children at home and could often count on children (especially girls) to do some of the piecework as well.

Children have, throughout time, contributed in various ways to the family economy. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in New York's teeming immigrant neighborhoods, children would be charged with going out each day to collect wood scraps and discarded bits of coal for cooking and heating their families' apartments. Sometimes children also peddled goods such as fruit or other items that they would purchase and resell on the street for a small profit.

Increasingly throughout the twentieth century, and especially during and after World War II, some immigrant women with children were enticed into the labor force by higher wages and the promise of job security, primarily taking jobs in factories but also taking service jobs in department stores, laundries, hospitals, and restaurants. Women developed informal child care networks in their communities in order to manage their lives as workers and as parents. Women who worked outside the home would arrange to have a family member, friend, or neighbor look after their children, paying in cash or in kind (food or clothing for instance, if the woman worked in a restaurant or a shop).

Poor immigrant workers throughout American history have weathered the insecurities of work in the formal economy—layoffs, periods of unemployment during economic downturns, and a general marginalization that relegates them to the secondary workforce—in part through participation in various sectors of the informal economy. At the turn of the twentieth century in New York City's immigrant-populated Five Points district, vendors plied their wares on sidewalks and streets in their native languages and in heavily accented English, hoping to earn enough to pay the rent. All across New York at the turn of the twenty-first century, immigrant vendors engage in similar occupations, some formally licensed by the city and others—those who pack up their goods and flee at the sight of a police officer—unlicensed. So-called Gypsy cab drivers (drivers of unlicensed cabs), nearly all of them immigrants, occupy another prominent place in New York's modern informal economy. On the other side of the law, some immigrants have also participated in a variety of criminal activities as an economic survival strategy. In Harlem in the 1920s and 1930s, for instance, immigrants from Jamaica, Barbados, and other parts of the anglophone Caribbean vied with Puerto Ricans, Italians, and African Americans for a place in the lucrative numbers racket. Immigrants from all corners of the world—Russia, Italy, China, the Dominican Republic—have been implicated, at various times since the nineteenth century, in drug-dealing rings and other criminal operations within the context of highly structured gangs (now commonly referred to by the Italian-origin term "Mafia") organized on the basis of national origins, although frequently different Mafias have cooperated across national-group lines. By about 1880, a number of Chinese gangs, or "fighting tongs," had sprung up in Chinese immigrant communities in California and New York City, revolving around the business of illegal gambling and opium importation. At about the same time, Italian gangs dealing in extortion, bootlegging, and other illegal businesses laid the foundation for the infamous Italian Mafia in the United States.

The majority of immigrants, however, have sought out legal, community-based forms of organization to weather the strains of poverty. Since the nineteenth century, immigrants in the United States (and nonimmigrants as well) have organized mutual benefit societies as a source of economic security. Structured around the simple idea of pooling members' resources through a small weekly or monthly contribution, such societies provide members with a system of informal insurance against the financial strains of illness, accident, or death of a wage earner. Such societies often served the additional function of cultural guardianship, adorning themselves with names that reflected a spirit of patriotism or nostalgia for the homeland, such as the Hijos de Borinquen (Sons of Puerto Rico), or the Association of the Sons of Poland. Some mutual benefit societies were organized, like guilds, around a particular trade or occupation, and some recruited members from a particular town or region of the home country; others were more inclusive. Many immigrant mutual benefit societies, particularly those operating in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, did not permit women to join or required women to participate through a "women's auxiliary" branch whose activities were often limited to the social functions of the organization. Women would organize benefit dances and concerts, for instance. Women's subordination in these immigrant organizations reflected their general subordination in public life. Moreover, because men tended to be the primary or sole breadwinners in this era, it was they who held the responsibility of organizing financial security. The institution of the mutual benefit society persisted among immigrant communities even after New Deal social welfare legislation created an economic safety net for legal immigrants and U.S. citizens alike.

For certain immigrants arriving in the United States before the mid-1920s (when laws restricting immigration dramatically reduced the number of new immigrants entering the country), another key strategy of economic survival was incorporation into local machine politics. Democratic machine politicians in New York City brokered the first enduring alliance with an ethnic group with Irish immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s. Naturalized immigrants gave their votes to local political bosses in exchange for patronage jobs, Christmas turkeys, and the assurance of regular police protection and garbage pickup. As the origins of immigrants began to shift to eastern and southern Europe during the late nineteenth century, machine politicians differentiated electoral rewards available to different immigrant groups. Whereas patronage jobs and party positions were extended to many Irish immigrants, for example, local machines tended to offer only services—sanitation, kerosene, the holiday turkey—to Slavic and Italian immigrants. Despite differences in the relationships among immigrant groups and local political machines, for more than a century the boss-immigrant relationship was a powerful source of economic security for European immigrants in cities like Boston, Chicago, and New York.

Beginning in the twentieth century, unions were another crucial source of both political incorporation and economic security for some immigrants. The craft-based American Federation of Labor discriminated against immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and campaigned for the exclusion of the Chinese and other Asians. But during the early decades of the twentieth century, emerging industrial unions in coal, steel, and textiles organized some southern and eastern European workers; during the 1930s, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) gained significant power from immigrant and second-generation membership in these unions as well as in the unions of newly organizing sectors, such as auto manufacture. However, the economic benefits and protections of unionization were not readily available to all immigrants even after the rise of the CIO. Unions were weak or did not form in the sectors in which many Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Asian workers were employed: in agriculture and service work before the 1960s and in domestic work today. Where unions did exist, race discrimination often resulted in the exclusion of many Latina/o and Asian immigrants, as well as of U.S.-born Blacks, in the decades prior to enactment of the Civil Rights Act. More recent immigrants from Asia and Latin America have not been incorporated or assisted by unions due to the overall decline of union organization and to antiunion federal policies.

For immigrants who arrived in the United States after the liberalization of immigration law in 1965, the welfare state provided a safety net that had not existed for previous generations of immigrants. Available to documented immigrants, though sometimes only after a period of years, many programs of the welfare state attenuated some of the effects of low wage, nonunion work. However, the public charge provision of immigration law impedes immigrants' access to the public assistance programs of the welfare state. Moreover, late-twentieth-century federal immigration and welfare reforms, along with California's effort to restrict immigrants' access to certain health and welfare services, have foreclosed participation by many recent immigrants in such key poverty-mitigating programs of the welfare state as food stamps and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, immigrants in the increasingly globalized U.S. economy have developed some new strategies for dealing with poverty and economic strain. For immigrants entering the United States after 1965, the advent of relatively inexpensive transportation and communication technologies, among other factors, has allowed migrants to retain more-continuous transnational ties to their home countries. The transnational linkages maintained by many of today's immigrants can help them deal with poverty by, for instance, facilitating their return to the home country during economic downturns in the United States (at least to the extent permitted by immigration and naturalization policy). Although the novelty of transnational experiences among immigrants is open to question—previous immigrants also retained ties to their homelands and often engaged in "circular migration," that is, migration back and forth between their homelands and the United States—and while globalization exacts a harsh price from poor immigrants in the United States and elsewhere, today's immigrants are creatively adapting technology and globalizing culture to soldier on, working toward a better future for their children in spite of their poverty.

Lorrin R. Thomas

See also: Asian Americans; Asian Law Caucus/Asian Law Alliance; Citizenship; Domestic Work; Immigration Policy; Informal Economy; Latino/as; Mutual Aid; Puerto Rican Migration; Social Security Act of 1935; Trade/Industrial Unions; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Immigration Policy

Federal and state policies regulating the status and rights of immigrants have had a tremendous impact on the lives and livelihoods of immigrants—especially poor and nonwhite immigrants—in the United States. Many of these laws, implemented during more than two centuries of immigration to the United States, have curtailed immigrants' economic rights and social welfare; many have been motivated by racism or by a more general nativism. The first policy regulating immigrants in the United States was enacted by Congress in 1790, limiting naturalized citizenship to "free white persons" only. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 moderated the impact of the 1790 law on some Mexicans, and following the Civil War, the Naturalization Law of 1870 permitted naturalization of Africans. But naturalization restrictions continued to bar from citizenship nonwhite groups for whom specific exception was not made—primarily Asians—until the 1940s, when geopolitical concerns began to prompt changes. During the late 1940s, certain Chinese were permitted to naturalize; then, in a comprehensive policy reversal in 1952, the McCarran-Walter Act lifted the racial bar to naturalized citizenship.

Naturalization policy was the primary immigration policy until the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1855, a naturalization law granted automatic naturalization to immigrant women who married male citizens and automatically conferred citizenship on children born abroad to male citizens. During the Civil War, Congress adopted the first federal policy affecting the admission of foreign-born people to the United States when it enacted the Act to Encourage Immigration. A wartime measure to beef up the labor supply, this was the first and last liberal immigration measure for a century.

Beginning in the 1870s, under pressure from popular agitation, Congress legislated restrictions on the entry of people it considered "undesirable" and "unassimilable." In 1875, the Page Law prohibited the entry of Chinese "prostitutes"—a term deployed to choke off the immigration of Chinese women who were not married before they arrived. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act ended the immigration of most Chinese, especially laborers. Responding to nativist opposition to immigration from eastern and southern Europe, in 1884 the Foran Act barred the immigration of contract laborers—that is, of southern and eastern Europeans whom steamship companies and heavy industry had recruited to immigrate with promises of employment and housing. In 1908, the so-called Gentleman's Agreement with Japan curbed the migration of Japanese workers, and in 1917, the Asiatic Barred Zone Act stiffened anti-Asian restrictions on immigration. In 1921, and then again in 1924, the National Origins Act ended Japanese immigration altogether and set tight quotas on the entry of immigrants from ethnic and nationality groups based on those groups' percentage of the U.S. population in 1890, when the numbers of eastern and southern Europeans had not reached their high point.

Naturalization law continued to reinforce the racist nativism of developing immigration policy. The 1907 naturalization law revoked the citizenship of U.S.-born women who married aliens, even if they never left U.S. soil. The 1922 Cable Act repealed this provision, but only for U.S. citizen women who married men from countries whose subjects were eligible for citizenship. U.S. women who married "aliens ineligible for citizenship" (67 Public Law 346)—namely, Asian men—lost their U.S. citizenship. The National Origins Act compounded these disabilities by forbidding Asian immigrant men who already were in the United States from bringing their wives to join them. Naturalization measures had a particularly acute effect on family formation, in turn constraining the development of "family economies" for some Asian immigrant men and depriving them of the support they might have had in old age from a next generation.

During the first half of the twentieth century, many states and localities reinforced nativist and racist immigration and naturalization policies with local measures restricting the rights of nonnaturalized immigrants to own or lease property, to obtain licenses for certain commercial activities, and to participate in many professions, including law, medicine, architecture, and engineering. These restrictions impeded opportunities for immigrants to achieve even a modicum of economic security.

California was the first state to institute what became known as "alien land laws." As increasing numbers of immigrants from Japan settled in California around the turn of the twentieth century (an increase spurred by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882), white Californians and their representatives in the state legislature became increasingly hostile toward these groups, many of whom were buying land in order to farm. Legislative debates to restrict aliens' ownership of land began in 1907 and resulted in a state law forbidding ownership of land by "aliens ineligible for citizenship" in 1913. In response to Japanese landowners' accommodation to the original law—transferring land titles to their American-born children, for instance—the California legislature passed a more encompassing law in 1923 making it illegal for aliens to "acquire, possess, enjoy, use, cultivate, occupy and transfer" property (Takaki 1989, 205). Several other states in the West and the Southwest adopted alien land laws in the 1920s and 1930s; more states followed suit in the era of anti-Japanese sentiment that reached its apex during World War II. In the decades between World War I and World War II, many states and municipalities also passed similar legislation regulating aliens' rights to obtain licenses for hunting and fishing; many also excluded aliens from public works jobs. In 1948, a U.S. Supreme Court decision deemed the California law unconstitutional. Some other states' restrictive laws were also abolished in the postwar years, but several states have yet to officially abolish their alien land laws.

Although states and localities continued to restrict nonnaturalized immigrants' economic rights during the World War II era, ranchers and agricultural employers in the southwestern United States were beginning to lobby for policies that would facilitate the legal immigration of seasonal workers, largely from Mexico. Such businesses depended on temporary migrants for cheap labor and sought the establishment of short-term contracts for manual labor that would attract from Mexico large numbers of workers who would not become permanent immigrants. In 1942, the U.S. and Mexican governments cooperated to institute a guest-worker program—the Bracero Program—that, until its demise in 1964, admitted farmworkers under a classification of "foreign laborers" rather than as immigrants. The short-term contracts offered the braceros a guaranteed place to live and a specified wage, but the contracts were often a losing proposition for the workers: The work was hard, the pay was poor, and the living arrangements often established what were effectively relations of debt peonage between worker and employer, whereby the laborers were forced to pay (or had portions of their pay withheld) for housing and sometimes food and other goods at noncompetitive rates that left them with little or nothing to save. Thus, although the Bracero Program and similar contract-labor programs that recruited Puerto Ricans and other seasonal workers to U.S. industry were touted as systems that protected the interests of workers by guaranteeing employers' obligation to them, the benefits to immigrants have been marginal.

The passage of the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, abolishing the discriminatory national origins quotas established in the 1920s, marked a shift in the national attitude toward immigration that was partly inspired by the emphasis of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (and of the movement that pushed for that legislation) on racial justice and opposition to discrimination. The 1965 law was a departure from the previous postwar immigration policy as it had been articulated in the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, which affirmed restrictionist policy (although the 1952 law did, finally, remove the denial of admission based on race that had been in place since 1790). In one important way, however, the Hart-Celler Act had a negative impact on some of the poorest immigrants entering the United States: It established, for the first time, annual ceilings on immigration from Western Hemisphere countries, spurring a massive increase in the number of illegal—and overwhelmingly impoverished—immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. Lack of documentation for these immigrants translated to a higher likelihood that they would find only sub-minimum-wage work and to a lack of entitlement (in the absence of a legal Social Security number) to federal benefits like Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and unemployment insurance.

By the late 1970s, Congress began to view the rise in illegal immigration as a significant problem, and it established the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy. This commission's most important initiative affecting the lives of poor immigrants was the 1980 Refugee Act, which allowed people fleeing their home country due to persecution to enter the United States under a separate and more liberal admissions system. Although this new law opened doors for many immigrants fleeing oppressive regimes in various parts of the world, it also set in motion a new and, according to many, unjust hierarchy of opportunity among immigrants, not just in terms of access to the United States but in terms of benefits and federal support once in the United States. Whereas Cuban and Vietnamese immigrants in the 1980s—fleeing governments opposed by the United States—were readily granted refugee status and became eligible not just for welfare benefits but also for low-interest loans, immigrants fleeing extreme poverty and political violence in countries like Haiti, El Salvador, and Guatemala—whose governments supported U.S. interests—were denied refugee status. Many such immigrants have entered the United States as "illegals" and have little hope of gaining the civil and economic protections conferred on their more fortunate counterparts who are officially deemed "refugees."

Social policies passed at both the state and federal levels during the mid-1990s cemented the distinctions between documented and undocumented immigrants, placing "illegals" at an even greater disadvantage. At the state level, California led the way—as it had at the beginning of the century—in the effort to pass restrictive policies to deter immigration in the state, particularly illegal immigration. In 1994, a 59 percent majority of California residents ratified Proposition 187, a controversial ballot initiative that would deny undocumented immigrants and their children access to most health, education, and welfare benefits controlled by the state. Although Proposition 187 was eventually jettisoned after a series of court challenges deemed it an unconstitutional regulation of immigration, support for the initiative demonstrated how widespread was the disapproval for public spending on undocumented immigrants in California. It also signaled an increasing concern at the national level about the cost of supporting noncitizen immigrants who had become "public charges" because of age, unemployment, or disability.

The sweeping welfare reforms enacted in 1996 included a number of provisions restricting access of immigrants—both legal and illegal—to federal welfare benefits. Restrictions applying to undocumented immigrants paralleled those in California's Proposition 187: These immigrants were declared ineligible for virtually every federal health and welfare provision except for emergency medical care. The 1996 welfare law also cut off access to social welfare programs for many documented, "legal" immigrants. Restrictive provisions included a five-year ban on nonnaturalized immigrant eligibility for welfare; federal permission for states to withhold benefits from all immigrants; the requirement that an immigrant have ten years of Social Security employment before being eligible for key programs; and outright prohibitions on immigrant eligibility for other programs. Although a pro-immigration lobby managed to reverse some of these restrictions in 1997, at least for documented immigrants who were in the United States before the 1996 law was enacted, the trends in immigration policy in the 1990s—and the public opinion behind those trends—reveal immigrants' precarious access to a "safety net" in the United States.

Lorrin R. Thomas

See also: Asian Americans; Bracero Program; Citizenship; Dillingham Commission; Immigrants and Immigration; Latino/as; Refugee Policy; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Income and Wage Inequality

Inequality is higher in the United States than in any other developed country, and in recent decades it has been rising at a faster rate than in any country except Great Britain. Rising inequality is especially notable given that it defies expectations. Since the late 1920s, upper-income shares had been declining, or at least holding steady. Moreover, according to what is known as the Kuznets hypothesis (after economist Simon Kuznets), inequality was thought to follow an inverted *U* shape, rising initially with industrial development and then falling as the gains of development become more widely shared through, among other things, universal education and democracy (Kuznets 1955).

Until the 1970s, this seemed about right. First, available data, which were primarily for white men, indicated a decline in the wage gap between skill groups as the supply of high-skill groups—the high school educated in the 1910s and 1920s and the college educated in the 1940s and later—generally outpaced demand (Goldin and Katz 2001). Second, social movements fought for new redistributive institutions both during the period of great economic insecurity in the 1930s and during the period of great economic prosperity in the 1960s. New legislation (1) allowed a fairer distribution of economic rewards between employers and workers (for example, via collective bargaining and the minimum wage), (2) established a social safety net (such programs as unemployment insurance and Social Security), and (3) incorporated previously excluded workers into the mainstream of the economy (for example, through antidiscrimination and affirmative action programs). As a result, wages became more evenly distributed across skill and class as well as across other kinds of divisions, such as gender and race.

Several more contingent factors were also important. First, the Great Depression wiped out large concentrations of capital income (Piketty and Saez 2003). Second, the world wars boosted industrial production and imposed price controls, increasing demand at the bottom and reining in wages at the top. Finally, the strong economic growth of the immediate post–World War II period was helped along by the relative weakness of war-torn Europe. These economic shocks and geopolitical conditions suggest that technological advances and democratic deepening may be necessary but not sufficient explanations of changes in inequality.

Putting the pieces of the inequality puzzle together becomes even less straightforward in the post-1960s period, when the trend in inequality took everyone by surprise by reversing course and climbing, in many cases, to prewar levels. Nearly all forms of economic inequality began to rise in either the 1970s or the 1980s, the major exception being gender inequality. Although standard indices of income inequality, such as the Gini coefficient, shot up, further exploration revealed several unique aspects of the "new" wage inequality (Levy and Murnane 1992).

First, the spread between high and low wages grew *within* groups—within racial groups (that is, *among* Blacks and *among* whites), within gender groups, within education groups, and so on. The dispersion of wages was so pervasive that it is unlikely that a temporary mismatch in relative supply and demand was the only or entire story. In fact, the largest influx into the labor force came from women, yet their relative wages *increased*. Second, real inflation-adjusted wages actually declined for significant shares of the workforce, most dramatically for less-educated men but also for the median male worker. Finally, the compensation of those at the very top of the income distribution—in the top 1 percent—skyrocketed, as did the income of top executives.

Once again, external shocks, long-term developmental dynamics, and institutional reconfigurations each play a role in explaining these new dynamics. In the early 1970s, the Vietnam War and surging oil prices combined with increasing international competition and technological change (for example, the automation of factory jobs) to send the U.S. economy into a tailspin of increasing inflation and unemployment and declining output and productivity growth (Piore and Sabel 1984). The 1970s downturn was used to justify free-market experimentation on a grand scale: Industries were deregulated, unions were crushed, jobs were outsourced, investors gained dominance, and the minimum wage fell to historic lows. The net result was a decisive upward redistribution of income. Although it was hoped that the fruits of restructuring and the computer revolution would eventually "trickle down," the low unemployment and high growth and high productivity of the late 1990s boom did not last long enough to reduce levels of *income* inequality, though it did reduce some forms of *wage* inequality by lifting wages at the bottom, at least temporarily (DeNavas-Walt and Cleveland 2002).

It might be tempting to conclude that the main form of inequality today is between class or skill groups. Although it is true that gender and racial inequality have declined and that increasing inequality within these groups is compelling, the decline in *attention* to gender and racial inequality is misplaced. They each continue to be high in absolute terms and continue to follow relatively separate dynamics, both from each other and from class inequality (McCall 2001). For example, we see persistent wage discrimination against women with caregiving responsibilities, persistent gaps in wealth and proximity to high-quality schools and jobs between racial groups, and persistent concentrations of women and racial minorities in the lowest-wage jobs. This makes a more wide-ranging and integrated analysis of contemporary wage and income inequality both important and challenging.

Leslie McCall

See also: Economic Theories; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Labor Markets; Wealth, Distribution/Concentration

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Income-Maintenance Policy

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); General Assistance; Relief; Social Security; Supplemental Security Income

Indentured Servitude

Indentured servitude was an economic institution of the British American colonies that was created to lure a large supply of labor from the Old World to the New. Within a decade of the establishment of the Virginia colony in the early 1600s, the abundance of land and the absence of the substantial, low-cost workforce the colonists saw as necessary to exploit the economic potential of that land led them to embrace the concept of indentured servitude. In exchange for the costs of the transatlantic voyage, a citizen of Europe could sign an "indenture," a contract essentially selling his or her labor for a fixed number of years to a colonial landholder. At the end of this term, generally between four and seven years, the servant would be freed and could then pursue an independent existence on a small grant of land (if this was part of the contract), on the western frontier (if he or she could survive the dangers inherent to this prospect), or (quite frequently) on the margins of colonial society. By most estimates, between one-half and three-quarters of all white immigrants to the American colonies in the seventeenth century came as indentured servants.

At first, most indentured servants fit a profile: Most were male, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, single, traveling alone, and English. Later, as economic opportunities expanded in England, indentured servants came more often from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Germany. However, there was always a mix of the skilled and unskilled, the literate and illiterate, women, children, convicts, paupers, and adventure-seeking members of the Old World middle class intent on finding new opportunities in the colonies. Their destinations varied as well, with fewer going to New England and the "middle colonies" and far more destined for the southern mainland colonies and the English West Indies. Most entered upon their indenture voluntarily,

I hereby assign & convey to James Madison President [illegible]
-ted States the within named servant John [illegible]
during the remaining term of his service [illegible] day of [illegible]
last past [illegible] to the [illegible]
the 19th day of April 1809 at Monticello Virginia.

Sales contract between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison for an indentured servant's remaining term, April 19, 1809. President Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) wrote this contract for the sale of the remainder of the term of service of an indentured servant, John Freeman, to President James Madison (1751–1836). Both Jefferson and Madison were the owners of many slaves, but neither possessed claims to many indentured servants. The servant in question was probably a free black man, with a special skill as an artisan, who would have been of particular value to Madison, because he was expanding his plantation house. (Library of Congress, Carter G. Woodson Collection) though large numbers did not: English citizens convicted of capital crimes were sometimes sold into indentured servitude as an alternative to the death sentence, indebted citizens were sent to work off their debts, and orphans and "vagrants" were rounded up off the streets of England and forced into servitude. Children were especially valuable as indentured servants, since they were required to maintain their servitude until they reached adulthood at age twenty-one. In all, several hundred thousand indentured servants immigrated to the British colonies.

The experience of indentured servitude was probably as varied as its demographics. Some indentured servants enjoyed decent treatment by their employers and had good prospects for establishing small farms after gaining their freedom. On the other hand, historical records indicate that this was not the case for many others. Indentured servants were often beaten, the women were often raped, and intolerable living conditions spelled the death of nearly half of all indentured servants within the first two years of service. Indentured servants had no voting rights and could not travel, sell or buy goods, or marry without the permission of their masters. However, unlike the slaves who would eventually replace them, indentured servants did enjoy legal recognition as individuals and therefore had the right to sue and give testimony. Furthermore, they were granted the full rights of free men upon termination of their contract, with the important caveat that voting rights for men were contingent upon land ownership. Yet the fact that the masters always possessed the power to hire out or sell their indentured servants, even if this meant separating families, blurred the distinction between servant and slave. Also, many masters found ways of extending the period of servitude by utilizing a legal system structured to severely punish those who sought to escape their masters or who failed to meet the master's demands. As earlier waves of indentured servants gained their freedom, freedmen and freedwomen were increasingly seen as a threat to the interests of the landed class, creating incentives for even harsher conditions, longer terms of servitude, and fewer rights for indentured servants.

Eventually, indentured servants were replaced by slaves. In every colony that adopted slavery, indentured servitude had preceded it. A number of scholars of early America have suggested that indentured servitude, which treated individuals primarily as property, paved the way for slavery in important respects. Many of the first Blacks brought to the colonies were indentured servants, and, during a transitional period, white and Black indentured servants simultaneously filled the colonial labor pool. The relative expense of indentured servitude compared to slavery, and the racist rationale applied toward the new African workers, rapidly ended the large-scale use of indentured servants in favor of wholesale slavery. Although very limited use of indentured servitude continued in the former colonies even after the American Revolution, the abolition of slavery in the British sugar colonies in the early nineteenth century led to a renewal of the use of indentured servitude there, as well as in parts of South America. The institution finally died out there in 1917, marking three centuries of indentured servitude in the Americas.

The importance of indentured servitude in shaping U.S. political roots and the structure of U.S. society has often been overlooked. Though most believe America was "born free" (as French writer Alexis de Tocqueville put it in his renowned observations of *Democracy in America*) and without the class divisions that plagued the Old World, the truth is that colonial America was built upon a clear class hierarchy consisting of a class of landed elites, an intermediate class of freed servants, and a large population of bound laborers—the indentured servants. As more indentured servants gained their freedom only to discover they had far less opportunity than they had anticipated, tension mounted between the masters and their old servants, sometimes breaking out into open rebellion, as in Bacon's Rebellion of 1670. Slavery inserted a new underclass into the system and fundamentally reshaped society, for earlier class divisions now appeared to be less important than racial ones. Poor whites were convinced they had more in common with the wealthy whites than with the Black slaves, and this perception allowed the colonists to convince their former servants to ally with them against the slave class. This early schism between the poorest whites and Blacks would shape the structure and perception of society in the United States for centuries to come.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Slavery

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Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)

The Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) is the nation's oldest and largest community organizing network working to build power for low-income communities. The network was founded in 1940 by Saul Alinsky, and today "Industrial Areas Foundation" is the name both of the institute that provides organizers and training services to local affiliates and of the network to which all affiliates belong. The IAF has contracts with approximately sixty-five American groups and works with sister networks in the United Kingdom and South Africa. Local IAF organizations work together at the statewide level in a number of states, most notably Texas, and often coordinate training and strategy at regional levels.

Influenced by the union organizing movement of the 1930s, Alinsky sought to build the power of workers where they lived, that is, in the neighborhoods around factories, hence the name "industrial areas." He formed his first group, the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council in Chicago, by working with established churches and neighborhood associations. He then established the IAF to help spread community organizing to other parts of the country, working in white ethnic and Black communities. Alinsky and the IAF became widely known for using militant tactics to win better services and a share of power for poor neighborhoods. Alinsky elaborated his organizing tactics, and his brand of democratic populism more generally, in *Rules for Radicals* (Alinsky [1971] 1989).

Upon Alinsky's death in 1972, the IAF underwent a significant transformation. Alinsky's successor as IAF director, Ed Chambers, moved to systematize the training of organizers and pushed the IAF, which had long focused on material self-interest, to take people's values more seriously as a foundation for organizing (Reitzes and Reitzes 1987, 92–100). The most prominent developments came through the work of IAF organizer Ernesto Cortes Jr. in Texas. Cortes built Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio in the early 1970s by working with a network of Catholic parishes serving Mexican Americans. COPS emerged as arguably the most powerful community organization in the country, and it permanently altered power relationships in the city. COPS has garnered over $1 billion in public and private funds for an extensive array of projects in its neighborhoods: affordable housing, job training, after-school programs, health clinics, and street and drainage projects, among others (Warren 2001).

The IAF emerged from the 1970s with a distinctive model for community organizing. Local groups are constituted by institutions (for example, congregations), engage faith traditions to motivate and frame action, and focus on the development of indigenous leaders, often women, drawn from the member institutions. The IAF refers to this model as "broad-based," but others use the term "faith-based" (sometimes "congregation-based") in light of the predominant role of faith institutions and values in the organizing approach.

With this model, the IAF has developed multi-issue organizations that are highly participatory, persist over the years, often draw leaders together across different racial and socioeconomic groupings, and increasingly take in full metropolitan areas. IAF groups have initiated a number of innovative policies to address the needs of poor and working-class communities: East Brooklyn Congregations launched Nehemiah Homes, which became a national model for affordable housing; BUILD in Baltimore was a key player in the nation's first living-wage campaign; COPS and its sister group Metro Alliance initiated the Project QUEST job training program in San Antonio; and the Texas statewide IAF network built the Alliance Schools, the nation's largest school reform project based upon parent and community organizing.

Mark R. Warren

See also: Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN); Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations; Living-Wage Campaigns

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Industrialization

Industrialization is the rapid growth of the manufacturing sector, an event that traces its origins to the early nineteenth century. This shift toward goods made in factories and by machines generally raised incomes and expanded choices for Americans. For those employed in industry, whether native born or immigrant, real wages rose impressively over the nineteenth century. Yet industrialization did bring poverty to some as it encouraged migration to the cities and exposed workers and their families to unemployment, injury, and disease. It also distributed wages and opportunities unequally: For example, women and children were among the earliest industrial workers, but by the early twentieth century, their presence had shriveled, especially in the new mass-production industries. Both African Americans and women experienced discrimination when they sought the better-paying jobs available in American factories.

Before the nineteenth century, most American goods were made in households or small shops or mills by individuals who possessed various levels of skills. Although some urban craftsmen may have earned substantial incomes, most were quite poor. Probated estates from the time of the American Revolution reveal craftsmen as among the least wealthy of white Americans. But they enjoyed a certain independence as they crafted goods from the raw material to the finished product.

Industrialization altered the way goods were made. First, it involved breaking the manufacturing process down into tasks and assigning people to tasks instead of having individuals fashion an entire product. This enabled manufacturers to hire the less skilled, notably women and children, to do the simplest tasks while having the more skilled, usually men, concentrate upon the most demanding jobs. Second, wherever possible, manufacturers introduced machines to increase the quantity of goods produced and to save labor. As markets grew, the numbers of workers multiplied.

The explosion of the manufacturing sector created a tremendous demand for labor, which could not be met simply by recruiting men from the countryside. Initially, manufacturers turned to women and children, who were willing to work for much lower wages than their fathers and brothers. Later, the manufacturers hired immigrants, who were overwhelmingly male, to labor in American industry. Most of these workers toiled in cities, where manufacturers sought ready access to supplies, labor, and markets.

Historians and economists have disagreed about the impact of industrialization and of the quickened pace of immigration and urbanization that accompanied it. Historians tend to be negative in their assessment of industrialization, highlighting the loss of artisanal skill and independence, which surely happened to some workers. They note that wages were low and that a reserve army of unemployed loitered outside the factory gates hoping to underbid the workers within. Much, perhaps most, of the working class lived on the edge of poverty. Unemployment, unknown on the farm, became common. Industrial accidents were distressingly frequent, and compensation for injury or death was woefully inadequate. The costs of occupational diseases were borne solely by the worker. For women, African Americans, and immigrants, industrialization brought pervasive discrimination.

Economists tend to be much more positive. They note that the migration to factories from the countryside and from abroad was voluntary. Although depressions could bring wage cuts, when viewed over the long haul, wages rose markedly for all identifiable groups: men, women, African Americans, and immigrants. Factory work offered an alternative to other, more poorly paying jobs for women in the antebellum period and drove up women's wages from roughly a quarter to better than a half that of men's wages (Goldin 1990, 63–66). Similarly, when compared to their opportunities in the Old World, employment in American factories was a decided improvement for immigrants. Chronically short of labor, the United States offered both high wages and opportunity.

What was the impact of industrialization upon the well-being of its participants? American industrial wages were high compared to those of other nations, and they rose more than 1 percent annually (Margo 2000, 224). These increases over a century meant that the material position of workers in industry must have improved. Statistics from the period show high rates of saving, no doubt necessitated by the absence of meaningful government safety nets. The most commonly cited figures show that manufacturing and mining incomes exceeded the national average for all workers by more than 10 percent on the eve of the Civil War and by 25 percent by the end of the nineteenth century (Gallman 1972, 53). Industrialization also widened the choices of goods available. Indeed, it encouraged escalating consumption, since the real prices of manufactured goods fell dramatically.

Although the primary beneficiaries of these gains would be native-born white males, immigrants, women, and African Americans were employed in industry as well. Immigrants fared the best of these three groups, since they migrated to the rapidly growing industrial centers and readily found jobs. By the end of the nineteenth century, perhaps one-third of all manufacturing workers were foreign born. To be sure, they faced discrimination, and they could not expect to climb to the highest rungs of the occupational ladders. After adjusting for worker and industry characteristics, a large study of workers at the turn of the century found that those from northern and western Europe earned about 2 percent, or 20 cents, less a week than the native born, whereas those from southern and eastern Europe earned 8 percent, or $1.07, less (McGouldrick and Tannen 1977, 734).

Over the course of the nineteenth century,

Boys working at a West Virginia glass factory, 1908. (Library of Congress)

women became a smaller proportion of the manufacturing labor force. In 1840, women accounted for some 40 percent of the labor force; by 1890, this percentage had halved. To a considerable extent, their exodus was voluntary, and most people believed that married women should not work outside of the home. But some of this decline was due to the fact that the industries associated with women, such as textiles and clothing, grew rapidly before the Civil War and failed to keep pace after the war. Employment was highly sex segregated: Men dominated the most dynamic and the highest-paying industries of the late nineteenth century. Earning slightly more than half as much as men, most women were more than happy to leave the factory upon marriage and never return. Some did not have that option, and with comparatively low wages and almost no opportunity for advancement, they lived on the edge of subsistence.

Like women, African Americans were not extensively employed in industry before World War I. Not only did they face discrimination, but some 90 percent of Blacks lived in the heavily agricultural South. Racial segregation prevailed, with African Americans dominant in the tobacco, iron and steel, and lumber industries, while whites held most of the jobs in the textile industry. Although they worked in different industries, unskilled Blacks and whites made about the same wages. But here as with women, advancement up the occupational ladder was well nigh impossible. For African American men with families, in the postbellum South, work in the cotton fields was a better choice than work in the factories (Wright 1986, 185).

Although the trend may have been toward long-term improvements in income and consumption, workers could and did face short but intense periods of rising unemployment, lagging wages, and escalating costs for the necessities of life. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, for example, an influx of immigrants combined with a slowing economy and soaring food prices and rents brought genuine hardship. Some workers saw their skills eroded by the division of labor and mechanization, although the process of technological unemployment was not nearly as rapid in the nineteenth century as it would be in the late twentieth. Moreover, the construction, repair, and operation of machinery required new skills. Mechanization did reduce the demand for genuinely raw, unskilled labor, especially in the later period when the application of steam power and electric motors eliminated much of the backbreaking toil associated with industrialization.

Quickening industrialization coincided with rising death rates in the United States. Abundant evidence exists to show that mortality rose in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. In this period, many, perhaps most, Americans were stunted or wasted; that is, they did not absorb enough calories to achieve optimal heights and weights. Although some of this may have been due to inadequate diets, most experts argue that the main explanation is to be found in the caloric demands of factory work, especially to fight off infectious air- and water-borne diseases (Steckel 1991, 36–41). By bringing people together in factories, and especially in urban factories, industrialization facilitated the spread of such highly contagious diseases as cholera, yellow fever, typhus, and smallpox. The decline in death rates that began in the last third of the nineteenth century appears to have been due to advances in public health and the construction of urban water and sewer systems.

The primary impact of industrialization upon poverty was to reduce its incidence. Although the yardstick used to measure poverty is subjective, informed estimates show that poverty declined markedly over the course of the nineteenth century. Both by offering good jobs and by providing goods at ever-lower prices, industrialization contributed to that decline. The exceptions to this generalization are those who faced rampant discrimination: married women, African Americans, and southern and eastern Europeans.

Industrialization could and did lead to poverty for some workers and their families, even as many benefited from improved wages and jobs. The greater use of machines with more power meant that work became more dangerous, and the numbers of industrial accidents had soared by the late nineteenth century. Those who were hurt in such accidents could expect little if any compensation from their employers, for companies employed a number of legal stratagems to avoid payouts. This was remedied to some extent with the development of workmen's compensation laws in the early twentieth century. Occupational diseases, such as brown lung for textile workers, shortened careers and life expectancies. Since most families depended overwhelmingly upon the income of the primary breadwinner, incapacitating illness or death could bring widespread misery.

Unemployment was a common event in the nineteenth century, if somewhat more episodic and less long-lasting than unemployment today. Machines broke down, business slowed, the economy went into depression, and organizing workers went on strike; firms adjusted by laying off workers. Workers who lived in cities could not turn to traditional methods of getting by. They could not go to the garden, fish, or hunt. They might find day labor, but hard times tended to result in a tight job market for all. The opportunities for wives and children to work diminished with advanced industrialization as outwork, such as sewing shirts and weaving hats, became mechanized. One of the casualties of industrialization was a certain independence from the market.

Diane Lindstrom

See also: Child Labor; Economic Depression; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Sweatshop; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Informal Economy

"Informal," "black," "underground," or "shadow" economy are all terms for economic activity that—for various reasons—operates outside the reach of government or other regulatory agencies and thus is unofficially and in large part illegally exempt from taxation, labor law, official safety regulations, and the like. This includes paid work involving the production and sale of goods and services that are unregistered by or hidden from the government in order to avoid taxes, Social Security costs, or labor laws but that are legal in all other respects. Paid informal work also includes all legitimate activities where payments received by individuals are not declared to the authorities. The informal economy also encompasses work in illegal activities, such as prostitution, the manufacture and sale of illicit goods, and drug peddling. Overall, then, what makes these varied enterprises part of the informal economy is that they involve evasion of both direct and indirect taxes, Social Security fraud where the officially unemployed are working while claiming benefits, and avoidance of labor legislation, such as employers' insurance contributions, minimum-wage agreements, or certain safety and other standards in the workplace. These activities are often accomplished by hiring labor off the books, subcontracting work to small firms, or asking the self-employed to work for below-minimum wages (Williams and Windebank 1998, 4). Moreover, because much of what takes place is hidden from official view, there are many myths about this type of employment, particularly concerning its growth in advanced countries such as the United States, and about its participants, who are stereotypically characterized as the unemployed, the impoverished, women, immigrants, and ethnic minorities in low-income communities. Although these groups are indeed heavily represented in the informal economy, a great deal of the activity in this sector is actually conducted by employed white men supplementing income from their "regular" jobs. In addition, some analysts argue that unregulated work has become an increasingly integral dimension of global capitalism.

Manuel Castells and Alejandro Portes demonstrated the impact of alternative or informal income-generating activities characterized by one central feature: "[I]t is unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment" (1989, 12). As a result of the absence of institutional regulations, standard work processes are ignored, changed, or amended. For example, labor may be clandestine, undeclared, paid at less than the minimum wage, or employed under circumstances that society's norms would not otherwise allow. Informal employment often does not adhere to institutional regulations that involve land use zoning, safety standards, hazardous or toxic dumping in the workplace, and other health-related work issues.

Three primary debates drive most of the research on informal employment and help us better understand the origins and nature of this alternative economic activity and the participation of immigrants, ethnic and racial minorities, women, and other marginalized groups in this form of employment: formalization, informalization, and marginality theses.

The formalization thesis argues that as economies become more developed or advanced, informal employment declines, eventually disappearing. This notion is rooted in dichotomies between "first" and "third" worlds. Third world countries are defined in this thesis as economically underdeveloped vis-à-vis their more "advanced," industrialized, technologically driven first world counterparts. According to this thesis, informality exists in developing countries and is part and parcel of their "backwardness," which will eventually disappear as economic advancement and modernization occur. Immigrants, especially those coming from third world or undeveloped countries, export their economic activities, including informal employment. Proponents of this argument use this rationale to explain the preponderance of informal activities in countries such as the United States, Canada, and other advanced economies, in effect treating the informal economy as a temporary third world holdover in otherwise modern first world economies.

On the other hand, the informalization thesis argues that advanced economies are witnessing a growth of informal economic activity for reasons having to do with economic restructuring and globalization. For example, Saskia Sassen (2000) argues that the very development that is occurring in advanced and developing economies is causing a growth of informality. A combination of growing inequality in earnings and growing inequality in profits among different sectors of the urban economy has promoted informalization of an array of economic activities: For example, manufacturers turn to contracting out or to sweatshop labor in order to reduce labor costs and remain competitive. She argues that informal employment is a structured outcome of current trends in advanced economies (Sassen 2000, 7). As a result of restructuring and other economic, social, and political fissures, informal employment has increased in visibility, stature, and number of participants. Informalization is embedded in the structure of the current economic system and is particularly manifest in large cities, where informalization emerges as a set of flexible maximizing strategies employed by individuals, firms, consumers, and producers in a context of growing inequality in earnings and in profit-making capabilities.

Finally, the marginality thesis states that immigrants, women, ethnic minorities, and other vulnerable groups participate in informal employment at higher rates because their status is peripheral, disadvantaged, and outside the margins of formal economic activity. Are immigrants (and racial and ethnic minorities) more prone to informal employment? According to an extensive review of the literature on informal employment (Williams and Windebank 1998), they are. However, this conclusion is mostly based on U.S. research on this topic, the vast majority of it concerning the extent to which immigrant and minority populations engage in informal employment and the type of paid activities making up informal employment. Most work on this topic focuses on low-paid, labor-intensive, nonunionized, and exploitative occupations in poorer areas with high concentrations of immigrants, ethnic minorities, or both (see Fernandez-Kelly and Garcia 1989; Sassen 1989; Stepick 1989). As a result of this focus, informal employment is closely associated with immigrants and minorities. One should be cautious, however, in attributing all, or even a majority, of informal employment to immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities. Informal employment also includes work in white-collar, pink-collar, and blue-collar industries in which nonminority and nonimmigrant groups participate in large numbers.

Even among immigrants and ethnic minorities, further delineation of these two groups is needed to better assess their participation in informal employment. For example, it is important to distinguish among immigrants of different origins and with different legal statuses when assessing their employment opportunities. Naturalized legal immigrants have an experience in the U.S. labor market that is qualitatively different from that of unauthorized immigrants who entered the country without inspection and from those who overstayed their student or tourist visas. Unauthorized immigrants in the United States, by virtue of their tenuous status, participate in informal employment at higher rates than do authorized immigrants.

Excluded from formal employment by the lack of proper documentation, unauthorized immigrants have little choice but to engage in informal employment as a means of generating income. As a result, the most visible forms of informal economic activity are replete with immigrant participants, ostensibly immigrants without proper documents. However, not all unauthorized immigrants partake in informal work. Many employers in the formal sector pay little attention to federal regulations and may not adhere to the strict statutes governing new hires and the required documents needed to finalize employment. In addition, unauthorized immigrants can seek fraudulent documents or use someone else's documents to obtain formal employment. In 1996 (the last time the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the size of the unauthorized population), it was estimated that there were 5 million immigrants without documents in the United States, with approximately half coming from Mexico, and slightly less than half being concentrated in California (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 2002). Although obviously engaged to a greater extent in informal activity than other groups, immigrants also participate in other forms of marginal, formal sector employment, such as flexible or contingent work.

Are the poor, particularly those who are unemployed, more prone to participate in informal employment activities? The primary connection of informality to the poor is through alleged cases of benefit fraud committed by so-called welfare cheats—women and men who claim benefits while also employed in an underground activity so that earnings and taxes are not reported to a government agency. Or, similarly, those without work as a result of structural economic changes—such as a recession—might turn to informal employment as a buffer or alternative to unemployment. Most analyses of poor people participating in informal employment assume that a significant percentage of the officially unemployed are in reality working off the books, being paid in tax-free cash. However, according to Colin Williams and Jan Windebank (1998, 50), participants in informal employment are not usually the jobless, nor are participants doing it as a survival strategy as a result of economic exclusion or unemployment. Instead, their review of research in this area shows that the unemployed find it more difficult than the employed to augment their incomes through informal employment. Rather, working in informal jobs is primarily a strategy to accumulate extra resources for those who already have a job. The vast majority of studies find that the employed tend to engage in more autonomous, nonroutine, and rewarding informal jobs than do the unemployed, who undertake lower-paid and more routine, exploitative, and monotonous informal employment (Williams and Windebank 1998, 52). Here, they suggest a segmented informal market in which employed workers get the better informal jobs while unemployed workers get the worse informal jobs.

The literature concerning the participation of the unemployed or the poor in informal employment therefore suggests that informal employment is concentrated among those who already have a formal occupation and who find relatively well-paid informal employment. These workers get side jobs, for example, if they are in the construction industry and a neighbor fancies their skills and hires them for a "weekend" job repairing or refurbishing the neighbor's home. Other examples include repairmen who will do side jobs, often conducted on a self-employed basis, for a fee below market but clearly profitable. On the other hand, the unemployed or poor generally engage in relatively low-paid organized informal employment, which tends to be more exploitative, more dangerous, and more poorly paid. As a result, the unemployed and the poor do not disproportionately participate in or gain from informal employment, and such employment should not necessarily be considered a reliable survival strategy.

What is the gender division of informal employment? According to Williams and Windebank (1998, 66), studies on informal employment indicate that men constitute the majority of the informal labor force. Of course, exceptions to this general rule exist: In many regions and in occupations such as care work and domestic work, women are participating in larger numbers than men. What is clear is that when women do participate in informal employment, they work primarily in highly exploitative jobs and they are more likely to be poorly paid. In contrast, men tend to be engaged in the higher-paid and more autonomous forms of informal employment (Williams and Windebank 1998, 80), such as construction, repair, and landscaping.

Other important gender factors similarly constrain and aid both genders in their participation in informal employment. For example, women participate in informal employment on a part-time basis mostly because of their domestic roles and household responsibility constraints. Furthermore, their motivation is more economic, based upon the desire to generate extra income to help the family get by during lean times. According to Williams and Windebank (1998, 80), for men, informal employment is more irregular but is more likely to be full-time, and it is often undertaken for the purpose of earning spare cash for socializing and for differentiating themselves from the domestic sphere and women. Therefore, a clear gender segmentation of the informal labor market is evident, in terms of the work undertaken, motivations, pay, and the types of men and women who undertake this line of work.

Abel Valenzuela Jr.

See also: Day Labor; Domestic Work; Labor Markets; Unemployment

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Institutionalization

See Crime Policy; Mental Health Policy; Orphanages; Poorhouse/Almshouse

Islam

The religion of Islam in the United States influences poverty and social welfare through the moral and spiritual dimensions of its teachings and programs sponsored by mosques. Of the 5 million to 7 million Muslims in the United States, 29 percent are African American; 29 percent are South Asian American; 20 percent are Arab American; and 22 percent are "others," mainly Africans, Southeast Asians, Bosnians, and Hispanics and Latinos (Bagby, Perle, and Frohle 2001). Recognizing the diversity of American Muslims, this entry will draw its examples primarily from the African American Muslim community.

The Moral and Spiritual Dimensions of Islam

The simplicity of Islam's Five Pillars has been attractive to people from all class strata, especially the poor. In the first pillar, a Muslim convert begins by publicly reciting the creed, or *shahadah:* "There is one God, Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet." By adhering to a schedule of five formal prayers, or *salat,* from sunrise to evening, that person fulfills the second pillar and begins to develop an Islamic or God consciousness and an internal discipline. The deep compassion of Islam is found in the third pillar, which requires believers to give 2.5 percent of their annual savings to the poor each year. What is often called the charity, or *zakat,* is given to the mosque for distribution to poor people in the neighborhood. Muslims can also make voluntary contributions, called *sadaqa,* for the maintenance of the mosque, the salary of the imam, and other charitable efforts. The fourth pillar, fasting during the lunar month of Ramadan, also contributes to the development of internal discipline. From sunrise until sunset, a Muslim abstains from food, drink, and sexual pleasures. At the end of the thirty-day fast, the first official holiday celebration of Islam, Id al-Fitr, takes place. Gifts are exchanged, and everyone, including the poor, are invited to a feast at the local mosque. The fifth and final pillar, the *hajj,* or pilgrimage to Mecca, should take place at least once in a lifetime if a Muslim can afford it. During the *hajj,* all pilgrims wear a similar white garb, removing all status symbols and class distinctions. The second holiday, Id al-Adha, takes place at the end of the annual *hajj* period; sheep are slaughtered, and the excess meat is passed out to the poor.

The Five Pillars have built within Islam's doctrines and rituals a strong concern for the poor, beginning with the requirement of charity, or the "poor tax," and the feeding of poor people during its two major holiday celebrations. However, Islam also moves beyond charitable acts by also emphasizing the development of the internal discipline that is required by five daily prayers and fasting for thirty days. As Max Weber argued and as numerous studies have shown, the development of a disciplined moral life can lead poor people out of poverty, given the right conditions and opportunities. Islam's most important contribution to the discussion of poverty and social welfare concerns the formation of a disciplined life as a way out of poverty.

Besides the Five Pillars, the Qur'an and the deeds and sayings, or *hadith,* of the Prophet Muhammad and his four senior companions form the moral basis for Islam and Islamic law.

Muhammad's loss of both parents by the age of six reinforced Islam's concern for "widows and orphans," the most vulnerable and least fortunate people in pre-Islamic Arabia. Muhammad taught that when Muslims serve the needs of their fellow human beings, they are also serving God. The teachings of Islam also support strong and stable families.

In his farewell speech, the Prophet said that Muslims should treat each other as "brothers and sisters" and that they should not practice "usury" (charging interest on money that is loaned). There is an incipient type of socialism within Islam, where the practice is that Muslims do not charge interest on loans to fellow Muslims. However, an interest payment can be charged on loans to non-Muslims. This socialistic emphasis in Islam has made the religion open to social welfare programs for the poor.

Social Service Programs Sponsored by African American Mosques

A national field survey of 130 predominantly African American mosques examined the types of community outreach programs sponsored by these mosques, including their cooperation with social service agencies. Almost all of the community outreach programs in the study, which are directly sponsored by the mosques themselves or in cooperation with other social agencies or organizations, have an impact upon families in poor neighborhoods. The data showed that 67 percent of the mosques sponsor programs directly to deal with community problems, while 75 percent of them work with other social agencies on issues affecting their communities. The largest direct program (found in 74 percent of the mosques studied) is the requirement of *zakat,* charity to the poor or to those in need and one of the Five Pillars of Islam. *Zakat* constitutes 2.5 percent of one's annual savings. It is given to the mosque, and the imam distributes the charity. Thirty-nine percent of the mosques sponsor their own food or clothing banks for the poor; 82 percent of the imams provide counseling to their members and the community, and marital concerns account for 52 percent of such counseling. One of the unusual programs that Muslim mosques offer provides temporary housing for the homeless, especially ex-offenders (31 percent). Almost all mosques will provide temporary shelter for travelers and visitors; the physical space of a mosque includes a room or place for overnight guests (Mamiya 2002, 40–43).

Since alcohol and drugs are strongly forbidden by Islamic law, Muslims are generally inclined to participate actively in programs against substance abuse. Thirty-eight percent of the mosques sponsor their own programs, such as Muslims Anonymous or Alcoholics Anonymous groups, and 59 percent of them cooperate with other community agencies and organizations in programs against substance abuse. Similarly, the Islamic ethic of self-defense enables African American Muslim congregations to become more actively involved than Black churches in programs of Neighborhood Watch and security patrols against criminal activity (16 percent) and in working with street gangs and troubled youth (33 percent). It is not unusual to hear an African American imam talk about "cleaning up" the neighborhood around the mosque to rid the area of drug dealers, prostitutes, and petty criminals. Part of the task of cleaning up may involve carrying arms or using strong-arm tactics, which most Christian clergy are not prepared to do. These programs of antidrug and anticrime activities have a direct impact on the quality of life in poor neighborhoods (Mamiya 2002, 43–44).

Perhaps the strongest connection that African American Muslims have with poor families is that many of them are poor themselves, or at least one step away from poverty. In the survey, the imams were asked to give estimates of the economic background of their congregations. They estimated that 36 percent of their most active members had annual incomes below $20,000 and that the majority of their members

(53 percent) were in the working class or the lower-middle income bracket, between $20,000 and $34,000. Only 11 percent of their members had incomes higher than $35,000 (Mamiya 2002, 43–44).

Another problem area that has affected many poor Black families concerns the extremely high rates of incarceration of African American men (49 percent of male prisoners nationwide) and women (52 percent of female prisoners). With America's inmate population at 2.1 million and the number of incarcerated African Americans at more than 1 million, Muslim groups have responded strongly in their ministry to prisoners and ex-offenders. The survey indicated that 90 percent of the mosques have prison ministries in place, with 88 percent of them visiting prisons on a sustained basis, and 79 percent holding special programs at prisons during Muslim holidays. Thirty-eight percent of the imams also worked as prison chaplains. Counseling (at 41 percent of mosques), meetings for ex-offenders (21 percent), and participation in a halfway house (13 percent) constitute the other activities carried out by mosques (Mamiya 2002, 44–46).

Lawrence H. Mamiya

See also: African American Migration; African Americans; Black Churches; Crime Policy; Nation of Islam

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J

Job Corps

See Employment and Training; Employment Policy; War on Poverty

Job Creation

See Employment and Training; Employment Policy; Labor Markets; Works Progress Administration (WPA)

Johnson, Lyndon Baines

See Liberalism; War on Poverty

Judaism

Jewish social welfare in the United States has provided a complex array of institutions and social services directed at relief of Jewish poverty, assistance to Jewish immigrants, and preservation of Jewish culture for what has emerged as the largest, most stable, and wealthiest Jewish community in the world. Over time, Jewish philanthropy has evolved from meeting the material needs of a poor population to providing a broader array of social services and cultural activities not specifically focused on poverty. Jewish social services have become one facet of the heterogeneous, public-private social service network that characterized the late-twentieth-century U.S. welfare system.

Jewish charity is deeply embedded in the religious texts and communal traditions of ancient Judaism. The concept of *tzedakah*, which can be alternately translated from Hebrew into "charity" or "justice," developed from social legislation in Hebrew scripture that stipulated a number of practices to provide food for the impoverished. Subsequent Jewish scholars made central the link between charity and righteousness in the eyes of God. The medieval philosopher Moses Maimonides detailed eight levels of *tzedakah*, with the most noble being the provision of help that promotes eventual self-reliance among recipients. Jewish charity also urged avoiding humiliation of the recipient—an injunction that in the early-twentieth-century United States made Jewish charities comparatively more generous to their clients than other religious or secular agencies.

American Jewish charity is traced to the Stuyvesant Pledge of 1654. The twenty-three Jews in New Amsterdam, the Dutch colony that is now New York City, were on the verge of expulsion by Governor Peter Stuyvesant of the Dutch West India Company. Jewish shareholders in the company appealed to its directors, who forced Stuyvesant to relent, on the condition that the "indigent among [the Jews] shall not become a burden on the Company or the public, but shall be maintained at the expense of the Jewish nation" (quoted in Goldin 1976, 5). Self-help in the face of anti-Semitism became a central characteristic of Jewish charity.

By the mid-nineteenth century, an increasingly prosperous German Jewish immigrant community had created a welter of charitable agencies in the United States, particularly in New York, that had evolved into community-wide organizations rather than retaining close associations with a particular synagogue. Typically, Jewish communities sponsored a general welfare society to provide monetary relief to the impoverished, orphanages for Jewish children, homes for the Jewish elderly, a number of educational institutions, and a hospital. Hospitals in particular served as a key point of pride for the Jewish community, but they also underscored the tension between the forces of anti-Semitism and the tradition of Jewish self-help: One prime motive for creating Jewish hospitals was that other hospitals often refused to train or hire Jewish doctors.

A new wave of immigration beginning in the late nineteenth century strained Jewish communal resources. Russian Jews fleeing the pogroms that began in Russia in 1881 chose the United States as one of their prime destinations. The American Jewish population stood at 250,000 in 1880, but would soon absorb over 1.6 million new immigrants from Eastern Europe. Fearful of an anti-Semitic backlash, some in the Jewish community protested the influx of poor Russian Jews, but the community soon mobilized to create institutions that would help the new immigrants settle and assimilate into America.

What may have seemed like a homogeneous Jewish population when viewed by native-born Protestants at the turn of the century was in reality deeply divided by national origin, sectarian allegiance, and political conflict. The split was deepest between the more established and wealthier German Jewish community (the Yahudim), who often were adherents of more theologically liberal Reform Judaism, and the immigrant, poorer, and more Orthodox Russian Jews (the Yidn). It was reflected in a pattern of charitable interaction in which Yahudim controlled the welfare institutions that serviced a largely Yidn clientele. Yidn recipients, accustomed to a more intimate relationship with charity in their Russian villages, resented the seemingly impersonal and imperious attitudes of Yahudim charities. Such resentment, as well as a desire for the social recognition that charitable giving granted, led to the development of parallel Yahudim and Yidn welfare institutions in many cities.

The imposition of immigration restrictions in the United States following World War I reduced immigrant influence in the American Jewish community and began a process of assimilation that produced a more homogeneous Jewish population. The stabilization and increasing wealth of the community began to prompt questions in the 1920s as to the function of distinctively Jewish charity, particularly in light of the gradual expansion of such public welfare programs as mothers' pensions. Jewish welfare agencies began to discuss shifting their emphasis from charity to "constructive programs" in recreation or cultural activities. The increasing professionalization of social work and the mounting interest in Freudian psychology, influential in Jewish welfare agencies, prompted an interest in the emotional, rather than the financial, problems of the Jewish community.

The Great Depression, however, was a fundamental challenge to this centuries-old system that had prided itself on ethnic self-help. Mass unemployment overwhelmed the capacities of all charities, including Jewish agencies, which had to dispense with their "constructive" programs in order to deal with the poor. Isaac Rubinow, an influential advocate of publicly funded Social Security, declared that the Stuyvesant Pledge was more myth than reality and that Jewish poverty was part and parcel of American poverty and should be dealt with by public institutions. Though this viewpoint was resisted by many charitable leaders, the New Deal paved the way for an expanding government role in welfare provision, a reality that private charity would have to reconcile itself to.

With the advent of public welfare and the professionalization of social work in the 1930s and 1940s, some within the Jewish community began to ask what distinguished Jewish charity from nonsectarian or public relief. In this, Jewish social services mirrored general developments in American social welfare. There were, however, distinctive aspects. An emphasis on self-help had inspired free-loan programs in Jewish agencies that provided business aid to small entrepreneurs, and the development of vocational counseling services that helped locate jobs for Jewish workers who faced discrimination. The Holocaust and the founding of Israel in 1948 also energized Jewish philanthropy and defined a new set of needs that spurred increased philanthropic activity even as American Jews became more prosperous as a group. Maintaining Jewish institutions for the sake of Judaism became an increasingly important element of Jewish philanthropy. Resettling Jewish refugees, first from postwar Europe, then from Russia in the 1970s, was one outgrowth of this commitment.

Most commentators in the post–World War II period, though, observed the growing similarity of Jewish and secular social services, particularly as Jewish philanthropy focused less on charity and more on broader community needs. Jewish poverty remained an issue, but it was largely confined to the elderly. The increasing number of Jewish elderly led to a reorientation of institutional programs toward care for the chronically ill, with supporting social services aimed at allowing the elderly to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Government rules allowed public funds such as Old Age Assistance and later Medicare to be used at religious institutions, and by the end of the twentieth century, these programs often provided the majority of such institutions' funds. At the same time, the number of children in Jewish orphanages dropped sharply, and many institutions were closed or changed to child psychiatric homes.

The prosperity of the Jewish population was evident in its increasing suburbanization after World War II. The shift to the suburbs left many urban Jewish institutions such as hospitals serving an inner-city clientele that, reflecting broader demographic patterns, was less likely to be Jewish and more likely to be African American or Hispanic. Jews by and large had supported the liberal welfare state of the midcentury, but as welfare became more and more associated with people of color, some rifts began to emerge. Tensions between Jewish and Black communities rose during the 1960s, and led some Jews to question their support for the welfare state. Moreover, increasing concerns about the vitality of the Jewish community (given high rates of divorce and intermarriage) and the survival of Israel following the 1967 war helped raise ethnic consciousness among Jews and led to calls for more community investment in Jewish culture and education, evidenced in the boom in the construction of Jewish community centers between 1960 and 1980.

Though Jewish charity became less and less focused on poverty per se in the late twentieth century, it remained entwined in questions about the communal role of charity and its relationship to the government. In the 1970s, Jewish agencies took advantage of increasing government "purchase of service," or contracting out, to fund counseling programs, work training, foster care and adoption, health care, and care for the elderly. This practice made them vulnerable, like many nonprofits, to social service cutbacks in the 1980s, at the same time that charities were being urged by some conservatives to take responsibility for the poor away from the government. Some Jewish conservatives have welcomed the opportunity for Jewish voluntary institutions to play an increased role in "faith-based" social service provision, but leaders of most mainstream Jewish charities have protested decreasing government commitments to social welfare.

Andrew Morris

See also: Mutual Aid; Philanthropy; Social Work; Voluntarism

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The Jungle, *Upton Sinclair*

For seven weeks in 1904, Upton Sinclair lived and examined firsthand life in the stockyards of Chicago; his horror at the conditions he found there led him to write his best-known novel, *The Jungle*, a devastating portrayal of a world of desperate poverty, shocking corruption, unsanitary factories, hopelessness, and suffering.

First serialized in the socialist *Appeal to Reason* in 1905 and then released in novel form in 1906, *The Jungle* is, on one level, a gut-wrenching story of a Lithuanian family brutalized by the wage slavery that destroyed so many families and lives in the early twentieth century. However, it is also a classic of muckraking and of the American realist school of literature. Muckrakers seek to bring to light the dirty secrets of companies such as those of the Beef Trust—the doctoring of spoiled meats, the unsanitary factory conditions, the cruelty of low wages and inhumane treatment for employees. American realists sought to baldly tell the story of the Industrial Revolution with the voice of the common people. Despite critics' charges of sentimentality and a sometimes overly propagandistic and didactic tone, *The Jungle*'s legacy in muckraking and as realist literature has been profound. Moreover, Sinclair's exposure of the reprehensible behavior of the Beef Trust was a significant factor in bringing about the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906.

Meat inspectors examine hogs at the Swift & Company packinghouse in Chicago, ca. 1900. Both hygiene and labor conditions within the meatpacking industry came under close scrutiny by so-called muckraking journalists, and were memorably featured in Upton Sinclair's* The Jungle. *Such reports helped bring about the passage of the 1906 Federal Meat Inspection Act. (Corbis)

Beyond this, however, the novel also operates as an ideological argument; it depicts the failure and inherent injustices of capitalism and points the way toward an ultimate triumph for the poor via the socialist struggle. Sinclair, born in 1878 to a poor family descended from the southern aristocracy, was concerned throughout his life with the struggles of the destitute and with the contrasts of life at the extremes of the social spectrum. He converted to socialism in 1904, and the impact of his ideological commitment to the movement is obvious in *The Jungle,* in which the only ray of hope comes when the main character, Jurgis Rudkus, undergoes his own conversion to socialism and in the process rediscovers his self-respect and the resilience of the human spirit when given hope.

Sinclair's politics infuriated many, yet his portrayal of the meatpacking industry spurred many to outrage and then reform. The impact of *The Jungle* reverberated in policy and politics, as Sinclair challenged the American public to address fundamental questions raised by capitalism.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Industrialization; Progressive Era and 1920s

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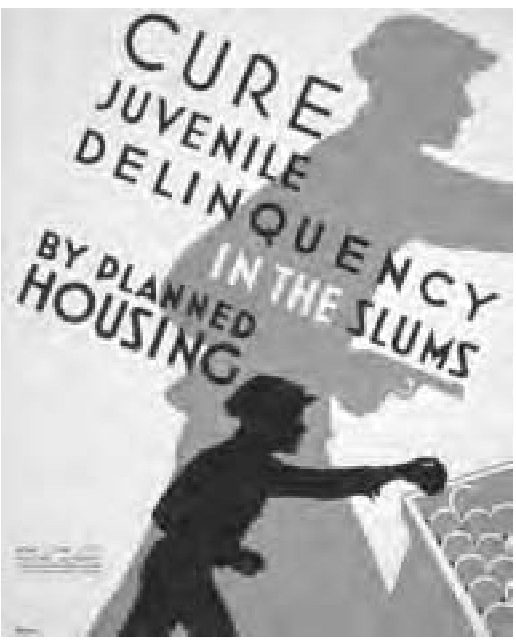
Juvenile Delinquency

Though the term "juvenile delinquency," meaning the antisocial behavior of youth, is of modern vintage, Americans have tried to identify and control wayward children since the colonial era. Efforts to curtail such behavior have been linked in every era both to cultural elites' fears of social instability and to their desire to realize chosen cultural ideals. More specifically, elites' campaigns against juvenile delinquency assumed that some families lacked the capacity to inculcate habits of moral responsibility in their dependents and that a welfare state must control *and* rehabilitate youthful miscreants when families could not. American policymakers and social reformers usually viewed the children of the poor as those most prone to delinquency and most in need of therapeutic intervention by the state. Biases about race, ethnicity, religion, and gender intersected with perceptions of class to shape policies on juvenile delinquency. Successive generations of socially anxious elites complained that existing programs failed to contain youthful deviance, provoking new and expensive rounds of reform. Though the parents of poor children attempted to shape state controls to their own interests, they had limited ability to do so.

The precursor to modern law and policy on juvenile delinquency was the "stubborn child" law, a statute passed by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1646 making it a capital offense for any boy to disobey his father or mother. The significance of this law does not lie in the severity of the punishment it prescribed, for there is little evidence of children being put to death for filial disobedience. Rather, the "stubborn child" law, which emerged in a decade of religious and political dissent, codified normative and deviant moral behaviors for parents and children (or heads of household and unrelated servants and slaves) and created a legal framework for the community's regulation of children. It established in America the permeable boundaries between family and state and the state's interest in moral and social control.

The modern juvenile justice system was inaugurated in the 1820s with the opening of Houses of Refuge in Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia. All were founded by social elites who believed that Irish immigration, the growth of the factory system, and urbanization were producing profound social dislocations, including pauperism and juvenile delinquency. The reformers believed themselves to be among God's elect, yet they favored secular and "rational" methods for rehabilitating wayward children. Indeed, the legislation authorizing the private refuges established key principles of modern juvenile justice: a distinction between adult and juvenile offenders, reliance on indeterminate sentences to ensure youthful rehabilitation, and a broadening of the category of delinquent children to include not only lawbreakers but also the incorrigible and neglected. Subsequent court cases upheld the right of the state to separate children from "unworthy" parents, against the wishes of the latter. The inmates of the early refuges were usually poor Irish Catholics, but Philadelphia also established a refuge for "colored" juvenile delinquents. Female inmates were usually disciplined for presumed sexual immorality.

For the remainder of the nineteenth century, state governments supported a variety of moral interventions that built on the underlying assumptions of the Houses of Refuge, though the houses themselves were discredited as overly punitive. Responding to sharpening class tensions, reformers and state officials invented a legal concept of juvenile delinquency that justified the incarceration of children, especially the children of poor immigrants. These social elites declared that impoverished families were cradles of criminal behavior, yet they insisted that children could be rehabilitated by early intervention. Their most important innovation was the state reformatory, designed to turn boys and girls of the so-called dangerous classes into reliable workers and citizens. States gave the new public institutions jurisdiction over criminal as well as noncriminal juvenile delinquents and permitted the incarceration of children without due process.



1936 poster promoting planned housing as a method to deter juvenile delinquency, showing silhouettes of a child stealing a piece of fruit and a child involved in armed robbery. (Library of Congress)

Efforts to control juvenile delinquency intensified during the Progressive Era as elites hastened to resolve social and economic conflicts provoked by the emergence of the United States as a global industrial power. Government officials, social reformers, and social welfare professionals complained that juvenile delinquency was on the rise because poor, immigrant, and nonwhite parents were ignorant of children's needs in a modern industrial society. Cultural elites were especially alarmed by evidence of sexual immorality among disadvantaged adolescent girls. Illinois initiated the most significant reforms of the era: juvenile courts and systems for probation and parole. Juvenile courts favored, at least in principle, a socialized jurisprudence that identified adjudication as the first step in a complex program of diagnosis and treatment. Judges and probation officers in the juvenile system questioned the efficacy of incarceration, yet they enhanced state authority by devising surveillance methods that reached poor and immigrant children at home, school, work, and play.

Progressive reformers sought to anchor innovations in juvenile justice in social scientific knowledge. They often turned to mental health professionals for insights into the mental conflicts that were thought to contribute to delinquency.

By the 1920s, many juvenile courts were turning to child guidance clinics for help in diagnosing and treating juvenile delinquents. This partnership was relatively weak, however. Over time, professionals in child guidance clinics shifted their practices to middle-class children, whose problems seemed less severe than those of the poor delinquents referred by the courts.

Beginning in the 1930s, many poor communities developed delinquency-prevention programs, enlisting help from neighborhood leaders and local organizations. During the 1960s, community-based programs proliferated, some attempting prevention *and* rehabilitation. Federal support for the programs was challenged by ethnic activists who argued that Washington, D.C., was engaging in a form of domestic colonialism. Judges in juvenile courts, police officials, and correctional administrators also challenged the community-based programs, claiming they failed to reduce juvenile crime.

After the 1960s, most states passed laws that separated criminal and noncriminal juveniles and specified different levels of rights and, sometimes, different treatment for the two classes of offenders. Since the 1980s, debates over juvenile delinquency have been dominated by social conservatives, who favor deterrence and punishment for juvenile criminals, including their transfer to adult courts and prisons. Conservatives offer uncompromising definitions of normative and deviant behavior while questioning the extent to which poverty contributes to juvenile delinquency.

Ruth M. Alexander

See also: Adolescent Pregnancy; Child Welfare; Child-Saving; Crime Policy; Feminization of Poverty; Maternalism; Orphanages; Social Surveys; Welfare State

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K

Kerner Commission Report

The Kerner Commission Report, the product of the 1967 Commission on Civil Disorders, is an eclectic document combining liberal and moderate analyses of the causes and remedies for the widespread urban violence in the late 1960s. Rejecting conservative interpretations blaming revolutionary conspiracies, the report blamed "white racism" for the increasingly violent confrontations between America's "two nations," prescribed a broad reform agenda, but shied away from a structural analysis of urban poverty. President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed the Commission on Civil Disorders in July 1967, after rebellions in Newark and Detroit climaxed four summers of violence that left 130 dead. Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois presided over a liberal-moderate collection of eight public officials, a corporate leader, a labor leader, and a civil rights leader (only two of the commission's members were Black). The commission's report, issued in March 1968, was "a catalogue of ills and a list of reforms" rather than a coherent analysis or popularly accessible challenge to political and economic power (Boesel and Rossi 1971, 256). Yet the commission did push the boundaries of liberalism, recommending more than Johnson or Congress could accept. Commission members heeded Johnson's initial call for an attack on "conditions that breed despair . . . ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs." And they challenged Johnson's assumptions that riots were the crimes of a "violent few" and that police deserved respect from "all Americans" (*Report* 1968, 538–541).

Despite its willingness to challenge conventional wisdom, the Kerner Commission was under continual pressure to produce a moderate—and moderating—report. Robert Shellow, a social psychologist, coordinated survey research in twenty-three cities for the commission. When researchers drafted "Harvest of American Racism"—noting a "truly revolutionary spirit" among rioters—administrators appointed by Johnson fired Shellow and 120 researchers. Mayor John Lindsay of New York, who led a liberal faction on the commission, was unhappy with the "wishy-washy" tone of the report written by staff lawyers. He inserted a hard-hitting "Summary" in the beginning (Boesel and Rossi 1971, 255). "White racism is essentially responsible for the explosive mixture" that produced postwar ghettos, it read, indicting racist *institutions* as well as racist *attitudes* (*Report* 1968, 1–2). In part because of such forceful sentiments, the book was an instant best seller.

The eclectic report's catalogue of the riots' causes included discrimination, mass migrations, manufacturing decline, low Black self-esteem, and (central but rarely mentioned), "indiscriminate and excessive" police violence. Despite allegations of riot conspiracies hatched in antipoverty offices, the commissioners found that antipoverty workers, ministers, and community activists acted as "counter-rioters." In a glaring omission, they ignored the Vietnam War and its disproportionately high Black casualty rates, yet they noted that half of Newark's rioters denied that America was worth defending in a "world war." "Rioters" were typically young Black men: better educated than nonrioters, politically aware but disaffected, frustrated by unemployment and job discrimination—not simple criminals. Their grievances were widely shared: "Police practices" and unemployment came first, then "inadequate education," ineffective political structures, and inadequate federal poverty and welfare programs. Still, biased toward social psychology, the commission spoke of "the frustrations of powerlessness" more than of disempowering institutions (*Report* 1968, passim).

Locally, the commission recommended more funding and more citizen participation in community action agencies and "neighborhood action task forces" to press grievances. Nationally, they advocated new taxes and reforms in education, employment (2 million new jobs), welfare (subsidies for poor workers and poverty-line benefits for mothers receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children), and housing (desegregation and 6 million new units). Johnson refused to comment on a report that he found divisive and legislatively unrealistic, and Congress was increasingly focusing on "law and order." Yet the commission helped spawn a larger body of analytically sharper empirical research challenging the nation, the police, and, ultimately, the commission itself.

Thomas F. Jackson

See also: African Americans; Poverty Research; Racial Segregation; Racism; Urban Poverty; War on Poverty

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King, Martin Luther, Jr.

See Civil Rights Movement; Poor People's Campaign

L

Labor Markets

Labor markets have historically played an important role in the experience of poverty and the distribution of economic opportunity in the United States, shaping the overall availability of jobs as well as wage levels, benefits, and possibilities for promotion. Labor market theories have also been prominent as explanations for poverty, in part reflecting the work-centered nature of U.S. social welfare policy.

Labor market theories of poverty attempt to address three main questions: (1) Why is there unemployment and underemployment (that is, why are people unable to work as many hours per week or as many weeks per year as they choose)? (2) What accounts for the very different valuations, and consequent pay levels, of different jobs? (3) Why are some people—and in particular, some socially significant *categories* of people, such as women or people of color—more likely to end up unemployed or in low-wage jobs? For as long as there have been labor markets in the United States, economists and others have put forward two conflicting types of theories about the answers to these questions. On the one hand, some have argued that labor markets are basically efficient and, in some fundamental sense, fair. This viewpoint favors *supply-side policies:* policies that remove restrictions on labor markets and help individuals to invest in skills. For the last 100 years, the predominant theory associated with this point of view has been neoclassical economics. On the other hand, critics have claimed that labor markets are inevitably greatly shaped by institutions distant from efficiency considerations, and often distant from fairness as well. These critics have championed *demand-side policies*, favoring enlightened regulation of wage levels and hiring and support for institutions designed to rectify power imbalances, such as unions. Over the last century, the critical view has been linked to radical (including Marxist) and institutionalist theories.

A glance at recent statistics establishes the link between labor markets and poverty in the United States. As Table 1 shows, adults who did no paid work in the previous year are far more likely to be in a household that fell below the poverty level than are those who worked year-round, full-time. Part-time and part-year workers fall between these two extremes, though closer to those who did no paid work at all. It is important to note that close to 3 percent of year-round, full-time workers live in poverty households: Sustained work at low wages can still leave a person and his or her household in poverty.

Why Is There Unemployment and Underemployment?

The average family in poverty worked a total of 1,112 hours in 1998, about half the 2,080 hours

Table 1

Poverty rates for adults, by amount of paid work, 1999

	Percent in poverty among those who:		
Age group	*Worked year-round, full-time*	*Worked part-time or part-year*	*No paid work*
All 16 and over	2.6%	13.1%	19.1%
Ages 25–64	2.3%	13.0%	26.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, Table 3.

that constitute year-round, full-time work for one person (Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 2001, table 5.18). Although this low level of hours worked to some extent reflects deliberate choices (themselves influenced by other constraints such as child-rearing responsibilities or disability), unemployment and underemployment also limit work hours for poor families and individuals.

Until a third of the way through the twentieth century, the dominant explanation for unemployment was the classical view, holding that excessively high wages depress labor demand. The policy implication, which echoes down to this day, is that institutions maintaining higher wage levels, such as unions or minimum-wage laws, harm employment in the aggregate. Economists dismissed the possibility that aggregate demand might not be sufficient to absorb aggregate supply, citing Say's Law, that "supply creates its own demand."

When the Great Depression gripped the industrialized world during the 1930s, John Maynard Keynes's *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936) challenged this traditional consensus. Keynes argued that pessimistic expectations by capitalists, translated into anemic investments in plant and equipment, can become self-fulfilling, trapping an economy in a downturn. In these circumstances, Keynes argued, wage cutting simply aggravates the shortfall of demand, since it leaves workers with less money to spend on consumer goods. Instead, governments should use monetary policy (such as cutting interest rates) and, especially, fiscal policy (such as reducing taxes or expanding spending) to prime the pump of private consumer expenditure and to ensure full employment. Governments, including that of the United States, implemented this theory through social welfare spending and public works programs. World War II and postwar "military Keynesianism" (military spending aimed at job creation) carried this policy thread forward, although Congress backed away from an explicit commitment to guarantee *full* employment that had been embodied in early drafts of what became the Employment Act of 1946 (notably leaving out the "full" in the original title).

In the 1970s and 1980s, Keynesianism stumbled over the combination of stagnation and inflation in the United States (a possibility Keynes had discounted) and over the persistent high unemployment in western Europe that many attributed to classical causes—high wages and generous welfare payments. "New classical" economists revived the classical analysis of unemployment (Barro 1989). Equally important, huge federal deficits in the United States (run up by the tax cuts of the early 1980s combined with increased military spending) politically blocked proposals for substantial new tax cuts or spending programs, while antigovernment rhetoric undermined support for programs to create employment, such as the 1973 Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). By 2000, deficits had been replaced by surpluses, and a wide range of new empirical and theoretical research questioned classical accounts of unemployment (notably by David Blanchflower and Andrew Oswald [1994], who found that unemployment tends to be associated with *lower* wages rather than higher). Nonetheless, new classical economics continued to reign on campuses, and low unemployment at the outset of the twenty-first century blunted concerns about job creation, while a combination of economic recession and massive tax cuts soon re-created huge federal deficits, further constraining policy options.

*Under*employment's most readily measurable form is involuntary part-time employment—workers stuck in part-time jobs against their wills. Families of involuntary part-time workers are more likely to fall below the poverty line than are those of voluntary part-time workers, and both are far more likely to live in poverty than year-round, full-time workers. The causes of involuntary part-time employment are similar to those of unemployment. Indeed, fluctuations in the level of involuntary part-time employment track unemployment quite closely. However, involuntary part-time work has an added "classical" component, since employers typically offer part-time workers fewer fringe benefits and in some cases lower wages (Tilly 1996).

What Accounts for the Pay Levels of Different Jobs?

In 1999, $6.05 per hour marked the upper boundary of the lowest-paid 10 percent of U.S. wage earners (Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 2001, table 2.6). If a person worked year-round, full-time at this wage, she or he would still fall $700 below the poverty line for a family of three. Indeed, the family-wide average hourly wage of families in poverty in 1998 was just slightly higher, at $6.16 (Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 2001, table 5.18). At the other end, the lower boundary of the highest-paid 5 percent stood at $33.28 per hour. The highest-paid CEO in America in 2000, Citigroup's Sanford Weill, received $224.4 million in direct compensation for the year, which translates to about $72,000 per hour (assuming a sixty-hour week) (*Wall Street Journal* 2001). Clearly, differing wage levels contribute to extremes of wealth and poverty in the United States.

The leading theory of wage differences, that of neoclassical economics, puts forward an elegantly simple explanation: People are paid according to their productivity, or, more precisely, according to their *marginal revenue product*, meaning the amount they add to sales. The reasoning behind this theory is straightforward. As firms add more and more labor to a fixed stock of capital (machines, buildings, and so on), the added product gained from each added hour of labor eventually declines. Since firms maximize profits, they will keep adding labor as long as the amount of salable product yielded by an extra hour of labor exceeds the hourly wage, so that hiring one more hour of labor results in a net gain. They will stop adding labor precisely at the point at which the marginal revenue product equals the wage (see, for instance, Hamermesh 1986).

The question then becomes why some workers in some jobs are more productive than others. Neoclassical theorists point to two main factors: skill and the other resources a worker has to work with (for example, Baumol and Blinder 1991, ch. 36). Note that skill has two kinds of impacts. Certain *jobs* require more skill and involve greater productivity and therefore pay more. But even in two identical jobs, one *person* may bring more skill than another and therefore be more productive and earn more. As for other resources, neoclassical analysts posit that workers using more capital (more or better machines, faster computers, and the like) can be more productive. They often cite low capital-to-labor ratios to explain low pay levels in less-developed regions. Similarly, workers with more-able coworkers (better managers, more clever innovators) are more productive. The most important policy implication of this perspective is that wage differences are efficient. For example, firms offer higher wages to attract workers with higher skills, and the pay differential prompts workers to seek added education and training (Welch 1999). Neoclassical recommendations to reduce poverty include subsidizing the acquisition of general skills and facilitating capital inflow to or labor out-migration from depressed areas, such as mid-twentieth-century Appalachia.

Critical theorists take a different tack. Karl Marx himself concentrated primarily on the processes setting average wages for the working class, emphasizing workers' cost of subsistence and the class struggle. To the extent that he discussed wage differences, he accepted the neoclassical notion that they reflect skill differences (Marx [1867] 1967). But Marx's contemporary John Stuart Mill ([1848] 1929) wrote of "non-competing groups" in the labor market, for whom hiring and wages were governed by custom and institutions (such as guilds and professions) rather than by market competition. Institutionalist economists in the United States, most prominently represented in the early twentieth century by John R. Commons (1934), took Mill's proposition in two directions. They stressed the importance of institutions—including tangible organizations such as unions but also including more diffuse phenomena such as fairness norms—in regulating wages. And, more important for theorizing about poverty, they picked up the idea of segmented labor markets.

For much of the twentieth century, institutionalists, riveted by the momentous struggle to unionize the industrial workforce, focused broadly on how institutions affect wages. In the post–World War II years, however, renewed interest in issues of poverty and racial inequality sparked attention to segmentation, a term popularized by Peter Doeringer and Michael Piore (1971). The labor market segmentation perspective challenges the neoclassical notion of smooth, continuous trade-offs, holding that particular sets of characteristics or governing rules tend to be found together. This points to multiple, qualitative distinctions between good and bad jobs. Doeringer and Piore described the "secondary" segment as comprising jobs marked by low wages, high turnover, and arbitrary supervision and often by unpleasant working conditions (in contrast to well-paid, steady "primary"-sector jobs). These are the jobs of the working poor.

Theories of segmentation have typically adopted either functional or historical logics. Functional accounts, like neoclassical wage theory, focus on efficiency. For instance, some view the job ladders that characterize certain segments as incentive systems. The promise of advancement can help to deter shirking and to retain workers with valuable skills or proprietary knowledge. However, segmentation theorists appeal to history as well as efficiency. Historical accounts point to the enormous power of inertia enforced by both short-run efficiency (based in the familiarity of current ways of doing things) and the defense of vested interests. Sociologist Arthur Stinchcombe (1990, ch. 10) observed that many jobs still reflect the organizational forms of the era in which they were introduced; a case in point is the craft structures of the building trades. Struggles along class, race, and gender lines also weigh in. Neo-Marxists David Gordon, Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich (1982) attributed the initial homogenization and later segmentation of the U.S. proletariat to employers' efforts to assert control over their workforces, first by de-skilling the workers and later, in response to industrial unionism, by dividing them.

Policy advocates have used segmentation theory to argue for policies quite different from those implied by neoclassical productivity theory. The goal is to shift employment from secondary-sector jobs to primary-sector jobs, either by directly regulating the labor market (through devices such as the minimum wage or unions) or by industrial policies subsidizing better-paying, "high road" industries.

One hundred years ago, most economists held a mix of neoclassical and institutionalist views. But as the twentieth century wore on, the two theories diverged, for both methodological reasons (neoclassical tools became increasingly mathematical, whereas institutionalists relied on case studies) and ideological ones (institutionalists supported unionization and regulation of the labor market, whereas neoclassicals increasingly shunned these policies). The 1930s through the 1950s saw the zenith of institutionalist influence, both in the field of labor economics and in the corridors of power. Institutionalist arguments (along with powerful political considerations) underpinned Depression-era laws such as the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Wagner Act, as well as wartime regulation of industrial relations.

In the 1960s, neoclassical labor market analysis gained the upper hand. The elegant mathematical formulations developed by economists attracted scholars, as did the large data sets newly available for analysis with emerging computer technology. The sharp class struggles of the 1930s that had fueled institutionalist fortunes receded from the collective memory. Despite the flowering of segmentation theories in the 1960s and 1970s, the reigning analyses of labor markets and poverty remained neoclassically grounded (O'Connor 2001).

Beginning in the 1980s, neoclassical dominance took yet another turn. Encouraged by economist Gary Becker's application of neoclassical analysis to such "noneconomic" topics as marriage and childbearing (Becker 1976), orthodox economists used their tools to model labor market institutions. Interestingly, the conclusions and even policy recommendations of this "new information economics" sometimes replicate those of the institutionalists. For instance, Jeremy Bulow and Lawrence Summers (1986) used neoclassical incentive analysis to model a segmented labor market and concluded that policies subsidizing the primary sector would increase efficiency. Nonetheless, this and other neoclassical models are driven by efficiency considerations and by the assumption that rational individuals will pursue their own self-interest. Like older neoclassical models, they leave little space for acknowledging the influence of power, history, or culture.

Why Are Some People More Likely to End Up Unemployed or in Low-Wage Jobs?

Wage levels and unemployment rates differ markedly by gender, race, and ethnicity (see Table 2). As is well known, men in the United States earn higher average wages than women, whites and Asians earn more than Blacks and Latinos, and Latinos and, especially, Blacks suffer from higher unemployment. Relative poverty rates track these regularities in earnings (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

Neoclassical theories explain who gets what job in much the same way that they explain pay differences across jobs—via differences in skills and therefore in potential productive capacities.

Table 2

Median hourly wage (1999) and unemployment rate (2000) by race, ethnicity, and gender

	White		*Black*		*Latino*		*Asian*	
	Men	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
Median hourly wage	$13.90	$10.57	$10.78	$9.23	$11.03	$9.06	$14.67	$11.39
Unemployment rate	3.4%	3.6%	8.1%	7.2%	4.9%	6.7%	—	—

Note: Latinos can be of any racial group.

Source: Median wages from Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 2001, Tables 2.25–26. Unemployment from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, January 2001, Tables 3 and 6.

Human capital theorists (Becker 1964) extended the basic productivity theory by reasoning that (1) a person would only defer earnings to obtain more education if the added learning increased his or her potential wage and (2) an employer would pay a higher wage to more educated workers only if they were indeed more productive (on average). Human capital theory has been applied not just to education but to a variety of parental investments and self-investments yielding higher productive returns, ranging from health care to reading bedtime stories. Others have pointed to—and argued about—the role of inherited abilities and the growing importance of "soft skills" such as motivation and style of interaction (Bowles, Gintis, and Osborne 2001; Moss and Tilly 2001). In general, orthodox economists have attributed most racial and ethnic differences in wages and unemployment to skill disparities, and policy advocates have used this analysis to bolster calls for better education for African Americans and Latinos. This explanation does not serve well for gender differences, since women now attain education on average slightly higher than men (and presumably inherit abilities similar to those of their brothers); more on this below.

At a polar opposite to hiring theories based on merit are those based on discrimination, espoused by critical theorists, including radicals, institutionalists, and feminists. Social scientists appeal to a variety of mechanisms to explain discrimination, including subconscious psychological attraction to those who are similar, conscious solidarity and defense of privilege, and employer-fomented divisions among workers. Critical theorists use discrimination to explain occupational segregation, such as that between men and women. To the extent that women or other groups are "crowded" into a restricted set of jobs, excess labor supply will drive down the wages offered to them. In addition, sociologist Paula England and colleagues (1994) have shown that a higher proportion of women in an occupational category are associated with lower average wages in that category, suggesting that the mix of job holders itself affects the valuation of the job.

The diagnosis of discrimination has led to three main policy prescriptions. First, and most straightforward, are laws—some dating as far back as the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1868—barring discrimination in hiring and wage setting and mandating affirmative action to offset the effects of past discrimination. Second, beginning in the 1970s, feminists observed that "equal pay for equal work" regulations help women little if they are located in different jobs than men, and consequently they have argued for pay equity—laws requiring equal pay for jobs of "comparable worth" as determined by a comparison of job characteristics (England 1992). Third, leaders of communities of color have called for community development to expand employment opportunities within those communities (Ferguson and Dickens 1999).

Neoclassical theorists have grappled with the concept of discrimination as well. As Becker (1957) pointed out, if employers indulge a "taste for discrimination," they are foregoing hiring the most productive workers or they are paying more than they must to obtain equally productive workers. This suggests that market competition will erode discrimination. Similarly, neoclassical theory is inclined toward the view that occupational segregation results from differing worker tastes or aptitudes rather than discrimination. However, theorists of *statistical discrimination* observed that it may be narrowly efficient—but not socially desirable—for employers to discriminate based on information about group averages or variances (for example, "Women do not stay at jobs as long on average," "African Americans on average have less skill") (Arrow 1973).

While skill and discrimination have loomed largest in theories of hiring, sociologists (and some economists) also highlight a variety of other exclusionary social structures. The *spatial* *mismatch theory* holds that residential segregation has cut many Blacks off from the jobs most appropriate to their skill levels, especially given increased suburbanization of manufacturing and retail jobs (Ihlanfeldt 1999). Noting that a large proportion of jobs are found through personal connections, some analysts have argued that less-effective social networks disadvantage the poor (Montgomery 1991). Feminists, assessing the high poverty rates of single mothers, have suggested that an important part of the problem is lack of flexibility in hours in the higher-paying jobs and, more generally, workplace demands that are biased toward the male-breadwinner household ideal (Albelda and Tilly 1997). Sociologist William Julius Wilson (1995) and others, echoing Gunnar Myrdal's (1944) notion of cumulative causation, have hypothesized that concentrated poverty unleashes a self-reinforcing cycle of social isolation, decreased orientation to work, and insufficient investment in skills. In its "culture of poverty" variant, this view converges with neoclassical concerns about skills, aptitudes, and work ethic (Mead 1992).

The academic and political fortunes of analyses linking poverty to labor market discrimination have largely followed those of the civil rights movement. Theories of discrimination saw an upturn of interest after World War II and then flourished during the 1960s and 1970s. Although theorizing and policymaking in this vein have continued, their influence has waned since the 1980s in the face of political and theoretical backlash and the claim that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 greatly diminished the extent of discrimination. Currently, most research and public policy attention focuses on skills.

Chris Tilly

See also: Capitalism; Economic Theories; Employment Policy; Income and Wage Inequality; Unemployment

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Labor Movement

See Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; American Association for Labor Legislation; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Service and Domestic Workers; Trade/Industrial Unions; Wagner Act

Latino/as

Latinos are both the largest minority group in the United States and one of the poorest. Moreover, their poverty is very responsive to economic fluctuations, making them more vulnerable to changes in the economy. The reasons for their poverty are as varied as the groups that make up the Latino population, but among the major explanatory factors are Latino migration patterns, high concentrations of workers in low-wage occupations, low levels of education, poor English proficiency, discrimination, and limited access to training programs and good educational facilities.

In 2001, there were 35.3 million Latinos in the United States, or 12.6 percent of the U.S. population. Latinos trace their heritage to a diverse set of countries. In 2000, 66 percent were of Mexican heritage, 14.5 percent were Central and South Americans, 9 percent were Puerto Ricans, and 4 percent were Cubans (Therrien and Ramirez 2001). Of the Central Americans, some of the largest groups were Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, and Guatemalans; among South Americans, there were a substantial number of persons of Peruvian, Argentinean, and Colombian descent. Among those from the Caribbean, there were a large number of people of Dominican descent.

This diversity is reflected in the geographical distribution of Latino subgroups. Mexicans were more concentrated in the West and the South, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans in the Northeast, Cubans in the South. Those of Central and South American descent were more geographically dispersed, with large numbers in the West, the South, and the Northeast. But the Latino population has also grown in less traditionally Latino areas such as Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina, and Utah. Some cities, such as Boston and Chicago, have grown for the first time in decades partly because of Latino population growth. As a result of this population growth and dispersal, the economic and social outcomes of Latinos are likely to play an increasingly important role not only in specific regions but throughout the nation.

The outcomes to date suggest that the situation of many Latino families is precarious. The long economic boom of the 1990s pushed Latino poverty rates from some of their highest levels, in 1993, to some of their lowest since the mid-1970s, by 2000. Yet even in 2000, 30 percent of Latino children were poor (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). The economic downturn of 2001–2003 increased unemployment rates among Latinos, worsening economic circumstances for families (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2003).

Low levels of education are one of the most important factors explaining poor economic outcomes among U.S. Latinos. In 2000, 27 percent of Latinos over age twenty-five had fewer than nine years of education, and 43 percent of them had not completed high school (Therrien and Ramirez 2001). Low levels of educational attainment are especially problematic because the financial returns of an education have been rising steadily in the United States; as a result, income gaps between those with low and high levels of education have widened. But neighborhood segregation relegates Latinos to communities with underperforming schools that fail to provide adequate training to Latino children. Furthermore, tracking into vocational preparation or away from higher education limits the educational experience of Latinos and, in some cases, predetermines their outcomes.

English proficiency plays a critical role in social mobility. Indeed, some researchers have found that English proficiency has a greater effect than immigration status on the economic progress of immigrants (Capps, Ku, and Fix 2002). A lack of English proficiency has social consequences as well as economic ones; it isolates individuals and groups, limits their access to resources, and constrains their rights. For example, training programs are rarely available in immigrants' languages, limiting Latino access to such programs.

Another set of factors affecting Latino economic well-being is their migration patterns and U.S. immigration policy. Many Latino immigrants move back and forth between the United States and their country of origin in search of economic opportunity. This migration has allowed transnational relations to flourish, but it may also limit an immigrant's degree of economic mobility in the United States. Furthermore, a persistent flow of new Latino immigrants may keep wages down for previous waves of immigrants. However, U.S. immigration policy plays a critical role in patterning migration and its effects. Latinos who are in the United States as temporary immigrants do not have the possibility of readjusting their status, and others work in the United States for many years without legal documents. Given their status, it is almost impossible for many Latinos to move up the economic ladder, and they are forced to compete with new immigrants for the limited jobs at the bottom of the job queue.

Last, Latinos have some of the highest workforce participation rates of all racial and ethnic groups, but many are concentrated in low-skill jobs in the agricultural, service, construction, craft, repair, and transportation sectors. These jobs tend to be unstable and to have relatively high levels of unemployment, limited benefits, and low wages. As a result, only African Americans have a lower proportion of full-time, full-year employment. In addition to the educational and language issues mentioned above, part of the explanation for Latino occupational segregation is a lack of networks and ethnic job queues, and part is discriminatory practices in the labor market, both of which limit Latinos' access to training programs, investment opportunities, and promotions.

Belinda I. Reyes

See also: African Americans; Americanization Movement; Day Labor; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Puerto Rican Migration; Racial Segregation; Refugee Policy

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Legal Aid/Legal Services

Legal aid and legal services provide civil legal services, including individual legal representation, legislative advocacy, impact litigation, and community organizing, at low or no cost for poor people.

Since the inception of legal aid in the late nineteenth century, legal work for the poor has undergone significant changes. From its origin until 1965, legal work on behalf of poor people was funded with private monies, and those organizations engaged in the provision of legal services to the indigent were referred to as "legal aid" organizations. A major shift occurred in 1965, when the government federalized the provision of civil legal services to indigent people. After 1965, the term "legal services" was used to refer broadly to both the governmental agency that administered legal services and the local programs that received federal money to provide free civil legal assistance to low-income communities. Legal services programs reached the height of their success in the 1960s, but since then, they have suffered a backlash resulting in decreased funding and substantive restrictions on the type of work legal services lawyers can perform. The current status of the legal services system reflects an ongoing disagreement regarding the way legal assistance is provided to those in our society least able to gain access to justice.

The Origin of Legal Aid Societies in the United States (1876–1900)

In 1876, the German Legal Aid Society opened in New York City and became what is believed to be the first legal aid society in the United States. Originally designed to protect immigrants of German descent, the society provided free legal assistance to individuals who could not afford a lawyer. Following the path of the German Legal Aid Society, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, privately funded legal aid societies began to emerge around the country in response to local needs. Operating on a grassroots level, early legal aid societies were largely unaware of similar work being done in other parts of the country.

The Beginning of the National Legal Aid Movement (1900–1920)

With the turn of the century and the onset of World War I, traditional sources of private funding decreased. In response, legal aid societies explored alternatives to reliance on private contributions, either becoming departments in existing charitable organizations or seeking local government funding. With these new forms of funding, the number of legal aid societies slowly increased nationwide between 1900 and 1919.

Then, in 1921, Reginald Heber Smith published a book entitled *Justice and the Poor* that compiled information on legal aid activities and advocated for legal aid on a national level. The book brought national attention to the previously local legal aid movement and united its advocates. Publication of Smith's book also brought mainstream lawyers and legal organizations into a national debate regarding the provision of free legal services to the indigent.

The New Deal Era and Beyond (1920–1960)

Given this new national debate, in 1921, the American Bar Association (ABA) formed a special committee on legal aid. However, ABA support for legal aid remained minimal throughout the 1930s, in part because of a concern that free legal services would take away increasingly scarce business from private practitioners.

In 1949, England passed a statute known as the British Legal Aid and Advice Scheme that created a legal aid system funded by the government. Passage of this act raised concern that the sentiment for government-funded legal services might spread from England to the United States. Fearing the potential for a socialist system of legal services in the United States, the ABA stepped up support for legal aid societies in the 1950s. This initial concern over legal aid societies funded by private charitable dollars versus state-sponsored provision of legal services set the stage for the ongoing struggle over the scope and conditions of free legal services to the indigent.

The War on Poverty Years: From Legal Aid to Legal Services (1960–1970)

From its inception in 1876 through the 1960s, legal aid was viewed as a mere private charity designed to placate the masses, to avert potential unrest, and, for the ABA, to increase the prestige of the bar. However, the Great Depression had raised awareness of the systemic causes and costs of economic inequality. During the 1960s, advocates began to argue that in the fight against inequality, poor people needed access to legal services.

Within this context, in the early 1960s, the Ford Foundation funded demonstration projects called "Gray Areas projects." Conceived as a strategic and innovative way to redress systemic inequality, Gray Areas projects were set up in New Haven, New York City, and Washington, D.C. The projects situated money in specific low-income neighborhoods and created decentralized service centers that provided a range of assistance, including consumer, medical, educational, and legal services. The Gray Areas projects played a crucial role in influencing the creation of a federal legal services program and foreshadowed the recurring battles over funding, politics, and independence of the legal aid/legal services movement.

Particularly influential was the New Haven Gray Areas project, which was forced to suspend operations only seven weeks after opening because of its involvement in a controversial case. After suspension of operations, Jean Cahn, one of the New Haven staff attorneys, and her husband, Edgar Cahn, wrote a law review article advocating federal government funding to establish neighborhood legal services. As the law review article was being written, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced the War on Poverty and formed the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), a new federal agency responsible for operating and overseeing the antipoverty programs.

Between 1964 and 1965, as federalization of legal services became part of the national consciousness, the ABA debated whether or not to endorse federally funded legal services. After vigorous internal disagreement, in February 1965, under the leadership of then ABA president Lewis Powell, later to become a U.S. Supreme Court justice, the ABA adopted a resolution endorsing federal legal services. In 1965, the OEO initiated the Legal Services Programs, which administered federal money to local legal services programs nationwide. Thereafter, federal government funding for indigent civil legal assistance significantly increased, so that by 1967, there were approximately 300 legal services organizations receiving government grants totaling more than $40 million through the OEO Legal Services Program (Johnson 1974, 99).

Quickly utilizing these new resources, between 1967 and 1972, legal services attorneys focused on law reform work designed to change the systems that affected the lives of poor people. To support law reform work, the Legal Services Program created and funded "backup centers" and training programs. The backup centers, which were frequently housed at major law schools, and the educational programs were designed to support and assist in litigation of large cases that sought systemic changes. The law reform efforts proved so successful that between 1967 and 1972, the Supreme Court heard 219 cases filed by legal services attorneys involving the rights of the poor. Of these, 136 were decided by the Court and 73 resulted in favorable decisions (Huber 1976, 761). Many of these cases, which represented enormous substantive victories for poor people, have endured and remain landmark decisions (Redlich 1992, 753–754). Such success, however, had its costs, for conservative elites reacted negatively to the legal gains made on behalf of poor people. In response to these gains, some in Congress attempted in the late 1960s and early 1970s to restrict the program's activities.

The Debate over Independence (1970–1980)

Political pressure on the legal services program increased in the early 1970s when President Richard M. Nixon chose a staunch critic of the War on Poverty and legal services to head the OEO. The vulnerability of the organization to a backlash raised questions concerning its independence, and in 1971, the ABA and the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization recommended the creation of a separate corporation to disperse legal services monies. Thus began a three-year battle over the independence of the legal services program.

Legislation introduced in Congress in 1971 sought the creation of a national Legal Services Corporation (LSC), which would make the legal services program independent of the executive branch of government. But President Nixon opposed the bill, due mainly to the decrease in executive control and oversight it represented. On the eve of his resignation in July 1974, President Nixon signed a compromise bill that created an independent LSC but defunded the backup centers and imposed minimal restrictions on the scope of work permitted by legal services lawyers. Over the next five years, funding for the LSC steadily increased.

Change in Political Climate: Retreat and Restructuring (1980–Present)

Governmental support for legal services abruptly changed in 1980 with the election of Ronald Reagan as president. In his 1982 budget, President Reagan called for the complete elimination of the LSC. The legal services board, law schools, the ABA, and judges expressed strong opposition, however, leading the president to suggest instead a block grant system of local legal aid provided by private attorneys and those willing to perform pro bono legal services. When he did not win approval for this proposal, President Reagan instead decreased funding,

Gideon v. Wainwright, *372 U.S. 335 (1963)*

Mr. Justice Black delivered the opinion of the Court.

Petitioner was charged in a Florida state court with having broken and entered a poolroom with intent to commit a misdemeanor. This offense is a felony under [372 U.S. 337] Florida law. Appearing in court without funds and without a lawyer, petitioner asked the court to appoint counsel for him, whereupon the following colloquy took place:

> The Court: Mr. Gideon, I am sorry, but I cannot appoint Counsel to represent you in this case. Under the laws of the State of Florida, the only time the Court can appoint Counsel to represent a Defendant is when that person is charged with a capital offense. I am sorry, but I will have to deny your request to appoint Counsel to defend you in this case.
>
> The Defendant: The United States Supreme Court says I am entitled to be represented by Counsel.

Put to trial before a jury, Gideon conducted his defense about as well as could be expected from a layman. He made an opening statement to the jury, cross-examined the State's witnesses, presented witnesses in his own defense, declined to testify himself, and made a short argument "emphasizing his innocence to the charge contained in the Information filed in this case." The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and petitioner was sentenced to serve five years in the state prison. Later, petitioner filed in the Florida Supreme Court this habeas corpus petition attacking his conviction and sentence on the ground that the trial court's refusal to appoint counsel for him denied him rights "guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights by the United States Government." . . .

II

. . . We accept *Betts v. Brady*'s assumption, based as it was on our prior cases, that a provision of the Bill of Rights which is "fundamental and essential to a fair trial" is made obligatory upon the States by the Fourteenth Amendment. We think the Court in *Betts* was wrong, however, in concluding that the Sixth Amendment's guarantee of counsel is not one of these fundamental rights. . . .

The fact is that, in deciding as it did—that "appointment of counsel is not a fundamental right, [372 U.S. 344] essential to a fair trial"—the Court in *Betts v. Brady* made an abrupt break with its own well considered precedents. In returning to these old precedents, sounder, we believe, than the new, we but restore constitutional principles established to achieve a fair system of justice. Not only these precedents, but also reason and reflection, require us to recognize that, in our adversary system of criminal justice, any person haled into court, who is too poor to hire a lawyer, cannot be assured a fair trial unless counsel is provided for him. . . . The right of one charged with crime to counsel may not be deemed fundamental and essential to fair trials in some countries, but it is in ours. From the very beginning, our state and national constitutions and laws have laid great emphasis on procedural and substantive safeguards designed to assure fair trials before impartial tribunals in which every defendant stands equal before the law. This noble ideal cannot be realized if the poor man charged with crime has to face his accusers without a lawyer to assist him. . . .

Reversed.

increased restrictions, and appointed a hostile LSC board to oversee the organization.

This trend of antagonism toward legal services continued in the 1990s. In 1992, there was renewed congressional debate concerning the future of legal services. Although some advocated its elimination, others sought to severely restrict the work of legal services. Because Democrats still maintained some control in Congress, the 1992 bill to eliminate legal services was unsuccessful. However, in 1994, as Republicans gained control of both the House and the Senate for the first time in forty years, there were renewed calls for the elimination of legal services. In 1996, as Congress was debating the elimination of the LSC, legal services advocates determined that in order to maintain some funding they needed to concede and negotiate on the issue of restrictions. Thus, after debate, Congress passed and President Bill Clinton signed the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996 (OCRAA), which decreased funding to legal services by 30 percent and imposed the most significant restrictions on the program to date.

The OCRAA restrictions prohibit government-funded legal services organizations from advocating or providing representation before legislative bodies and administrative rule-making proceedings, from litigating class-action lawsuits, from obtaining attorneys' fees, from representing certain categories of immigrants, from representing prisoners in civil litigation, and from representing people in certain claims, including abortion-related litigation, redistricting cases, and public housing cases where clients face eviction because of alleged drug-related crimes. In addition to these specific restrictions, legal services organizations are prohibited from using non-LSC funds to undertake activities for which LSC money is restricted. This so-called entity restriction and dramatically decreased funding forced legal services programs to change their structure. In larger cities, legal services providers split into two separate organizations, one performing unrestricted work with LSC money and the other utilizing the non-LSC money to engage in otherwise restricted work. It is within this context that legal services providers continue the traditions of providing invaluable legal assistance to those who would otherwise be unable to have access to the courts.

Christine N. Cimini

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Community Organizing; Poverty Law; War on Poverty

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Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, *James Agee and Walker Evans*

In 1936, author James Agee and photographer Walker Evans received an assignment from *Fortune* magazine to cover, both in words and in pictures, the plight of southern white tenant farmers (or sharecroppers). The end result was not—as originally intended—an article for the increasingly conservative *Fortune* magazine but a profoundly angry, self-conscious, and poetic book called *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, which was released in August 1939 to little fanfare and even less commercial success. By then, the Great Depression was over, and the book's power was lost on a nation whose focus had shifted to an impending war. Out of print only a few years after publication, the book was relegated to the obscure annals of journalistic history until its revival in the 1960s. Now considered a classic work of literary journalism, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* stands as a testament to the pain and suffering endured by impoverished sharecroppers during the Great Depression.

Agee and Evans drove to rural Alabama unsure of how to find a family of white tenant farmers who could be considered typical and who would also open their doors to their journalistic intrusions. But they were eventually able to win the trust of three families who accepted them and their project wholeheartedly. For two weeks, the journalists visited their homes to observe and take copious notes and pictures.

Although others before them wrote arguably exploitative exposés of rural poverty, Agee and Evans never failed to humanize their subjects. The prose and pictures never wavered from the truth, but the book managed to avoid privileged condescension and to portray the three tenant families with dignity.

The book is also an eclectic oddity, a complex and multilayered work of art containing many things seemingly unrelated to the coverage of Depression-era sharecroppers, including poems, confessional reveries, and lengthy sermons on the right way to listen to Beethoven. These oddities notwithstanding, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* a title dripping with bitter irony, is at once a work of journalism simmering with outrage at the savage injustices heaped upon the American sharecropper, a confessional response to the pain and suffering one witnesses but is powerless to abate, and an unrelenting and truthful account of what these families had to withstand.

The abject living conditions of tenant farmers during the Great Depression attracted the attention not only of socially conscious journalists like Agee and Evans but also of policymakers, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration. FDR appointed a Committee on Farm Tenancy to investigate this segment of the farming population, and the committee's report, released in February 1937, revealed a problem both widespread and stark: One half of the farmers in the South, a third in the North, and a quarter in the West were sharecroppers, most of whom endured the pain and insult of wretched poverty. The committee's eye-opening report led to the passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, which included provisions intended to help tenants become self-sufficient landowners.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: Picturing Poverty (I); Poor Whites; *Report on Economic Conditions of the South;* Rural Poverty; Sharecropping

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Lewis, Oscar

See The Children of Sanchez; Poverty Research

Liberalism

A strongly contested political ideology in the United States, liberalism was the driving force behind the great expansion of the welfare state during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Despite its recent association with social welfare, however, the meaning of "liberalism" remains frustratingly hard to pin down, earning from political theorists and actors alike such descriptions as “diffuse,” “protean,” “divided,” and “amorphous.” In addition, when liberalism began and the extent to which it remains hegemonic in the United States are a matter of some debate. Although political elites formally rejected it as an ideology in the late twentieth century and scholars question its coherence as a belief system, its effects are everywhere to be seen. Liberalism is best characterized as a shifting set of values and institutional arrangements concerning the individual’s relationship to society, to the economy, and to the state. What has remained constant in American liberalism, at least rhetorically, is the importance placed on the autonomy of equal individual human beings and, for most of its history, a commitment to reform. What has changed are the conceptions of the individual and of the barriers to the realization of the individual’s autonomy.

One of the biggest challenges for understanding American liberalism is locating a coherent liberal tradition. As a political label, the term “liberal” appeared in the United States during the late nineteenth century, when it referred to a small political party called the Liberal Republicans (formed in 1872). The widespread use of “liberal” and “liberalism” came only with the emergence of an intellectual and political orientation self-defined as “liberal” during the New Deal in the 1930s. This self-acknowledged liberalism has since become known as “new liberalism” or “welfare state liberalism”—the phrase that best captures the way most Americans today think of liberalism.

Although liberalism was rarely used as a political label for much of American history, one can locate its antecedents in seventeenth-century British political thought and in the philosophy and institutional design of the early American republic. John Locke was the first to articulate a thoroughgoing liberal political theory. In his *Two Treatises of Government,* written primarily as a critique of monarchy, Locke asserted that men were born free, equal, and rational and that they therefore were capable of ruling themselves, politically and otherwise. From these assumptions followed Locke’s idea of the contractual basis of political society: Men agree to give up their natural freedom under natural law in exchange for civil freedom under civil law, made and enforced by a government of their peers. This political structure was supposed to limit political arbitrariness and government abuse through the instruments of the written law, representative institutions like parliament, and institutional mechanisms such as the separation of powers. Ultimately, political power was checked by a right of revolution that could be invoked against a government that failed to protect people’s God-given rights to life, liberty, and property.

The role of property in Locke’s theory has sometimes been taken as evidence that Locke was primarily interested in securing the conditions for commercial capitalism rather than in promoting political liberty as such. Locke did speak of individuals as having an ownership right over both their own bodies and their labor (leading some to describe Locke’s system as one of “possessive individualism”). But Locke’s conception of property suggested a far broader domain of human entitlements: Human beings had, by the dictates of natural law, a moral right to their own life, freedom, and material possessions. If anything, property stood for the notion of self-determination or sovereignty. Locke’s ideas about natural rights, the consent of the governed, and the immorality of arbitrary political power caught the imagination of American revolutionaries, who adopted an essentially Lockean vocabulary in their Declaration of Independence from the British. So too did the idea that individual autonomy stemmed from control over one’s own productive property.

The second great plank of the Anglo-American liberal tradition is the idea that individual freedom depends upon a free-market economy. Inspired by Adam Smith’s eighteenth-century political economy, this notion stressed the need for commercial dealings to be unfettered either by private monopolies or by too much government interference. A final element was religious toleration. These three doctrines of political, economic, and religious freedom came together in England to constitute classical liberalism, an ideology and political program that helped shape British politics for much of the nineteenth century. Hence, at the core of classical liberalism lay the protection of the rights and liberties of the autonomous individual and an endorsement of markets and of a government constrained by the rule of law.

Although sharing many of its values, the United States did not adopt British-style classical liberalism as an explicit political program; several things militated against this development. Republican ideals dating back to the Revolution stressed the virtues of citizenship, at times holding that the market-based economy should be placed in the service of political participation rather than being an end in itself. In addition, the slaveholding South required forms of political and economic coercion that were incongruous with the libertarian ethos of classical liberalism. Classical liberalism as such existed in the United States as a political force only for a brief moment during the Gilded Age of the 1870s and 1880s.

Facing large changes in the structure of American society and economy—particularly the emergence of large corporations and of social movements of laborites, populists, women, and African Americans demanding greater political inclusion and a more equitable distribution of social wealth—intellectuals and politicians adopted an extreme version of laissez-faire economics known as Social Darwinism. This creed held that poor, struggling individuals and prosperous corporations alike ought to be left alone to compete for survival. Corporations had "rights," the courts determined, just as did individuals, giving rise in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to a combination of a natural-rights jurisprudence and an antistatist politics. Social Darwinism quickly faded as a political ideal (though it persisted in certain intellectual circles and in the courts), as social scientists, reformers, and politicians, including Socialists, rejected the harsh individualism of laissez-faire. Foreshadowing aspects of twentieth-century liberalism, they praised the "coordinating power" of "state action" and railed against the arbitrary power of corporate monopolies.

Critics of laissez-faire recognized that the agents of integration and centralization, most importantly corporations, had displaced the property-owning sovereign individual as the locus of power in modern life. The newly interdependent individual required help from the government and from a robust civil society to maintain a semblance of autonomy. Social forces, not nature, God, or reason, determined who individuals were and their fate in life. Managing the complexity of modern life, moreover, required scientific and social scientific expertise. Between 1880 and 1920, then, Progressive reformers, according to the historian James Kloppenberg, "turned the old liberalism into a new liberalism, a moral and political argument for the welfare state based on a conception of the individual as a social being whose values are shaped by personal choices and cultural conditions" (Kloppenberg 1986, 299). The trope of an old liberalism, grounded in individual natural rights, in government constrained by law, and in the self-possessed individual, turned new is a familiar one. The goal of individual autonomy is probably the theme most commonly stressed by those who wish to link the two liberalisms. However, the fact that so much of the new liberalism, including its conception of the individual, is predicated on a rejection of the old complicates efforts to connect the two. Not surprisingly, scholars continue to debate the value of even positing a single liberal tradition.

The problem of continuity is exemplified by the politics of the New Deal, a self-avowedly liberal movement, which both drew on and transcended Progressivism. The conditions were set for a revaluation of the entire social order. Liberalism answered the call with "a theory of life," in philosopher John Dewey's words (Dewey [1935] 2000, 62). The label "liberal," which President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave to his New Deal, signified that the crisis of the Great Depression required a new vision of the role of government in American life. It indicated too a realism, not always present among Progressives, about the triumph of industrial capitalism over small-scale property ownership. To meet the crisis conditions, the new liberalism promoted unprecedented degrees of intervention in the economy by the federal government, including extra-constitutional emergency measures, the redistribution of wealth and resources, and expert management to direct these reforms. Roosevelt's measures were unusually popular with voters, who four times returned him to office. Most believed that New Deal liberalism would promote the good of society as a whole.

It was in the area of economic relations that New Deal liberalism made its biggest mark, criticizing the very market economy, albeit in radically changed form, that classical liberalism had once celebrated. The various cooperative and interventionist measures undertaken by the New Deal necessarily undermined economic autonomy but would stop short of outright socialist control of the economy. For example, the New Deal experimented with a form of corporatism in which tripartite bodies of business, labor, and government set wage rates and production levels. The New Deal also, via public works programs, provided what the capitalist market was no longer able to in sufficient numbers: jobs. Finally, liberalism addressed the appropriate means for reducing economic inequities, presenting itself as an alternative to communism and fascism. Of the two, often lumped together as "totalitarianism," communism proved to be the bigger challenge in the 1930s precisely because it was still attractive to many American reformers as a more egalitarian alternative to liberalism, and one that appeared to provide more economic security. Liberalism needed to rebut the idea that a violent revolution was the only way to achieve radical reform. Intellectuals responded by constructing an American "liberal tradition" to justify and limit potential anxiety over dramatic departures from existing institutional arrangements that the New Deal entailed.

Although continuing to view individuals as products of social forces, the new liberals simultaneously worried, unlike their Progressive forebears, about threats to individual autonomy by large organizations, whether public or private. Concern about overcentralization was one reason that the New Deal achieved only limited structural change, despite its significant and lasting reforms. Chief among these were the institutionalization of collective bargaining and programs such as Social Security and unemployment compensation. Although important, these changes aimed at providing a minimum standard of living for many Americans, not at fundamentally reworking capitalist institutions. An equally significant obstacle was the structure of American politics itself: the veto power that white southern Democrats held over congressional legislation. Concerned that far-reaching reform would undermine their interests, southern Democrats demanded that sharecropping and domestic labor, work largely performed by African Americans, be exempted from government programs. Equal opportunity and entitlements for Blacks, women, and other minorities would have to wait.

For almost two decades following World War II, political liberalism's critical edge was all but lost. Two conditions set the stage for a tamer liberalism: unprecedented prosperity and an ideologically charged Cold War. In the event, a "consensus" of sorts emerged among political elites that shunned all forms of collectivism, supported a modestly redistributive welfare state in which the government managed the now-prosperous economy indirectly through Keynesian policy, barred the most egregious civil rights violations, and rallied behind an extensive national security state, promoted as necessary to protect the freedom of Americans. Yet postwar liberalism was not simply a product of the Cold War. A new interest in individual rights and liberties, for example, was signaled initially by Roosevelt's call for a "second bill of rights" in 1944, in which he emphasized economic and social rights—to a living wage, health care, education, and protection from economic instability. An even bigger inspiration, and more indicative of the particular cast that postwar rights would take, was the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Above all, the horrors of Nazi Germany fueled the quest for rights in the postwar period. Legal theorists and philosophers such as John Rawls sought an objective but nonmetaphysical basis for morality, while deeming insufficient the moral relativism implicit in the pragmatic ethics of Progressivism and the New Deal. New theories advanced the idea that morality was implicit in sound judgment and reasonable rules, promulgated by average human beings. Postwar rights discourse emanated from an essentially humanistic impulse. Rights were grounded not in God or in nature but in the concept of humanity itself: They were *human* rights.

The advocacy of rights was mainly an attempt to remedy flaws in the theory and practice of New Deal liberalism, principally by making the welfare state more egalitarian. This expansion of the welfare state characterized the next great moment of reform in the mid-1960s: President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society initiative, in which poor people and minorities were granted new rights and access to public resources through civil rights legislation and a War on Poverty that was fought through new programs such as Community Action, Legal Services, and Medicaid. Johnson's initiatives were greatly inspired by social movements: the civil rights movement of the 1950s and later feminism and the welfare rights movement. The social movements were composed of groups left out of the New Deal who took turns claiming rights and liberties already enjoyed by other Americans. For women, people of color, and other excluded groups, rights represented not an alternative to justice and equality but an expression of them—indeed, a precondition for meaningful political participation and autonomy. Other assertions of rights, such as rights to privacy and to protection from police, were responses to abuses of state power growing out of McCarthyism and to fears of totalitarian government.

These campaigns for individual rights, civil and political equality, and real economic opportunity had several consequences beyond their immediate goals. One was the exposure of a tension between rights and democracy; another was the legalizing of liberalism. Efforts to secure individual and, at times, group rights ran up against majoritarian democracy. Some such efforts were defeated in Congress; others were thwarted on the state and local levels. On the one hand, groups seeking greater inclusion and opportunities were already disenfranchised, either literally because they did not have the vote (such as African Americans in the South) or effectively because they did not have enough power to influence the political process. Pressuring the electoral system through mass action was one strategy for overcoming these difficulties. Another was to use the judicial system, which, although formally democratic, holds no pretense of being representative and is relatively insulated from deliberative democracy. Seeking justice from the courts when the legislatures had failed to act proved a controversial strategy, provoking hostility not just from those who resented the courts as havens for minorities but also from legal and political elites who worried, echoing the Progressives and the New Dealers, that "activist" courts were undermining democracy.

Thus began the sense, proffered first by liberals themselves, that liberalism was in crisis. Meanwhile, other forces were lining up to challenge what by the 1960s was perceived as a liberal hegemony in American politics and insti-

President Lyndon B. Johnson, Graduation Speech, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, May 22, 1964

In the famous speech excerpted below, President Lyndon B. Johnson laid out a vision of a "Great Society," coining a phrase that would subsequently be associated with his expansive liberalism and challenging a new generation of college graduates to make it a reality.

. . . For a century we labored to settle and to subdue a continent. For half a century we called upon unbounded invention and untiring industry to create an order of plenty for all of our people.

The challenge of the next half century is whether we have the wisdom to use that wealth to enrich and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality of our American civilization.

Your imagination, your initiative, and your indignation will determine whether we build a society where progress is the servant of our needs, or a society where old values and new visions are buried under unbridled growth. For in your time we have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society.

The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But that is just the beginning.

The Great Society is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents. It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness. It is a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.

It is a place where man can renew contact with nature. It is a place which honors creation for its own sake and for what it adds to the understanding of the race. It is a place where men are more concerned with the quality of their goals than the quantity of their goods.

But most of all, the Great Society is not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge constantly renewed, beckoning us toward a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor. . . .

. . . For better or for worse, your generation has been appointed by history to deal with those problems and to lead America toward a new age. You have the chance never before afforded to any people in any age. You can help build a society where the demands of morality, and the needs of the spirit, can be realized in the life of the Nation.

So, will you join in the battle to give every citizen the full equality which God enjoins and the law requires, whatever his belief, or race, or the color of his skin?

Will you join in the battle to give every citizen an escape from the crushing weight of poverty?

Will you join in the battle to make it possible for all nations to live in enduring peace—as neighbors and not as mortal enemies?

Will you join in the battle to build the Great Society, to prove that our material progress is only the foundation on which we will build a richer life of mind and spirit?

There are those timid souls who say this battle cannot be won; that we are condemned to a soulless wealth. I do not agree. We have the power to shape the civilization that we want. But we need your will, your labor, your hearts, if we are to build that kind of society.

Those who came to this land sought to build more than just a new country. They sought a new world. So I have come here today to your campus to say that you can make their vision our reality. So let us from this moment begin our work so that in the future men will look back and say: It was then, after a long and weary way, that man turned the exploits of his genius to the full enrichment of his life.

tutions. Radical social movements in the 1960s, such as the New Left, blamed liberals and liberalism for a host of evils, among them the "liberal state," Vietnam, and quiescent labor unions. The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 cemented the perception that liberalism had exhausted itself.

A conservative, "New Right" reaction to welfare state liberalism had begun much earlier, in response to the civil rights legislation and court victories of the 1960s. The presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater in 1964 and Richard M. Nixon's election in 1968 were both indicative of this turn, though Nixon was hardly a conservative on all matters. He greatly expanded the regulatory state, forming such agencies as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Nor was he afraid to intervene directly in the economy with such mechanisms as price controls. Nixon did adopt much of the cultural rhetoric of 1960s antiliberalism. In this view, government was seen as favoring some groups—minorities and the poor—over others in a zero-sum game and as overly responsive to the social movements and interest groups seeking greater equality. By the 1980s, antiliberalism had become for many a vague, if deeply felt, antipathy toward "big government," and Reagan took as his mandate the dismantling of much of the welfare state. When the Democratic Party finally returned to power in the 1990s, even it had disowned the liberal label and many of the programs of the regulatory welfare state. These self-described "New Democrats" took their cue in part from intellectuals formerly sympathetic to liberalism who had begun to criticize it under the banner of "communitarianism." The New Democrats felt that liberalism was too focused on absolute rights, leaving little room for political negotiation and moral suasion, and too enamored with centralized, command-and-control government. Nevertheless, liberalism remains a vibrant political philosophy in a constant process of adaptation to new challenges of cultural and ethnic diversity and economic inequality.

Anne Kornhauser

See also: Capitalism; Civil Rights Movement; New Right; Republicanism; Social Darwinism; War on Poverty; Welfare Capitalism; Welfare State

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Living-Wage Campaigns

Campaigns for a "living wage," which became a notable feature of state and local progressive politics during the 1990s, have revived much of the language and ideology first adopted by the working-class movement in the late nineteenth century. In the years after the Civil War, working-class leaders and social reformers largely abandoned their opposition to the wage system itself—or "wage slavery"—and instead embraced the idea that the quest for a "living wage" was itself a form of liberation. Unionists sought a wage high enough to allow an average-sized family to enjoy physical and mental health as well as dignity. Of course, many of these same

Cambridge, Massachusetts, police officer Steve Donahue (L) watches as Harvard University students end their 21-day sit-in and leave the university's Massachusetts Hall administration building, May 8, 2001. The demonstrators, who were demanding that Harvard pay a "living wage" of at least $10.25 an hour to its lowest-paid employees, gave up occupying the building after Harvard met several of their demands. (Reuters NewMedia/Corbis)

laborite reformers held a highly radicalized and patriarchal understanding of the "living wage." Monsignor John Ryan's *Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects*, an influential Progressive-Era tract, assumed that the family breadwinner was a male, and socialists like Jack London and unionists like Samuel Gompers believed that the "American standard" of living excluded Asian, African American, and Latino workers.

During the New Deal years and afterward, many reformers believed that something approaching a "living wage" had been achieved for the nation's working population. Mass unionization raised the living standards of millions of workers, including many in nonunion firms and institutions whose wage standards tracked collective bargaining in auto, steel, and other high-wage, well-organized industries. The federal minimum-wage law, first enacted in 1938, was too low and too narrow in its coverage to constitute a "living wage," but by 1968, it had been raised high enough to provide the income necessary to lift out of poverty a three-person family with one full-time breadwinner. Meanwhile, "prevailing-wage" statutes like the 1931 Bacon-Davis law, which covered construction workers on federally funded projects, ensured that most government entities would pay the prevailing wage, that is, the union wage, to contract construction workers.

By the 1990s, this system was in crisis. Trade union weakness deprived organized labor of the power to set regional or industry-wide wage standards, the minimum wage had lost 30 percent of its value since the late 1960s, and many government entities contracted out an increasing proportion of their work to low-wage, nonunion service firms. Indeed, the modern living-wage movement began in 1994 when clergy running food pantries in Baltimore found that a large proportion of those coming for aid held a regular job. Many worked full-time in privatized city jobs that had once been decently paid.

The Baltimore living-wage campaign was led by the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, in a coalition of community members, clergy, and unions that would become characteristic of most of the ninety city and county living-wage campaigns that followed during the next decade. The city of Baltimore announced that it could not require all employers to pay higher wages but that it could extend its prevailing wage law from construction to include private-sector firms holding service contracts with the city (covering janitors, bus drivers, security guards, and so on). Over four years, the plan raised wages from the minimum wage, then $4.35 an hour, to a level that enabled a family of four to meet the federal poverty line ($7.70 an hour in 1999).

The movement soon went nationwide. Given the stalemate in social policy at the national level and in most states, the fight for municipal living-wage ordinances proved a favorable terrain for progressive groups such as the Service Employees International Union, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE), the IAF, and other local antipoverty groups. During the 1990s, a variety of ordinances were passed in many older industrial cities, including Boston, Duluth, Milwaukee, and New Haven, as well as in the high-cost-of-living cities of coastal California and the Pacific Northwest. The movement also became active on many college campuses, where living-wage advocates saw the university as the "government" entity that contracted out food, maintenance, parking, and security services. Few ordinances mandated higher wages for all workers in a city, but 85 percent covered government service contractors and about 40 percent called for higher wages for workers in firms that received economic assistance from a city or county. In Santa Monica, California, for example, where much beachfront infrastructure directly benefited local hotels, the living-wage ordinance applied to all large employers in the city's downtown tourist zone.

By the early twenty-first century, living-wage ordinances covered fewer than 50,000 workers, a minuscule proportion of the nation's huge poverty-level workforce. But these living-wage campaigns were nevertheless highly significant for three important reasons. First, they helped generate a new set of progressive coalitions at the state and local levels. The unions favored living-wage ordinances to forestall outsourcing and low-wage competition from nonunion firms, but they could not win without the community, religious, and economic development groups that often provided the key leaders of local living-wage movements. In the mid-twentieth century, these coalition partners had often been antagonistic, but now the labor movement was reinventing itself with their aid.

Second, the living-wage campaigns have had a substantial impact on local economic redevelopment efforts, focusing attention not only on the volume of jobs created by state and local incentives but on the quality of the jobs. Since tax incentives, rezonings, and outright subsidies have become so integral to urban redevelopment, the corporatist quid pro quo has increasingly involved higher-paying jobs.

And finally, the living-wage campaigns have been ideologically potent vehicles for the delegitimization of the laissez-faire economics that has returned to political ascendancy since the presidency of Ronald Reagan and for the valorization of the social and economic regulations necessary to the creation of a new generation of high-wage jobs. Living-wage ordinances have been bitterly opposed by service-sector employers and by conservative politicians and intellectuals, who argue that such laws will raise business costs, eliminate jobs, and increase municipal expenses. In response to such critiques, which apply to virtually all regulation of the labor market, including long-standing federal regulations governing minimum wages, job safety, and maximum hours, living-wage advocates like economists Robert Pollin and Robert Reich have conducted a series of empirical studies demonstrating that living-wage laws raise real incomes for covered employees, reduce turnover, and have little impact on city employment or cost of services.

Nelson Lichtenstein

See also: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Family Wage; Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); Minimum Wage; Trade/Industrial Unions; "Working Poor"

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Losing Ground, *Charles Murray*

With the publication in 1984 of *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950–1980*, Charles Murray established himself as the leading policy theorist of the New Right. He obtained this position by forcefully criticizing what he called a too liberal social welfare state. His later work, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*, published in 1994 and coauthored with Richard Herrnstein, cemented his location in a conservative agenda committed to ending aid to poor, unmarried women with children. *The Bell Curve* reiterated themes running through *Losing Ground*. In *Losing Ground*, Murray condemned the programs of the Great Society years, arguing that they interfered with the natural order of things. That natural order required poor people to work hard for a living. Murray was especially harsh on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), arguing that welfare was a strong disincentive for work.

Murray targeted his criticism against poor Black women and children. He was angered by the disproportionate number of Black welfare recipients, not because he objected to the racial distribution of poverty but because he blamed poverty among Blacks on their behaviors and calculations. In particular, he railed against young Black mothers for bearing "illegitimate" Black babies. Murray argued that the availability of welfare actually encouraged poor people to avoid work and promoted illegitimacy. Contending that the liberal welfare state agenda had been "disastrous" for poor people of all races but for poor Blacks especially, Murray called for the end of welfare.

Charles Murray also attacked affirmative action in *Losing Ground*, a theme he continued in *The Bell Curve*. In the latter book, he and Herrnstein resurrected the issue of inequality rooted in biological differences in intelligence. Although especially hard on African Americans, the two men were intent on articulating the point that a growing white underclass was the product of inferior intelligence.

Losing Ground and *The Bell Curve* prefigured the arguments for policy changes that would culminate in the dismantling of AFDC for poor women and children. These arguments congealed in the Republican agenda to eliminate welfare during the mid-1990s and continue to feed Republican initiatives to use social policy to promote marriage and compel work in the labor market.

Rose M. Brewer

See also: Family Structure; Racism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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See Charity Organization Societies; *Public Relief and Private Charity*

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Malthusianism

Malthusianism in its narrow sense designates the proposition, advanced by the English cleric Thomas Malthus in *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), that human population advances geometrically while the food supply increases only arithmetically. This principle of population-to-food ratios assumed a world of scarcity or limited resources and posited that rapid population growth would inevitably lead to mass starvation and want. However, Malthusianism also dominated early-nineteenth-century Anglo-American discussions of poverty through three other, comparably controversial arguments that Malthus advanced along with his principle of ratios: (1) societies' lower classes were virtually doomed to poverty and misery because only such "positive" checks as famine, disease, and war were likely to bring their numbers into line with the available food supply; (2) the members of these classes were to blame for their condition because they failed to control their sexual appetites and reproductive propensity; (3) not only were needy laboring people not entitled to public poor relief, but such relief should be abolished because it only encouraged the irresponsible disposition of working-class families to produce more offspring than they could support. In subsequent editions of the *Essay on Population*, Malthus emended his arguments, in particular emphasizing that the lower classes could be taught to restrain their sexual activity and control their numbers. But despite acknowledgment that mass poverty and suffering might be averted by moral "preventive" checks, Malthusianism became identified as a fundamental component of the "dismal science" of classical economics. Its persisting influence, moreover, culminated in one of the watershed pieces of English legislation: the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which sharply curtailed outdoor (that is, noninstitutional) assistance to the "able-bodied" poor.

In America as in England, there were eighteenth-century thinkers (notably Benjamin Franklin) who anticipated some of Malthus's arguments. But if only because the young republic was not faced with the magnitude of England's social problems—extensive unemployment, labor unrest, and spiraling poor-relief costs—neither the defense nor the denunciation of Malthusianism generated the same all-consuming intensity in the early-nineteenth-century United States. Nevertheless, both the controversies over Malthusianism and the actual impact of Malthus's arguments on poor-relief policy proved significant for the United States as well.

The escalating sectional conflict over southern Black slavery lent an indigenous dimension to the American controversies. Defenders of slavery and the southern social order above all embraced Malthusian population doctrine. Many of these invoked the slaves' supposed lack of "prudential restraint" to strengthen the case for slavery's expansion into new territories. Such pro-slavery Malthusians believed that confining the expanding slave population to the existing slave states would result either in the slaves' mass starvation, in race war, or even in the South's abandonment by an overwhelmed white population. Southerners also applied pro-slavery Malthusianism to criticize the social order of the free states. They predicted that as the nation's public domain was exhausted, a surplus population of rebellious wage laborers would continue to build in the North, much as it had in England.

Malthusianism generally met with a more hostile reception among commentators in the pre–Civil War North. This hostility stemmed in part from the overt pro-slavery uses made of Malthus's population principle. But it also reflected a more optimistic view of political economy and of the possibility of achieving and sustaining mass prosperity. Even as the nation's colleges commonly taught less pessimistic versions of classical economic doctrine, there arose an influential "American" school of political economy that unequivocally repudiated classical economics for denying God's benevolent intent and the natural "harmony of interests" existing among capital, labor, and other social entities. Malthus's population principle (along with David Ricardo's doctrine of rent), Henry Carey and others of this school argued, was not merely inapplicable to the land-abundant, labor-scarce, high-wage United States; it was wrong for all societies.

The Malthusian-classical economy-of-scarcity paradigm, the American school argued, should be thrown out along with the oppressive and "aristocratic" Old World arrangements that it sought to legitimate.

Yet there remained one particular sense in which Malthusianism, generally defined, did win substantial acceptance even in the antebellum North. The state officials and elite private citizens involved in poor-relief efforts may not have found any particular validity in Malthus's ratios. But, alarmed over the growing poverty and pauperism in New York and other urban centers, they embraced as overpowering truths the broader axioms of free-market competitive morality that underlay Malthusianism. These included the admonitions that the laboring poor must take responsibility for their own condition; that they should, with assistance from more enlightened classes, internalize the bourgeois values of self-discipline, sobriety, and foresight; and that outdoor relief for the able-bodied poor, by insulating them from the salutary prodding of physical want, morally debilitated laborers and increased the numbers of dependent poor. Reinforcing the older Protestant work ethic, Malthusianism bore at least indirect responsibility for the American, as well as the English, movement toward "well-regulated" almshouses and for the efforts in northern states particularly to abolish or drastically curtail public outdoor relief.

As class divisions hardened and social unrest grew in the post–Civil War period, both Malthusian population doctrine and Malthusian moralism made further inroads among the nation's political economists and other elite elements. In their defense of laissez-faire competitive individualism and economic discrepancies in Gilded Age America, leading conservative thinkers, such as William Graham Sumner, drew on Malthusian-Ricardian tenets (for example, the man-land ratio), again in tandem with the work ethic. The Malthusianism of such thinkers was itself influenced (although how profoundly is a matter of debate) by the newer scientific reasoning and terminology of Darwinian biology (for example, "the struggle for existence").

Like conservative Social Darwinism, overt Malthusianism fell into increasing disfavor with the ascendance of progressive reform thought, and during the early twentieth century the Malthusian specter of overpopulation was generally supplanted by recognition that science and technology could greatly amplify crop yields. However, Malthusianism in its broader meanings has never truly abandoned the field. To this day, criticisms of the "undeserving" poor, including claims that Black single mothers on welfare are promiscuous and sexually irresponsible, reflect Malthusianism's subliminal, persisting influence.

Jonathan A. Glickstein

See also: Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Relief; Self-Reliance; Slavery; Social Darwinism; Society for the Prevention of Pauperism; Speenhamland

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Maternalism

The term "maternalism" refers to the ideology of early-twentieth-century women welfare reformers who contributed significantly to the development of American welfare. Studies of maternalism have revised conventional interpretations of the origins of the American welfare state, showing that key policies, such as the 1935 Social Security Act, did not develop merely in response to the Depression. Rather, their foundations were laid in the Progressive Era, when white middle-class women succeeded in enacting welfare programs specifically for women and children, even as efforts to secure universal entitlements, such as health care, failed. Although the maternalist movement waned in the 1920s, its leaders grew in influence during the New Deal. Maternalists gained unprecedented influence in the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt; in drafting portions of the Social Security Act, they made maternalist values a cornerstone of the American welfare state.

Maternalism was based on the nineteenth-century ideology of separate spheres, on the belief that childhood was a distinct stage of life, and on the conviction that women, as mothers and potential mothers, had a special ability—and responsibility—to protect children's welfare. It was made possible by economic and social changes, including new household technologies and a declining birthrate, that "freed" middle-class women for public caregiving and civic activism. Maternalist movements can be found throughout western Europe and the British Commonwealth, but they were particularly influential in the United States, where unions and courts rejected class-based welfare legislation and where a decentralized political structure and weak bureaucracy created a space for educated women to develop social welfare policy. Women's disenfranchisement was also an advantage, for it enabled female activists to present themselves as above politics while lobbying governments and designing policy.

Maternalism was a broad concept, but scholars have generally focused on two groups of mostly white activists: the members of women's clubs and voluntary associations, who numbered in the millions, and the tight-knit reform network that revolved around the U.S. Children's Bureau. The first group, members of the National Congress of Mothers and the General Federation of Women's Clubs, were less educated and more likely to be married than were their colleagues in the Children's Bureau network, but they were instrumental in waging maternalist campaigns at the state and local levels. By contrast, most national maternalist leaders, such as Children's Bureau chiefs Julia Lathrop and Grace Abbott and National Consumers League director Florence Kelley, were highly educated career women, often associated with social settlements. Taking advantage of the rhetoric of separate spheres, they presented themselves as "social mothers" or "social housekeepers" to expand their influence in politics and social work. Maternalists staffed local juvenile courts and child welfare organizations and state child health departments; the establishment of the U.S. Children's Bureau in 1912 also gave them a foothold in the federal government. Indeed, the entrance of women professionals into government service and social work was one of the most significant and long-lasting accomplishments of maternalism.

Historians debating the merits and legacy of maternalism have focused on three main issues. The first is the meaning and usefulness of the term. Although some scholars use "maternalism" broadly to refer to any political use of motherhood rhetoric, others draw a distinction between maternalism, with its emphasis on putting children first, and feminism, which was more individualistic and oriented to women's rights. Or they delineate differences within maternalism—for example, between the "sentimental maternalism" of the National Congress of Mothers and the more feminist or "progressive maternalism" of the Children's Bureau women. Others compare the maternalists who developed the American welfare state with those who opposed it, or question whether African American women reformers should be considered "maternalist."

A second debate has been over the legacy of maternalism. Was it progressive or conservative, feminist or antifeminist? Although some laud its potential for a more generous and caring welfare state, others underscore its class and race limitations. Scholars have been especially critical of its moralistic, class-bound ideas about family life. Most maternalists believed in the family-wage ideal—that fathers should earn enough money so that mothers could be full-time homemakers—and consequently objected to mothers working outside the home. As a result, they supported mothers' pensions, which provided partial support for a small number of children in

Special Message, *President Theodore Roosevelt, 1909*

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

On January 25–26, 1909, there assembled in this city, on my invitation, a conference on the care of dependent children. . . .

Each of these children represents either a potential addition to the productive capacity and the enlightened citizenship of the nation, or, if allowed to suffer from neglect, a potential addition to the destructive forces of the community. The ranks of criminals and other enemies of society are recruited in an altogether undue proportion from children bereft of their natural homes and left without sufficient care.

Notwithstanding a wide diversity of views and methods represented in the conference, and notwithstanding the varying legislative enactments and policies of the States from which the members came, the conference, at the close of its sessions, unanimously adopted a series of declarations expressing the conclusions which they had reached. . . .

The keynote of the conference was expressed in these words:

Home life is the highest and finest product of civilization. Children should not be deprived of it except for urgent and compelling reasons.

Surely poverty alone should not disrupt the home. Parents of good character suffering from temporary misfortune, and above all, deserving mothers fairly well able to work but deprived of the support of the normal breadwinner, should be given such aid as may be necessary to enable them to maintain suitable homes for the rearing of their children. The widowed or deserted mother, if a good woman, willing to work and do her best, should ordinarily be helped in such fashion as will enable her to bring up her children herself in their natural home. Children from unfit homes, and children who have no homes, who must be cared for by charitable agencies, should, so far as practicable, be cared for in families.

"suitable" homes, over day nurseries or child care. They also supported legislative restrictions on night work, heavy lifting, and the number of hours wage-earning women (potential mothers) might work. Such legislation, although intended to protect mothers, often prevented women, whether or not they had children, from gaining economic independence and workplace equality.

Many scholars have emphasized maternalists' class and race bias. Most maternalist programs were predicated on the belief that "good mothering" was essential to child welfare, and they made cultural conformity to an American middle-class model of home life a principal goal. Mothers' pensions, for example, were limited to "deserving" mothers willing to let social workers teach them proper ("American") diet, dress, and child-rearing techniques. African American women, whose high rates of maternal employment often marked them as undeserving of aid, were disproportionately excluded from mothers' pensions. Similarly, the maternalist baby-saving campaigns, which aimed to lower infant and maternal mortality and which culminated in the 1921 Sheppard-Towner Act, emphasized the dangers of traditional midwives, "superstitious" healing rituals, and spicy food. Although designed by and for women, maternalist policies fostered women's dependence and were often paternalistic and controlling.

Although maternalist ideas were written into the Social Security Act, the movement itself began to decline in the mid-1920s. Club women's interest in welfare legislation faded, and social workers referred to their professional expertise, rather than motherhood, when asserting women's authority in the child welfare field. Since the 1930s, welfare activists have occasionally employed maternalist rhetoric, but never again with the same success.

Molly Ladd-Taylor

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Maternalist Policy; National Congress of Mothers; U.S. Children's Bureau

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Maternalist Policy

Maternalist policies, such as state mothers' pensions laws and maternal and child health services, were set in place during the Progressive Era and made national during the New Deal. Although the United States lagged behind European welfare states in developing universal entitlement programs, such as national health insurance, it participated in the international trend toward enacting social welfare policies specifically for women and children. Early-twentieth-century women reformers—dubbed "maternalists" by historians—accepted and even exalted women's responsibility for home and child care, and they endeavored to write "motherly" values, such as nurturing and compassion, into U.S. social policy. Mostly white and affluent or middle-class, they designed policies based on the principles that (1) children should be the nation's top priority, and (2) every child needed a "proper" home with a stay-at-home mother and a breadwinning father who earned a decent wage. Although rooted in nineteenth-century ideas about woman's place, these maternalist precepts were written into the 1935 Social Security Act and have framed American welfare policy ever since.

Maternalist ideas and activism flowed in many directions; maternalist policies, however, can be divided into three overlapping categories: child protection, social housekeeping, and maternal and child welfare. Institutions and measures specifically directed to children, such as kindergartens, juvenile courts, compulsory-education laws, and the regulation of child labor, were influenced by psychologist G. Stanley Hall's ideas about the importance of physical expression, play, and "mother love" to child development. But they also had an assimilationist objective: to teach "American" values and cultural norms to immigrant children and parents. By 1920, every state required school attendance, 10 percent of the nation's children attended kindergarten, and all but a few states had juvenile courts.

Social housekeeping was the second category of maternalist reform. Expanding the notions of "home" and "woman's sphere" to include the entire community, activist women justified their involvement in new professions like nursing and social work and in clubs, voluntary associations, and politics by invoking motherhood and women's supposed moral superiority. Maternalists disagreed over whether women should have the right to vote, but they all believed that women—"social mothers"—were needed to clean up political corruption. They worked for civil service reform and for pure food and drug laws, and they saw to it that maternalist policies enacted into law usually included a provision for female administrators.

The third category of maternalist reform, maternal and child welfare, has received the greatest amount of scholarly attention, for it continues to define women's place in the American welfare state. Many studies have focused on the U.S. Children's Bureau, the center of maternalist organizing and policy administration from the second decade of the twentieth century to the 1930s. The bureau was the brainchild of Lillian Wald, founder of New York's Henry Street Settlement, and Florence Kelley, director of the National Consumers League, and it grew out of decades of maternalist activism in women's clubs and social settlements. Its establishment in 1912 and the appointment of longtime Hull House resident Julia Lathrop as its first director gave maternalists a foothold in the federal government eight years before women had the right to vote. Lathrop used her extensive network among women activists to build a remarkably effective partnership between women's voluntary organizations and the federal government, combining social science research and political mobilization on behalf of child welfare. In the second decade of the twentieth century, the bureau published a series of studies that mobilized women around the issue of infant mortality. It also conducted research on the effects of child employment and administered the nation's first federal child labor law, the 1916 Keating-Owen Act, until the Supreme Court overturned it after nine months. The bureau failed to secure a child labor amendment to the Constitution despite a vigorous campaign, and it was not until the 1938 passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act—a bill that owed much to the efforts of Frances Perkins, the maternalist secretary of labor—that the United States banned most child labor.

Protective labor legislation for women workers has been another popular topic among historians of women and the welfare state, for it poses a question that remains relevant today: Can policies based on gender difference be an entering wedge for universal social programs, or are they inevitably discriminatory? Social democratic maternalists, such as Florence Kelley, supported sex-based labor laws in part because the courts struck down—and the American Federation of Labor opposed—most laws regulating the hours, wages, and safety conditions of adult men. In *Lochner v. New York* (198 U.S. 45 [1905]), for example, the Supreme Court ruled that a law mandating a maximum ten-hour workday for male bakers was unconstitutional because it denied them their freedom of contract. Three years after *Lochner,* however, the Supreme Court upheld the principle of protective legislation for women in *Muller v. Oregon* (208 U.S. 412 [1908]), a decision that owed much to the efforts of Kelley's National Consumers League. Future Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis, brother-in-law of National Consumers League staffer Josephine Goldmark, argued the case, using his famous Brandeis Brief (developed largely by Goldmark) to convince the court that women's capacity to bear children—and populate the nation—placed the regulation of their work in the national interest. By 1925, all but four states limited women's working hours. Many also regulated rest periods, placed restrictions on nighttime employment and heavy lifting, and prohibited women from working in places deemed exceptionally dangerous or immoral. Kelley believed such protections would ease the physical burden on overworked women and would serve as an entering wedge to better labor standards for all workers. For the feminists who launched the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in 1923 and for many subsequent historians, however, sex-based labor laws that treated all women as mothers or potential mothers reinforced women's inequality. The debate over the ERA tore the women's movement apart. Although feminists saw the challenge to legalized gender difference as a crucial step toward women's rights—and pointed out that protective laws did not even apply to women of color who worked in agriculture or domestic service—maternalists objected that the ERA would overturn decades of work on behalf of wage-earning women. Tensions remained strong into the 1960s, even though workplace protections were extended to male industrial workers in 1938.

The underlying assumption behind protective legislation—that children needed mothers at home, not in the workforce—was also embedded in mothers' pensions, the most successful welfare reform of the Progressive Era. The first state mothers' pension law was enacted in Illinois in 1911; thirty-nine states passed similar laws within eight years. Maternalist organizations, especially the National Congress of Mothers, were the policy's most ardent supporters, for they saw mothers' pensions as protecting maternal custody rights and the dignity of poor widows. Not surprisingly, mothers' pensions also reflected maternalists' narrow understanding of children's needs. Pensions went only to "suitable" mothers willing to accept social work supervision and to bring their dietary, housekeeping, and child-rearing practices in line with "American" middle-class norms. Moreover, in spite of the claim that children needed full-time mothers, mothers' pensions were too meager to live on, and most states permitted—or required—recipients to work outside the home. Yet the belief that "good" mothers stayed home with their children kept reformers from endorsing child care programs or day nurseries that would support women in their capacity as wage earners. It also fostered discrimination against African American mothers, whose high rates of labor force participation often rendered them ineligible for aid. Defined as workers rather than caregivers, Black mothers faced the predicament that would come to haunt all welfare recipients: They were condemned as lazy nonworkers if they wanted to stay home with their children, but working outside the home made them "unfit" mothers.

The maternalist campaign against maternal and infant mortality, which culminated in the passage of America's first federal social welfare measure, was also based on middle-class notions about children's needs. Infant health (and, by extension, the health of pregnant women and new mothers) was the principal priority of the Children's Bureau in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. The bureau disseminated literature on prenatal and infant care, documented the economic causes of infant mortality, and coordinated local baby-saving campaigns. In 1918, the second year of World War I, 11 million women participated in the bureau's baby-saving drive. Three years later, Congress passed the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection Act, the first "women's" bill to pass after women got the vote. Sheppard-Towner provided federal matching funds to the states for prenatal and child health clinics, for instruction in hygiene and nutrition, and for visiting nurses for pregnant women and new mothers. Mothers across the country were advised to seek medical care for childbirth and sick children, to use "American" child-rearing methods, and to refrain from feeding babies spicy food.

Despite Sheppard-Towner's modest provisions—Congress had rejected the Children's Bureau's efforts to secure medical and nursing care—conservative politicians and the American Medical Association painted the law as an attack on the family and a step toward "state medicine," and they forced its repeal in 1929. Federal funding for maternal and child health care was restored in Title V of the 1935 Social Security Act, but access to services was means-tested and was stigmatized as charity for the poor.

Ironically, although maternalism was rooted in nineteenth-century gender ideals, maternalist policies were not implemented at the federal level until the 1930s—just as mass unemployment, women's right to vote, and the growing proportion of women in the workforce showed maternalist ideas about separate spheres to be anachronistic. Still, most male and female New Dealers remained convinced that a breadwinning father was a child's greatest need. They designed programs, such as the Works Progress Administration, that promoted work and wage earning among men but gave little thought to public works or child care programs that would assist married women workers. In 1935, the Social Security Act instituted a two-track welfare system, with old-age and unemployment-insurance entitlements for male wage earners and means-tested charity, such as Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), for the "dependent" poor. Needy mothers and children were not entitled to ADC (as mothers' pensions were then called). Instead, aid was given only to the children of "deserving" mothers, and their mothers received no stipend at all. Despite modest changes over the years, the basic framework of ADC—wherein children's economic welfare is tied to the moral and cultural "suitability" of their mothers—endures.

Scholars have engaged in a vigorous debate over the extent to which maternalism was responsible for the failures of the U.S. welfare system. Did the maternalist commitment to sex-based policies, to American cultural norms, and to middle-class family norms produce the inequities in the two-track U.S. welfare state? Or are the shortcomings of American welfare due to political and economic circumstances beyond maternalists' control? Although some scholars stress the accomplishments of maternalists in the face of fierce opposition to progressive welfare reform, others underscore the limits of their all-white social network and middle-class perspective. Present-day antipoverty organizations continue to struggle over "maternalist" strategies. Some, like the Children's Defense Fund, have decided to put children first, while others place a greater priority on changing welfare and employment policies that would enhance mothers' wage-earning potential and economic independence. Still others advocate new welfare provisions that would recognize and support the caregiving work of mothers.

Molly Ladd-Taylor

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Hull House; Maternalism; National Congress of Mothers; U.S. Children's Bureau; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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McWilliams, Carey

See Factories in the Field; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor

Means Testing and Universalism

Means testing and universalism are fundamental but opposite principles governing the eligibility of citizens for income, services, and other benefits in welfare states. Means testing, a legacy of the nineteenth-century poor laws, restricts benefits to applicants whose income and assets fall below an officially established threshold. Intrusive investigations are typically required to determine whether an individual's wages and assets are below the legal threshold. Universalism is based on the idea of common citizenship and social rights. Under universalism, public social welfare grants and services are available without restriction to all citizens regardless of social class, income, or status.

Though means testing is often justified as an efficient way to target income and services to needy people, it is used mainly to exclude people from social welfare programs. The nineteenth-century poor laws were written to sharply distinguish between paupers—those individuals unable to support themselves—and the able-bodied poor. Aid to the poor was thus conditioned on extreme want, and the measure of that want—the means test—stigmatized recipients as public burdens who lack independence and self-discipline. Means testing treats individuals as supplicants rather than as clients or beneficiaries with legitimate rights to social assistance. It can also lead to repeated investigations of applicants' personal lives, to behavioral requirements, and to other degrading practices that undermine recipients' self-respect. Defenders of means testing view these practices as necessary to make public aid to the poor less desirable than work.

Seeking to avoid the penury and stigmatization characteristic of means testing, universalistic social policies make equality the chief goal of welfare policy. Labor unions and labor-based political parties historically have embraced universalism for this reason. Universalism is valued not only because it is a fairer way to distribute public income transfers and services but also because it is thought to promote a common stake in the welfare state. Means testing is redistributive—that is one of its justifications—but it separates those who pay for public aid to the poor from those who benefit and thus inspires political opposition. Universalism distributes benefits and burdens to all citizens and inspires political support. Indeed, universalism is often defended as a tool to build political coalitions composed of different social classes and racial or ethnic groups and to promote social solidarity more generally.

As principles, means testing and universalism have offsetting virtues and vices. Means testing redistributes income to the poor, but it also may create work disincentives if benefits are reduced as individuals earn outside income or if benefits exceed wage levels. A generous means-tested policy may actually give individuals some leverage to bargain with employers in low-wage labor markets, which in turn leads to political pressure to keep means-tested benefits very low. Universal policies do not erode work incentives, but universalism is very expensive and much less effective than means testing in redistributing income and targeting benefits to the poor.

Universalism triumphed in Europe because of the strength of labor-based political parties and the support of the middle class. In the United States, by comparison, means testing is far more prevalent, reflecting the view that public aid should be sparing and reserved for the neediest. Public expenditures for means-tested policies in the United States are substantially higher than in almost all European countries. In Europe, moreover, means-tested policies are used to cover the gaps in universalistic social and health insurance, housing policies, and family allowances. This practice allows Europeans to embed means testing within politically popular universalistic programs. It amounts to redistribution within universalism and compensates for the inability of policymakers to infinitely expand costly universalistic programs.

In the United States, means-tested and universalistic policies define separate tiers in the welfare state. This separation goes back to the 1935 Social Security Act, which created a universal old-age insurance (Social Security) and unemployment compensation program for full-time workers and means-tested public assistance programs for the elderly and blind and for the children of widows (Aid to Dependent Children). Today, Social Security and Medicare cover almost all of the elderly, and means-tested policies for the elderly are used to supplement meager social insurance payments. Among nonelderly citizens, on the other hand, there is almost no overlap between individuals who receive means-tested benefits such as food stamps or other welfare programs and individuals who receive universal benefits such as unemployment compensation. Poor and middle-class citizens are treated very differently: Compared to people receiving universal benefits, recipients of means-tested aid receive lower, stigmatized benefits.

As a social welfare principle, universalism is ambiguous; in practice, many individuals are excluded from universalistic policies, either explicitly by law or implicitly. For example, the 1935 Social Security Act excluded farmworkers, domestic workers, and the self-employed, among other workers. Many of these workers were covered later by social insurance, but many more were excluded implicitly by requirements for extended attachment to the labor force. Those workers who experience low or intermittent employment—many women and members of racial minorities—are excluded, and if they do manage to gain entry, their benefits will be lower. Similarly, the policy permitting taxpayers to deduct interest payments on home mortgages from their taxable income, ostensibly a universalistic policy, implicitly excludes renters from what amounts to a significant and generous social welfare benefit.

Race and gender, not just social class, are defining features of means-tested and universalistic social welfare programs in the United States. These racial and gender divisions began when reformers during the Progressive Era advocated universalistic social insurance for male workers and created a very different program, mothers' pensions, for widows and their children. Unlike social insurance, mothers' pensions were locally controlled, encumbered with rules, and means-tested. Two-thirds of all African American workers were initially excluded from social insurance in the 1930s because they were employed as farmworkers or as domestic help. Poor African American workers had no choice but to turn to means-tested programs for help.

Although most African American families are covered today by Social Security, racial and gender divisions between means-tested and universalistic policies remain. Of those African Americans who receive a public cash transfer, almost three-quarters receive a means-tested benefit; by comparison, just under one-third of whites receiving an income transfer receive means-tested benefits. In universal programs, the pattern is just the opposite: About one-third of Blacks receive a non-means-tested benefit compared to three-quarters of whites (Brown et al. 2003, 98). Although women benefit from universalism in the United States, many women, particularly poor single mothers, must rely entirely on means-tested aid. These racial and gender divisions in the distribution of benefits reflect enduring labor market discrimination and unequal wages as well as the legacy of policy decisions.

Michael K. Brown

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Poverty Line; Social Security Act of 1935

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Medicaid

See Health Policy

Medicare

See Health Policy

Mental Health Policy

Mental health policy comprises the laws, regulations, court decisions, and programs by which government sustains, oversees, and supplements the delivery of mental health care services. The objectives of public policy in this sector include the prevention of mental health problems in the population, the treatment of mental illnesses in acute and chronic forms, and the provision of psychological, financial, and social supports to people with mental illnesses in various residential settings. According to this definition, mental health policy encompasses actions to maintain the mental health system, as well as those programs, such as health and disability insurance entitlements, that assist people with mental illnesses as part of a broader clientele (Rochefort 1997, 4–5). One of the earliest social welfare commitments in American society, policies in the mental health area have undergone tremendous growth and transformation over time. One constant, however, has been a mismatch between the level of need for mental health care and available resources, with marked inequalities of access for different social groups.

In the colonial era, people with mental illnesses who required public support were handled under the poor laws. Local officials relied on such practices as boarding disturbed individuals with neighbors and placing them in poorhouses and

Woman in Straitjacket at a Psychiatric Hospital, Ohio, 1946. (Jerry Cooke/Corbis)

jails. The movement to establish specialized mental hospitals in the early 1800s began as reformers, such as Dorothea Dix of Massachusetts, uncovered the shocking inadequacies of these ad hoc arrangements. Dozens of mental institutions soon spread across the states under public and private auspices with the aim of providing patients with "moral treatment," or humane individualized care in a well-ordered environment.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, however, a number of forces led to the deterioration of treatment and living conditions within public facilities. Population growth fueled overcrowding, legislatures neglected to fund the expansion and maintenance of state institutions as needed, and there was a steady accumulation of patients with dementias and other chronic disorders (Grob 1994, ch. 5). The influence of social status on mental health care grew especially pronounced during this period, both in public asylums' practice of determining treatments along class, ethnic, and racial lines and in the large gap in quality between public and private facilities (Grob 1994, 86–90).

The 1950s brought a major shift away from the long-term trend toward institutional treatment. After reaching a peak of 559,000 patients in 1955, the number of patients in state and county mental hospitals in the United States began a steep decline, falling more than 80 percent over the next four decades (Rochefort 1997, 216–217). The development of powerful new tranquilizing drugs was a causal factor, as were exposés of mental hospitals and court decisions favoring care in the "least restrictive" setting. Three important pieces of federal legislation in this period were the Community Mental Health Centers Act (1963), which expanded local mental health services; Medicaid (1965), which funded care in private nursing homes and general hospitals for many mentally ill persons; and Supplemental Security Income (1972), which gave financial support to patients living in the community. Yet a host of implementation problems marked this transition to the community, including the lack of low-cost supervised housing, poor coordination of services across different social welfare bureaucracies, and community opposition to mental health facilities. The emergence of the mentally ill as a distinct segment of the homeless—typical estimates range from one-quarter to one-third of this population—underscored the shortcomings of community mental health care in the nation's large urban centers (Rochefort 1997, 255–259).

Today's mental health reform agenda is multipronged. One major emphasis is on fashioning comprehensive systems of community support for people with severe and long-term mental disorders. This involves planning an array of mental health, substance abuse, health, housing, employment, and advocacy services, which are typically organized at the client level through a process known as case management. Assertive Community Treatment is one popular model that seeks to create "hospitals without walls" through use of multidisciplinary treatment teams accessing diverse resources on behalf of clients

Dorothea Dix Appealing for Federal Aid for the Mentally Ill, June 23, 1848

. . . I have myself seen more than nine thousand idiots, epileptics, and insane, in these United States, destitute of appropriate care and protection; and of this vast and most miserable company, sought out in jails, in poorhouses, and in private dwellings, there have been hundreds, nay, rather thousands, bound with galling chains, bowed beneath fetters and heavy iron balls, attached to drag-chains, lacerated with ropes, scourged with rods, and terrified beneath storms of profane execrations and cruel blows. . . .

[In an institution in New York state I viewed] a madman. The fierce command of his keeper brought him to the door, a hideous object; matted locks, and unshorn beard, a wild, wan countenance, disfigured by vilest uncleanliness; in a state of nudity, save the irritating incrustations derived from that dungeon, reeking with loathsome filth. There, without light, without pure air, without warmth, without cleansing, absolutely destitute of everything securing comfort or decency, was a human being—forlorn, abject, and disgusting, it is true, but not less of a human being—nay more, an immortal being, though the mind was fallen in ruins, and the soul was clothed in darkness. And who was he—this neglected, brutalized wretch? A burglar, a murderer, a miscreant, who for base, foul crimes had been condemned, by the justice of outraged laws and the righteous indignation of his fellow-men, to expiate offences by exclusion from his race, by privations and suffering extreme, yet not exceeding the measure and enormity of his misdeeds? No; this was no doomed criminal, festering in filth, wearing warily out of the warp of life in dreariest solitude and darkness. No, this was no criminal—“Only a crazy man.”

Source: Dorothea Dix, “Memorial of D. L. Dix Praying a Grant of Land for the Relief and Support of the Indigent Curable and Incurable Insane in the United States, June 23, 1848” (U.S. Senate, “Senate Miscellaneous Document no. 150,” 30th Cong., sess. 1). Reprinted in Edith Abbott, ed., *Some American Pioneers in Social Welfare: Select Documents with Editorial Notes* (1937. Reprint, New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), 108, 115.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1999, 286–287).

“Parity” insurance coverage is another leading issue in contemporary mental health policy. Historically, health insurers in the United States have restricted mental health benefits by placing limitations on services, by excluding particular diagnoses from covered illnesses, and by requiring that patients share more of the costs. By 2000, thirty-two states had passed laws to correct such forms of insurance discrimination, although with great inconsistency in the standards established for insurers and employers around the country (Hennessy and Goldman 2001, 60–62). Pro-parity groups are now intent on strengthening a federal parity statute passed in 1996 that contains many coverage gaps and enforcement loopholes.

The landmark U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Mental Health highlighted the prevalence of mental health problems among the nation’s youth (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1999, 46). Estimates are that 20 percent of children and adolescents experience a psychiatric disorder each year and that as many as 9 percent of children ages nine to seventeen have serious emotional problems. However, only a minority of troubled children receive specialized treatment. Many innovative mental health services for children are being developed focusing on families, schools, foster care, court systems, and other environments. Yet gaps in the continuum of care are evident in the long waiting lists for children in many state mental health systems and in the high occupancy levels in hospital psychiatric units for children (Rochefort 1999, 19–22).

Interwoven with all of these issues—and sometimes exacerbating them—is the pervasive move toward managed care in the mental health sector over the past decade. Public and private health insurers alike have adopted, or contracted with, programs that make use of a range of reviewing and payment practices to control mental health services. Those questioning the appropriateness of this managed-care framework cite such problems as loss of confidentiality, denials of needed services, an overemphasis on drug-based treatments (as opposed to psychotherapy), and inadequate public regulation of for-profit managed-care companies. At the same time, however, managed care has been a vehicle for expanding the spectrum of mental health services in some health plans and for enhancing coordination and quality control. Managed care has also provided a powerful argument against predictions that mental health services would be overutilized under parity legislation. These two faces of managed mental health care—as object and instrument of reform—continue to define the movement in the early twenty-first century (Mechanic 1998).

Approximately 20 percent of Americans have a diagnosable mental disorder each year (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1999, 46). Direct and indirect costs of these problems exceeded $150 billion by the late-1990s and were felt within health, educational, social service, and criminal justice systems, as well as in the workplace (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1999, 49). Given its dynamic history and current social impact, mental health policy is of pivotal significance in the study of American social welfare.

David A. Rochefort

See also: Disability; Disability Policy; Health Policy; Homelessness; Poorhouse/Almshouse

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Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) addresses the ever-changing needs of the Latino community. MALDEF concentrates its efforts in the following areas: employment, education, immigration, political access, language, public resources, and equity issues.

Founded in the 1960s, MALDEF began its work in Texas during the civil rights era. Its initial efforts consisted of developing programs and policies that would encourage Mexican American students to participate in education and that would improve the schools. MALDEF's initial efforts focused on bilingual education, scholarships, and desegregation.

In 1966, a pivotal event redirected the organization's social activism efforts. A Mexican

American woman lost her leg in a work-related accident. MALDEF believed that the woman deserved at least $50,000 for the company's negligence. The issue was taken to court, but the woman's lawyers argued that since the jury that was to decide the case was all white, it was unlikely to give the woman a fair trial. The judge agreed, and placed two persons with Spanish surnames on the jury. But neither person was able to serve: One of them had been deceased for ten years, and the other was a noncitizen. As a result of this treatment—which was indicative of the judicial system's disregard for Latinos—MALDEF mounted a major battle to end jury discrimination in Texas and to improve the treatment of Mexican Americans in the judicial system, particularly in the Southwest.

Challenging long-standing judicial practices required substantial funding. In 1967, members of MALDEF met with the Ford Foundation to explain the problems that confronted Mexican Americans in the Southwest. They maintained that an organization that would represent and protect the needs of Latinos was a paramount necessity. The Ford Foundation agreed and granted MALDEF $2.2 million for civil rights litigation and $250,000 for scholarships for Latino law students. This grant established the organization and many of the principles it still practices today.

In 1968, the organization's first office was opened in San Antonio, Texas. MALDEF did not lack problems to tackle: Education, voting, employment discrimination, police brutality, prison reforms, land and water rights, and media and housing issues were but a few of the problematic areas.

Education was an early priority for MALDEF. In the Southwest, schools segregated or discriminated against Latino students in various ways. Up until the 1960s, for instance, Anglo students were able to transfer out of classes that were predominately Latino. Placement testing was another means of segregation, for the tests were biased against students for whom English was not a first language or who came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Further discrimination arose from the way schools were funded. School funding based on property taxes disadvantaged students in poor communities. Latino communities tended to be less well-off than Anglo communities, so their schools could not provide resources and opportunities equivalent to those of Anglo schools.

MALDEF fought discrimination in educational content as well as in educational access. Students read books that depicted Latinos in a negative light. MALDEF worked at changing some of these negative depictions. MALDEF also worked at improving bilingual education. A variety of challenges throughout the Southwest led to many curriculum changes within school districts, changes that improved the learning environment for Latino students. Today, the organization continues its efforts in education.

Before the 1970s, it was not uncommon for Latinos to be denied promotions and advancements in employment simply because they were not Anglo. In addition, employers often imposed unfair requirements on Latino employees who sought promotions. For example, Latino employees typically worked twice as long for a company as an Anglo counterpart would before being considered for promotion. As a result, Latinos were restricted to lower and less well-paid positions in the workforce. When they filed complaints of job discrimination, they often were terminated.

MALDEF secured civil rights and labor standards for Latinos in the workforce. The organization monitored employers and litigated against those who discriminated against employees simply because of their ethnicity. One issue that continues to be a legal challenge is the use of Spanish at work. Some employers mandate that workers speak English only. The issue of whether workers can speak Spanish during breaks has also been a point of contention.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA)

encouraged minority participation in the political process. Before the VRA was enacted, racial, ethnic, and language-minority groups had to overcome numerous obstacles in order to participate in the political process. For instance, in some states, minorities had to pay poll taxes or pass literacy or English tests in order to vote. Many minorities were physically intimidated, threatened, or harmed when they sought to register, vote, or otherwise participate in the political process. Latinos were no exception.

MALDEF fought for VRA enforcement so that Latinos could be incorporated into the electoral system. For instance, MALDEF challenged policies that required annual voter registration of Latinos. The organization also challenged single-district voting schemes and poorly reapportioned districts. MALDEF was highly successful at increasing the overall number of Latino voters, particularly in the Southwest. The organization continues to promote political empowerment through its work on redistricting, voter registration, and voter fraud, to name but a few areas of activity.

MALDEF's greatest recent successes have come from its work on immigration. MALDEF fought to overturn California's Proposition 187, which would have ended education, health care, and social services to the state's undocumented immigrants. MALDEF also pursues national litigation on behalf of immigrants who are adversely affected by federal policy or lack of federal protections. For instance, MALDEF worked on the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). Some Central American immigrants are in the United States on a temporary basis. These immigrants can be sent back to their country of origin when the United States deems conditions there are safe. Many immigrants are fearful of returning because they know that safety is a precarious condition in their home country. MALDEF, along with other immigrant advocate groups, has been able to extend the length of time these immigrants can stay in the United States.

MALDEF has also challenged the placement of immigrant detainees in detention facilities far from border communities or from their points of entry into the United States. In an ongoing challenge, MALDEF has worked to place such detainees nearer the Mexican border so that family members can track relatives in prison, visit them, and recruit legal assistance for them.

Lisa Magaña

See also: Chicana/o Movement; Latino/as

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Migrant Labor/Farm Labor

Although popular imagination pictures the migrant worker in a field of crops, migrant labor and farm labor are distinct historical phenomena. True, seasonal migrants have been an essential part of the labor force in agriculture, but they have also been vital to such industries as logging, mining, construction, railroads, food processing, and entertainment. Often the same workers have cycled through different industries piecing together a living out of an annual round of temporary jobs. Others have moved between industry and agriculture as family necessity, age, and opportunity dictate. Conversely, although most agricultural work is highly seasonal, family and local labor have often met the labor demands of farm operators. Whether agricultural or industrial, local or long-distance, migrant and farm labor have long been linked together by their close association with political battles over child labor, unionization, and the social safety net. They have also been important entry points to the U.S. labor market for immigrants, poor workers, women, and children.

During the nineteenth century, migrant families and individuals were closely associated with the advance of Euro-American settlement across North America. The frontier generation farmers cleared new land and grew grain for eastern markets, but they often moved on quickly to more inexpensive lands farther west, or into the cities. After the advent of the mechanical reaper, a seasonal migration of young men scouting land for their families and a few unemployed industrial workers were serving the expanding wheat farms of the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys by the 1870s. In the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast regions, mining, timber, and railroad construction relied heavily on seasonal migrant workers. On the newly opened lands of the northern plains and in California's Central Valley, railroad companies financed highly mechanized "bonanza" farms employing hundreds of workers at harvesttime. At the same time, high unemployment among urban workers sent large numbers of men on the road in search of work away from their hometowns, inspiring middle-class fears of a "tramp menace."

By the 1880s, an annual cycle of work—from summer work on railroads to fall harvesting to winter logging—supported a growing subculture of young immigrant and U.S.-born men who made their homes in the transient districts of Chicago, Minneapolis, Sacramento, Seattle, and other towns. These "hoboes" soon became the primary constituency of the Industrial Workers of the World, a militant union organized in 1905 that led successful campaigns to raise harvest wages in the Great Plains from 1915 to 1924 despite systematic repression by local, state, and federal officials. The union was also active in the Pacific Northwest's wheat and fruit harvests and in the seasonal round of farm labor that linked Arizona and coastal California. Although closely associated with extractive industries, the seasonal hobo migration also drew from the ranks of factory workers forced into the contingent labor market by the employment policies of meatpackers, railroads, and other industries. Other migrants were sons and daughters of farm families seeking resources to buy their own land and set up their own households. These migrant workers played a vital role in what historians have called "the discovery of unemployment" during the late nineteenth century as Americans debated whether poverty was caused by personal weaknesses or systemic economic failures.

Farm labor policies have long involved federal policy interventions. In addition to aiding in the repression of union organizations, the federal government provided essential funding in the early years of industrial agriculture through commodity price supports, tariffs, agricultural experiment stations, and other research funding. The emergence of the sugar beet industry, soon to employ a large number of migrant laborers, was the direct result of federal policies that sought to protect domestic sugar producers and to promote rural development. Land reclamation, damming, and irrigation projects in Florida, California, and the Pacific Northwest made farming possible in areas that formerly had been swamps or deserts. Meanwhile, federal policies directly and indirectly abetted the massive migration out of the southern states beginning in the 1930s. Federally supported experimentation with cotton hybrids that could grow in the drier California conditions broke the South's monopoly on cotton, while commodity price support programs led to the dispossession of thousands of families. When owners received federal payments to refrain from growing cotton, they often summarily evicted sharecropping families, a particularly acute problem in Arkansas and Missouri, where the Southern Tenant Farmers Union had made some progress in confronting

Latino migrant laborers harvest apples. **(Corel Corp.)**

exploitative conditions. All of this was part of a half-realized strategy to fight rural poverty by moving people off marginally productive land and into industrial employment. In the interim, the U.S. Farm Security Administration (FSA) built camps for migrant farmworkers to provide them with a modicum of modern living standards. John Steinbeck, author of *The Grapes of Wrath,* made a study of the FSA camps, which he depicted in his novel as clean, orderly, and benevolent alternatives to the camps set up by large private producers and which were popularized as such in the film version of the novel. Significantly, however, the federal government excluded agricultural laborers from the protections of the National Labor Relations Act, the Social Security Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act.

With World War II, federal immigration and farm labor policy became more closely linked through the Bracero Program (1943–1964). With this program, migrant labor and farm labor became more closely associated because of labor market segmentation, augmented by the fact that braceros, at least nominally, could only work in agriculture. However, many braceros jumped their contracts in order to find work in other industries and settle into Mexican American communities. As a contract labor system, the Bracero Program undermined unionization efforts because workers could be deported through the collusion of employers and federal immigration agents. With the end of the program, farm unionization began anew, especially in California with the United Farm Workers, under the leadership of Cesar Chavez. By the 1970s, a farm labor movement closely associated with the Chicana/o movement emerged in midwestern farm states as well. Although these farm labor organizations have had some success in bargaining with large growers, labor market deregulation, repressive welfare policies, and intensified global migration of the 1980s and 1990s have increased the ranks of poor workers who continue to move about the country in search of work opportunities.

Frank Tobias Higbie

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Bracero Program; Contingent Work; Day Labor; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Dust Bowl Migration; *Factories in the Field; The Grapes of Wrath; Harvest of Shame;* Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; New Deal Farm Policy; Sharecropping; "Working Poor"

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Minimum Wage

The minimum wage is the smallest hourly wage that an employee may be paid as mandated by national law. As an employer mandate, it is designed to improve the wages, benefits, and employment conditions of unorganized workers. Established in U.S. federal law by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, the minimum wage is considered a bedrock of labor-protective regulation and social welfare provision for less-skilled workers (for full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal, state, and local governments). The immediate beneficiaries are by definition low-wage workers. Low-skilled workers in the South (for example, in the sawmill and apparel industries) were among the major beneficiaries of the initial legislation (which, in a bargain with southern Democrats, excluded agricultural and domestic workers until the 1960s). Today, minimum-wage workers are predominantly adult women (although a large proportion are teenagers) and are concentrated in the retail and service industries in such female-dominated jobs as cashiers and food preparers.

The Seventy-fifth Congress (well-known for the emergence of a conservative legislative coalition of southern Democrats and Republicans) established the federal minimum wage at an initial twenty-five cents per hour, to increase to thirty cents in 1944 and to forty cents in 1945. In the FLSA, Congress also defined the criteria that brought firms under its interstate commerce authority; specified industry, firm, and occupational exemptions; and retained statutory control over the magnitude and the timing of future adjustments. Congress, along with the president, revisits the minimum wage when exogenous economic changes (such as changes in the cost of living) or electoral conditions generate pressures to raise it. During the twentieth century, the minimum wage was increased nineteen times. In addition, the FLSA was amended eight times to extend coverage to more workers.

Historically, minimum-wage policy bargains have required political compromise among three groups in Congress: northern Democrats, generally representing more-urban, working-class, and politically liberal constituencies; southern Democrats, historically conservative, committed to racial segregation, antiunion, and resistant to federal regulation of any kind; and Republicans, who until the 1980s and the rise of the right wing of the party were dominated by more moderate, pro-business interests. For most of the period from 1938 to 1994, none of these players commanded a majority in Congress. Policy change resulted when members traded support and forged bargains over various provisions with other members and with the president in order to form an enacting coalition. Minimum-wage advocates, who controlled committee agendas, designed legislation to enact a change. Opponents typically preferred the status quo, allowing inflation to erode the value of the existing minimum wage. The outcome hinged upon the support of a third group, the moderates, whose preference for minor adjustment lay between the positions of the two ideological extremes. The bargain that emerged was an *intraparty* agreement between northern and southern Democrats, achieved by minimizing the scope and reducing the magnitude and/or extending the timing of any increase. Most recently, the 1996 Small Business Job Protection Act—representing a new *interparty* bargain between moderate Republicans and Democrats—was strategically allowed by the conservative House Republican leadership when a wage increase was linked with compensatory tax breaks for small business. Over the course of the twentieth century, no statutory action accounted for the most significant nonincremental policy change, as daily changes in the cost of living eroded the real value of the latest (nominal) minimum-wage increase. In addition, the congressional incremental phase-in over several years (that is, an escalator clause) of each minimum-wage increase was designed to minimize the magnitude of the annual wage cost that was imposed on businesses and to mitigate the potential adverse inflationary or employment effects.

As a tool of poverty alleviation, the minimum wage traditionally has been a mechanism to provide economic assistance to workers by effectively boosting their wages. Nevertheless, as an instrument of redistribution, it has long been a controversial political and policy issue; over the past few decades the minimum wage has failed to keep up with the cost of living and has lost value in real terms.

Supporters of the minimum wage argue that it does what it is supposed to: lift the wages of those workers with the least bargaining power. Its opponents, however, claim that it costs jobs by pricing low-wage workers out of the labor market and discouraging job creation. Although the claims of opponents have been challenged in empirical research, many use those claims to argue that raising the minimum wage is not necessarily the best way to aid the poor. The minimum wage can also benefit other workers indirectly, however, by making sure that the wage scale does not fall below reasonable standards of compensation, which is why the erosion of the minimum wage is also a sign of the declining political and economic position of wage labor. As the U.S. earnings distribution has widened and as wages at the bottom have eroded since the early 1970s, an increasing number of adults have become potential direct beneficiaries of minimum-wage legislation over the years.

Currently, covered nonexempt workers are entitled to a minimum wage of not less than $5.15 per hour, and this nominal value remains well below historic levels. The real value of today's minimum wage is 30 percent below its peak in 1968 and 24 percent below its level in 1979. The minimum wage reached its highest value in real terms in 1968, at $7.67 (in 1999 dollars). With five phased-in increases during the 1970s, its value held at approximately $6.60. The last increase of the 1970s left the inflation-adjusted value at $6.66. From 1981 through 1990, the nominal value did not change, eroding its real value at the end of the 1980s to $4.50. Although the nominal value was raised in two steps, from $3.35 to $3.60 in 1990 and to $4.25 in 1991, the value in real terms was still below its peak. By 1996, inflation had largely wiped out the 1990 increase, and the minimum wage adjusted for inflation reached a forty-year low (U.S. National Economic Council 2000, 2). In 1996, a two-step increase was enacted, lifting the minimum from $4.25 to $5.15, which was estimated to benefit 10 million workers. President George W. Bush recently proposed that states should be allowed to opt out of any federal increase. Currently, states can set a higher minimum wage, and ten states mandate minimum wages above the federal minimum floor (U.S. Department of Labor 2001).

In 1999, a full-time minimum-wage worker earned $157 less than the income required to reach the two-person family poverty threshold, whereas a full-time worker earning the minimum could have maintained a three-person family above the poverty threshold in 1969 and over most of the 1970s. During the 1980s, with no increases, the earning power of the minimum wage relative to the family poverty thresholds declined steadily, falling below the two-person threshold for the first time in 1985 and not rising above it again until 1997. At the same time, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which began in 1975 and was significantly expanded in 1993 and 2001, has softened the impact of a declining minimum wage. The average refundable tax credit, which provides payments even to families who owe no taxes, brought many minimum-wage workers supporting a family of two above the corresponding poverty threshold (U.S. Department of Labor 2001).

The minimum wage can improve the well-being of some low-wage workers. Some analysts confirm that an appropriately set minimum wage is likely to do more good (in redistribution) than harm in terms of employment and inflation (Freeman 1996). Others conclude that it is not the most efficient policy because it is not well targeted and because only about one-fifth of affected workers live in poor families (Mincy 1990, 1). However, a minimum wage is not the complete solution to poverty and low wages: Policies are also needed to augment the skills of the low-paid. Many believe that linking the minimum wage and the EITC creates an effective antipoverty measure, but it remains unclear whether the two will evolve as complements or substitutes in an effort to help working families.

Daniel P. Gitterman

See also: Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Great Depression and New Deal; Poverty Line; "Working Poor"

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Missionaries

A missionary is an individual participating in a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work. Missionaries usually regulate their enterprise through a careful course of sermons and services given to convert the non-Christian or to quicken diminished faith. Throughout American history, missionaries have labored to assimilate non-Christians both at home and abroad to their worldview. They have been a critical component of settlement and colonialism, providing essential social networks for America's geographic and cultural expansion.

Since the arrival of colonists in America, missionary efforts have been an integral aspect of settlement. Whether it was Puritans preaching on Martha's Vineyard, Spanish Jesuits teaching the catechism to the Zuni, or Russians plying their orthodoxy in Alaska, Christian missionaries tackled the American wilderness with as much enthusiasm and stoic endurance as any frontiersman. For the monarchs and religious leaders funding these missions, spiritual and physical conquest were inseparable. In a commendation to Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, the leader of the original Catholic expedition to Florida in the 1560s, Philip II of Spain admired Menéndez's zeal "for the service of God Our Lord, and for the increase to the Royal Crown of these kingdoms" (Hutchison 1987, 17). Menéndez's converted natives were accountable as profits to the growing Spanish New World. The enduring colonial empire would simultaneously conquer and "save" its native subjects, easing the march of civilization with an education in the encroaching civilization.

Colonial missionary efforts were never merely about conversion. Missionaries labored to teach Native Americans the etiquette, literacy, and theology of their own culture. One of the earliest missions in America was founded in Massachusetts in 1646 by John Eliot, who attempted to ease the Native Americans into their new faith with a translation of the Bible into the local tongue. "I find it absolutely necessary to carry on civility with religion," Eliot noted in 1649 (Hutchison 1987, 15). Indeed, Eliot attempted to isolate native converts by placing them in "praying towns," where they could be fully immersed into Christian civilization.

By the mid-eighteenth century, Protestant revivals had consumed New England, causing a major theological shift from the Puritan emphasis on social covenant to an evangelical push for individual salvation. From this point forward, American Protestants saw evangelization of non-Christians as a responsibility placed upon a uniquely blessed people. Since the Puritans had arrived in the New World, there had existed a pervasive sense of America as a "chosen" nation. Now, after revolutions in government and theology, American Christians sought to fulfill this promise through an extension of their avid holiness into the world.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, missionary efforts were largely focused on resident non-Christians. In the South, missionaries from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) relentlessly pursued African slaves; members of the SPG believed slave conversion was a responsibility of slave ownership. They failed to convert many slaves, however, and it was not until Baptist and Methodist itinerant preachers spread across the rural South that Blacks began to convert in large numbers. The frontier was another site for evangelical success. Methodist circuit preachers, Bible-society agents, and medical missionaries mapped the American West. These itinerants not only attempted to convert "heathen" natives but also sought to civilize the western wilderness.

Alongside the Baptist and Methodist revivals of the antebellum era emerged the first national foreign mission societies. With their emphasis on the equality of all believers, the authority of charismatic leadership, and dramatic conversion rites, Baptist and Methodist missionaries were particularly skilled translators of Christendom. The "Great Century" of American missionary work was initiated and maintained by their assiduous efforts abroad, as these Protestants instituted their labor through the formation of the United Foreign Missionary Society, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, and the Missionary Society of Connecticut. Following the multiple sectarian splits of the Civil War, missionary societies regrouped and redoubled their efforts, supporting missions throughout East and Southeast Asia, the South Pacific, Africa, and South America.

The 1888 founding of the Student Volunteer Movement, an organization focused on the recruitment of college-age volunteers, provided the organizational center for missionary activity. Prior to 1880, American missions abroad had been maintained by a relatively narrow sector of Protestant America. With the massive influx of young missionaries, missions became the central effort of American Christianity. The number of American foreign missionaries, which stood at 934 in 1890, reached nearly 5,000 a decade later and over 9,000 in 1915. This late-nineteenth-century missionary activity reflected the increased wealth of Protestant congregations, the general optimism of a prosperous nation, and a geopolitical obsession with imperial power. Missions provided—in the words of historian William Hutchison—the "moral equivalent" of imperialism (Hutchison 1987, 204), an on-the-ground translation of colonial power in religious terms.

The masses of young missionaries traveling abroad included a large cohort of women. By 1915, there were more than 3 million women on the membership rolls of some forty denominational missionary societies. Missionary activity offered American women a position of power and an opportunity for international adventure. In addition, theologians of missions suggested that missionary work was the special purview of women. Since the mid-nineteenth century, American evangelicals adhered to a theology of missions that attached special significance to the conversion of "heathen" mothers as the most efficient means of Christianizing heathen lands. The late-nineteenth-century "cult of true womanhood" further underlined this role, suggesting that the ideal woman was an "educated mother" extending her intelligent domesticity to manifold progeny.

The mid-twentieth century saw several shifts in American missionary activity. First, liberal Christians were increasingly critical of missions. Liberal belief in the sanctity of cultural pluralism suggested to many that the imperial element of mission work was inherently unethical. As liberals distanced themselves from this aspect of Christian work, Pentecostals, Mormons, and Catholics tackled the mission fields. Although Jesuits had been working as missionaries in America since the sixteenth century, in 1911, the Maryknoll Order established the first American-based Catholic missionary association, the American Foreign Missionary Society. Mormons and Pentecostals have seen enormous success abroad, with Pentecostal denominations growing at a faster rate internationally than any other Christian body.

It is easy to deride the missionary enterprise as a grotesque form of imperialism. However, it is important to recall the critical role missionaries played as cultural informants. During the nineteenth century, a vast majority of Americans derived their knowledge of non-Western people from the writings of missionaries. Moreover, missionaries abroad do not always pursue their "heathen" subjects with relentless and righteous ardor. Rather, many missionaries used their position to help local populations resist the encroachment of the more obtrusive colonial powers. Northern Baptists promoted indigenous autonomy and cultural distinctiveness within churches in Burma, and Methodist revivalists validated vernacular expressions of African spirituality. Although one must never lose sight of the primary motivation of missionaries—conversion—their relationships with native communities were and are nothing if not complex.

Kathryn Lofton

See also: Christian Fundamentalism; Colonial Period through the Early Republic; Social Gospel

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Mothers of the South, *Margaret Hagood*

Margaret Hagood's *Mothers of the South* typifies the Depression-era interest in documenting contemporary social conditions as a means of influencing social change. Hagood, born in Georgia in 1907, earned a Ph.D. from the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina in 1937, where she studied with

Howard Odum, the leading southern social scientist of the era. Odum sought to train academics who would help solve the economic and social problems of the South. Hagood's dissertation relied on statistical analysis to determine how the high fertility of white southern women related to the region's economic difficulties. Her next study was a more personal examination of white tenant women. For over a year, Hagood interviewed hundreds of women about their lives, children, marriages, and farmwork. The resulting book, *Mothers of the South* (1939), was a generally sympathetic and thoughtful portrait of white farm women and the triple tasks of farm labor, household management, and child rearing they were performing. While echoing her male colleagues in criticizing the grueling labor conditions and political economy of southern sharecropping, she was unique—and pathbreaking—in acknowledging the gender inequities implicated in its patriarchal character. At the same time, in the interest of advocating better education and stricter birth control practices, Hagood suggested that the poverty and isolation of rural life were fostering a culturally backward population that—allowed to propagate unchecked—threatened the social health of the nation.

In 1940, Hagood, along with University of North Carolina–trained sociologist Harriet Herring and Farm Security Administration photographers Dorothea Lange and Marion Post, produced a documentary photography project on North Carolina. The photographs, featuring people of all classes, buildings of various kinds, and farmland, were exhibited at the University of North Carolina in 1940. Hagood viewed the exhibition as "an opportunity for us to demonstrate to ourselves and others some of the potentialities of Photography as a tool for social research" (Scott 1996, "Introduction," x).

The excerpt below demonstrates Hagood's mix of sympathy and worry directed at tenant women, typical of *Mothers of the South*.

Sarah Case

See also: Picturing Poverty (I); Poor Whites; Poverty Research; Rural Poverty; Sharecropping

. . . [T]he Southern tenant farm mothers compose a group who epitomize, as much as any, the results of the wastes and lags of the Region. They suffer the direct consequences of a long-continued cash crop economy; they undergo extreme social impoverishment from the lack and unequal distribution of institutional services; and they bear the brunt of a regional tradition—compounded of elements from religion, patriarchy, and aristocracy—which subjects them to class and sex discrimination. Moreover, they continue to augment the pathologies of the Region by their very functioning as they produce, at a ruinous cost to both the land and themselves, the cotton and tobacco by which the rural South still lives, and the children who are simultaneously the Region's greatest asset and most crucial problem. . . .

As a group for a unit of study in the broad research program on all the resources and wastes of the South, the tenant farm mothers embody many of the causes, processes, and effects of the general regional problems of an exploiting agriculture, overpopulation, general cultural retardation, chronological and technological lag. . . . our focus of attention is on these mothers as a unit of the present human resources of the South and as an important source of the future human resources of both the South and other regions of the United States.

Source: Margaret Jarman Hagood, *Mothers of the South: Portraiture of the White Tenant Farm Woman* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939; reprint, with introduction by Anne Firor Scott, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996), 4–5.

Mothers' Pensions

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; Progressive Era and 1920s; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Moynihan, Daniel Patrick

See Family Structure; Moynihan Report; Poverty Research; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Moynihan Report

The Moynihan Report is a government document, first released in 1965, that purported to explain the persistence of high rates of Black poverty by pointing to the "pathological" condition of the lower-class Negro family. Highly controversial as social policy and largely discredited as social science, the report is nevertheless invoked to this day as an authoritative document in poverty debates.

In the spring of 1965, Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan (who would later serve as a domestic policy adviser in the administration of President Richard M. Nixon and as Democratic senator from New York, 1977–2000) completed a "confidential" report intended to influence the government's post–civil rights–era "race" policies. The report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, argued that in the decade between the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision (*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, 347 U.S. 483) in 1954 and the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the United States had achieved the political, administrative, and judicial conditions to support full citizenship rights for Blacks. But, according to Moynihan, as long as the Negro (the prevailing term for African Americans in 1965) family remained mired in poverty and "pathology," this group would never be "equal" to other populations in the United States.

The Moynihan Report was eventually released into—and exacerbated—an explosive political context. Many Black activists and their white allies were increasingly frustrated that new antiracist laws and policies were not being enforced and that, as a result, African American families continued to experience discrimination and poverty shaped by institutional racism.

The report did not find fault with law enforcement or institutional policies, however. It faulted Negroes themselves. In Moynihan's view, in the hundred years since the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ended slavery, the "disorganized" Black family—whose "disorganization" was originally the legacy of that slavery—had become more unstable than ever. Using descriptive data, including on Black rates of divorce and illegitimacy, on welfare "dependency," and on male unemployment and the percentages of Black youth found inadequate for the armed forces, Moynihan argued that such "pathological" social characteristics (1) created poverty, (2) sustained poverty, and (3) had achieved an "independent existence"; that is, they no longer depended on the legacy of slavery or institutional practices.

Progressive activists, scholars, and others were outraged by these arguments. In their view, the data showed unequal educational attainment but ignored unequal funding of inner-city schools. Nor had Moynihan presented data showing unequal race and class-based access to reproductive options when he defined Negro rates of illegitimacy as "pathological." He omitted information about widespread race-based wage differentials and hiring and firing practices; discrimination within housing, credit, and labor union arenas; law enforcement practices that targeted poor minorities; and other forms of institutional racism that locked African Americans into poverty.

Mainstream media responded to the report by referring to its "sensitive" treatment of difficult issues or by casting it as an illuminating exposé. Looking back on 1965, it bears mentioning that the passive, pathological image of Negro ghetto life in the report was sharply out of concert with the ever more militant phase of the civil rights movement then emerging. Similarly, Moynihan's excoriation of the "matriarchal" Negro family seems in retrospect to have been shaped by a kind of gender-status anxiety at the historical moment when various kinds of feminist activism were emerging. Thus, in a conclusion that at least some commentators at the time found questionable, Moynihan routinely used findings of Black female economic independence and comparative educational achievement as evidence of Black male emasculation—another symptom of the "pathology" Moynihan claimed to be documenting.

Despite the objections and counterarguments of African American activists and their allies in the 1960s, the report achieved the status of an iconic policy document. It has provided an enduring, if fallacious, argument for sharply constrained social spending, a strategy for "blaming the victim," and a model for "family values" rhetoric for the rest of the twentieth century and beyond.

Rickie Solinger

See also: Family Structure; *The Negro Family in the United States;* Poverty Research; Racial Segregation; Racism; "Underclass"; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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See Family Structure; *Losing Ground;* New Right

Mutual Aid

Mutual aid societies were a significant source of basic welfare services, especially insurance for illness, death, and funeral expenses, from the early nineteenth century until the growth of state services during the mid-twentieth century.

The earliest mutual aid societies were secret fraternal organizations such as the Masons, which supported members on an ad hoc basis. One fraternal group, the Odd Fellows, pioneered a more formalized mutual aid system, setting specific amounts for particular needs and establishing insurance as a benefit of membership paid for by annual dues. Just after the Civil War, the number of mutual aid societies in the United States mushroomed. Late-nineteenth-century groups combined the fraternal organizations' heritage of ritual and secrecy with a more sophisticated and generous distribution of aid. Although insurance remained their primary form of welfare, several operated orphanages, health clinics, hospitals, and homes for the elderly. One historian has estimated that by 1910, one-third of the American male population over the age of nineteen belonged to a fraternal organization (Beito 2000, 14). Women joined organizations as well, some specifically female, others open to both sexes. All mutual aid societies had some sort of selection criteria, usually based on sex, occupation, religion, or ethnicity.

Mutual aid societies appealed to Americans by providing needed aid while avoiding the stigma attached to charity or poor relief. By stressing such values as self-discipline, restraint, thrift, and temperance as well as a sense of shared responsibility, mutual aid societies allowed members to view their support as reinforcing rather than violating masculine ideals of independence. Further, government aid in this era was often inadequate and was usually limited to groups deemed "deserving," a stipulation that often functioned to exclude members of racial, ethnic, or religious minorities.

Indeed, mutual aid societies became popular among both African Americans and immigrant groups. The rise of fraternal societies coincided with the highest rate of immigration ever witnessed in the United States, from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, mostly from southern and eastern European countries. Ethnically based mutual aid societies provided financial support and a sense of community for newly arrived immigrants. Among African Americans, mutual aid societies represented self-help and racial pride. The membership of these societies cut across social classes, although leaders tended to come from the elite. Many included a religious component and served as civil rights societies as well as aid societies, providing a basis for organization both in local communities and nationwide.

In the 1920s, growth in membership slowed considerably as mutual aid societies suffered from the development of the commercial insurance industry, scandals of financial mismanagement within prominent societies, alternative demands on leisure time (including the radio and movies), and the slowdown of immigration. During the Depression, many members found it impossible to continue paying dues. Further, the extension of government services associated with the New Deal, especially Social Security, as well as the commercial companies' success in tying insurance to employment, made the aid functions of fraternal organizations less significant. Mutual aid societies suffered a dramatic drop in membership during the Depression, and numbers did not rise after the return to financial stability. Today, most fraternal organizations stress service to the local community rather than the provision of insurance and social welfare for members.

Sarah Case

See also: African American Migration; Charity; Community Chests; Immigrants and Immigration; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntarism

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Nation of Islam

The Nation of Islam is a controversial religious movement with strong Black nationalist teachings that was established among poor Black southern migrants to Detroit in July 1930 by a mysterious person called Master Fard Muhammad. It has become the most enduring and strongest carrier of Black nationalism in U.S. society, producing a number of charismatic leaders such as Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, Wallace Muhammad, and Louis Farrakhan. It also provided the foundations for the Black Power movement in the late 1960s. As a religious sect, the "Lost-Found Nation of Islam" survived several changes in leadership after Master Fard disappeared in 1934. Elijah Muhammad led the Nation from 1934 to 1975, and his son Wallace, who took over in 1975, produced a split in the membership by leading the majority of followers to orthodox, or Sunni, Islam. In 1978, Minister Louis Farrakhan led a rival faction to reestablish the Nation of Islam by emphasizing the teachings of Elijah Muhammad.

The major contributions of the Nation of Islam to the themes of poverty and social welfare lay in its religious ideology and in its attempts at the moral reformation of the marginalized Black poor. The teachings of Fard and Elijah Muhammad focused on a two-pronged attack upon the psyche and racial environment of Black people: "Know yourself" and "Do for self." The emphasis upon self-knowledge and self-identity was a critical consciousness-raising tool to affirm Blackness and African heritage in a society where both were denigrated. The task was to reverse the psychological valence of felt shame and worthlessness to one that saw Black people as "Allah's Chosen" and the "cream of the Planet Earth." The physical appearance of the Black Muslims reflected their confidence and pride; men in suits and bow ties acted as security guards or sold the Nation's newspapers on ghetto streets, and women in long, flowing white gowns and head coverings spoke at meetings.

The rallying cry of "Do for self" meant that alcoholics, drug addicts, prostitutes, and criminals had to clean themselves up and change their lives. It also meant that Black Muslims should not be dependent upon welfare or government aid but should work diligently to support themselves and their families through jobs or small businesses. Under Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan, members of the Nation have established thousands of small businesses—including grocery stores, bakeries, restaurants, bookstores, video and record shops, and cosmetic companies. In order to establish an independent economy for the Nation, members have bought farms to raise cattle and vegetable produce and have tried to set up their own banks and hospitals. The Nation's newspapers, Elijah Muhammad's *Muhammad Speaks* and Farrakhan's *Final Call,* also became fund-raising devices for individuals and mosques. C. Eric Lincoln aptly called the members of the Nation "Black puritans" because they worked hard, saved their money, and did not spend frivolously.

Farrakhan's highly successful Million Man March in 1995, in which close to 1 million Black people gathered in the largest crowd in the history of demonstrations in Washington, D.C., led to the establishment of an Economic Development Fund that proposes to build more schools, hospitals, farms, stores, airplanes, and good homes for members of the Nation.

The prisons, streets, and small Black storefront churches became recruiting grounds for ministers of the Nation like Malcolm X, who liked to "fish" for the souls of the poor. Under Farrakhan's leadership, members have been successful in getting rid of drug dealers in a number of public housing projects and private apartment buildings. The Nation has succeeded in organizing a peace pact between gang members in Los Angeles and those in several other cities. It has established a clinic for the treatment of AIDS patients in Washington, D.C. Under the leadership of Minister Abdullah Muhammad, the National Prison Reform Ministry has been established.

Farrakhan's messages of Black unity, self-knowledge, and economic independence and a biting critique of American society have struck a responsive chord among the Black masses. Rap groups and rappers like Public Enemy and Prince Akeem have helped popularize the appeal of the Nation, with songs such as "It Takes a Million to Hold Us Back" and "Coming Down Like Babylon."

Since 2000, Farrakhan has moved closer to Sunni Islam, instituting the Friday Jumu'ah prayer service and fasting during the lunar month of Ramadan. However, his focus is still on developing an Islam for Black people.

Lawrence H. Mamiya

See also: African American Migration; African Americans; Black Churches; Crime Policy; Islam

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National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is one of the oldest and largest civil rights organizations in the United States. The association was founded in New York City on February 12, 1909, the 100th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's birth, by white and Black activists who were outraged by the blatant violence and discrimination directed against Blacks in all parts of the country. During this time, Black men were being lynched, Black women were employed largely as maids and domestic servants, and the Black community lived in a state of extreme poverty. The founders of the NAACP, including Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, W. E. B. Du Bois, William English Walling, and Ida Wells-Barnett, believed that the situation of Blacks directly contradicted the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation.

The NAACP founders and early members wanted a militant alternative to the compromising posture of Tuskegee Institute founder Booker T. Washington, who downplayed citizenship rights while stressing industrial education and economic development for Blacks. From its earliest days, the NAACP has pursued multiple strategies to call national attention to the subordinate position of Blacks in American society. The group's activities have contributed to some of the most important legal, political, and social changes in American history.

In 1910, Du Bois was hired as director of publicity and research. In this capacity, he edited *The Crisis*, the NAACP's monthly publication. In it, he challenged race prejudice and ideas of Black inferiority and documented the atrocities and injustices occurring against Blacks. For more than two decades, Du Bois contributed singularly to the NAACP media tradition of strong condemnation of racism and passivity in the face of racial injustice. He also recorded the achievements of African Americans. *The Crisis* gained a circulation of more than 50,000 within its first decade.

The NAACP grew dramatically under the leadership of James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins from the 1920s to the 1970s. Johnson, the organization's first Black secretary, used his many contacts in Black cultural, educational, and political circles to organize local branches. White, who used his fair complexion to "pass" as a white person and investigate lynching throughout the South, organized branches as he traveled and spoke out against racial discrimination against Blacks. Roy Wilkins investigated Black labor conditions in the South and publicized the brutal conditions of poverty and discrimination faced by Blacks throughout the country. Along with Johnson, White, and Wilkins, other organizational representatives met frequently with elected officials to present the findings of their investigations and to encourage the passage of legislation to end lynchings and other forms of blatant discrimination and violence against Blacks.

The NAACP also formed a legal committee and recruited such outstanding lawyers as Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall to challenge the many institutionalized forms of racial discrimination. More than any other group, the NAACP challenged the legality of racial discrimination and Jim Crow segregation in education, housing, transportation, government, and practically all other areas of American life. Although the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund eventually became a separate organization, NAACP lawyers have won many legal victories over the years. The group's most famous legal triumph was the U.S. Supreme Court's unanimous 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483) declaring "separate but equal" educational facilities unconstitutional.

The civil rights movement from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, strong support from President Lyndon B. Johnson, and key congressional leadership resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This important federal legislation represented the culmination of decades of work by the NAACP and other civil rights organizations. Following widespread state and local resistance to the new laws, the NAACP protested and went to court to force racist public officials, especially in the South, to allow Blacks to vote and to end formal discrimination against Blacks. The election of President Richard M. Nixon in 1968 led to conservative public policies and a narrower interpretation of the new civil rights legislation. The NAACP disagreed with the Nixon administration's hostility to Johnson's Great Society and antipoverty programs.

Since the 1970s, the NAACP has worked actively toward the same goals that occupied earlier NAACP leaders: full equality for Blacks and the elimination of racial violence and discrimination against Blacks. The NAACP has used new instruments (that is, the civil rights legislation) to pursue the old goal of guaranteeing African Americans all the rights of and opportunities open to white Americans. The NAACP has continued to emphasize the legal struggle against white racism and Black subordination. The association has denounced and sought legal

Members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hold signs protesting the practice of lynching while a conference on crime takes place at the Capitol. Washington, D.C. (Corbis)

remedies to police brutality, the failure to achieve racial integration in schools, and the cutbacks in government programs (for example, affirmative action and contract set-asides) that benefited Blacks.

In addition to the legal struggle, the NAACP national leadership and department heads have attempted to increase employment, educational, and business opportunities for the Black community. The NAACP has worked with state and local governments, high schools and universities, business groups, fraternities and sororities, churches, and other institutions to inform African Americans about existing opportunities for advancement and to create those opportunities where they did not previously exist. NAACP presidents, such as Benjamin Hooks (1977–1993), Benjamin Chavis (1993–1994), and Kweisi Mfume (1996–present), as well as recent board chairs Myrlie Evers-Williams and Julian Bond, have continued the association's scholarship and test-preparation programs; Afro-American, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO); Fair Share agreements with businesses; prison programs; and voter education and registration programs. The NAACP has remained one of the most active Black political organizations in the post–civil rights period.

Ollie A. Johnson III

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Civil

Rights Movement; Racial Segregation; Voting Rights Act, 1965

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National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

The largest and most prominent of U.S. social work organizations is the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), founded in 1955 to represent the professional interests of social work and to address the social structures and processes that generate economic, social, and political inequality.

Social work organizations are the associations founded to establish and maintain the standards of the social work profession, to support social workers through educational and professionalization activities, and, at times, to advocate on behalf of particular approaches to social policy and reform. Their development is part of the larger history of a profession that has undergone a great deal of change and internal contention over time, beginning with the initial emergence in the late nineteenth century of social work as a distinct profession with specific expertise and skills and the attendant rise of organizations designed to support particular aspects of the work social workers do. As early as 1874, social workers gathered under the auspices of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, and in 1917, the National Social Workers Exchange provided support in job placement for social work positions for self-identified social workers.

As of August 2002, NASW had approximately 147,000 members. In an effort to consolidate amid the diversity and increased specialization within the field, it was formed through the amalgamation of a number of preexisting specialized social work organizations, including the American Association of Medical Social Workers (founded in 1918), the National Association of School Social Workers (1919), and the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers (1926), and two study groups, the Association for the Study of Community Organization (1946) and the Social Work Research Group (1949) (Colby and Dziegielewski 2001).

Over the years, NASW has been pulled in various directions, reflecting long-standing tensions within the field over such core issues as the relative weights that social justice and social change should be given in professional practice. This issue is frequently referred to as the public-private debate or as the Jane Addams rank-and-file movement approach to practice versus the social casework approach. In contemporary times, this issue has been reignited over the role of private practice within the profession versus the historical commitment to working with the disadvantaged. The sociohistorical context has played an important role in this ongoing debate. NASW's members, and therefore the organization itself, were influenced by the social movements and events of the 1960s and became much more engaged in the political process through lobbying. Despite the movement of the larger U.S. culture to the right from the 1970s through the 1990s and its subsequent move to a more conservative social policy, NASW and the profession have continued to take a progressive stance by advocating for the rights of the less advantaged within the larger society and particularly for oppressed populations.

NASW has also been shaped by internal debates about qualifications for membership in the profession. Membership was initially limited to social workers with master's degrees in social work. In 1969, NASW opened membership to graduates of baccalaureate programs in social work whose programs were accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. NASW is currently the chosen professional home of bachelor's- and master's-level graduates from CSWE-accredited programs as well as of persons earning doctorates in social work and social welfare.

As currently defined, the overall mission of NASW is to work "to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies" (NASW). The newly formed organization brought professional unity to social workers engaged professionally in a variety of contexts. NASW has become, in effect, the voice of the profession and has chapters in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to carry out state and local activities on behalf of its members and clients. As of 1998, fully 80 percent of NASW's members were women. Fourteen percent of the organization's members identified themselves as ethnic minorities (Dolgoff and Feldstein 2000). Over the years since its founding, NASW has developed a professional association and a code of ethics and is active in the regulation and licensing of social workers in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

NASW, its two affiliate organizations (the National Center for Public Policy and Practice and the NASW Communications Network), and its political action arm (Political Action and Candidate Election [PACE]) have engaged the public policy debate around the issues of welfare reform, AIDS, national health care, civil rights, and the prevention of violence.

PACE was established in 1975 by NASW as a political action committee to further NASW's policy agenda at the state and federal levels. PACE conducts research on political candidates and issues, endorses and financially supports political candidates, mobilizes voters by providing information and tools for engaging the political process, and promotes a legislative agenda on issues of importance to NASW. The Educational Legislative Action Network (ELAN), the predecessor lobbying arm of NASW formed in 1970, emerged from NASW's Ad Hoc Committee on Advocacy. This committee viewed advocacy as a constitutive element of social work practice. NASW also has a publishing arm, the NASW Press, which publishes the *NASW News* as well as scholarly journals, books, and reference materials.

In addition to NASW, an array of organizations have formed to represent the particular interests and visions of the nation's social workers. Some of these include the National Association of Black Social Workers (founded in 1968), the Association of Puerto Rican Social Service Workers (1968), the Asian American Social Workers (1968), and the Association of American Indian Social Workers (1971). Others, founded around subspecialty areas within the profession, include the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups, the Association of Oncology Social Workers, the National Membership Committee on Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work, the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, the School Social Work Association of America, and the Association for Community Practice and Social Administration.

Susan A. Comerford

See also: Social Work

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National Campaign for Jobs and Income Support

See Center for Community Change; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

National Congress of Mothers

The antecedent of today's National Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), the National Congress of Mothers played a major role in the expansion of public education and welfare services and in the popularization of parent education. Founded in 1897 by Alice McLellan Birney, the congress had 60,000 members by 1915 and was one of the most influential women's organizations in the United States. Theodore Roosevelt was a longtime member of its Advisory Council. In 1908, the congress changed its name to the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations; in 1924, it dropped the word "mothers," a move that reflected the increasing authority of professional educators and maternalism's declining appeal. By 1930, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers had a membership of 1.5 million.

The ideology of the National Congress of Mothers was rooted in the concept of scientific motherhood, which held that women needed science and medical expertise to rear healthy children, and in the psychological theories of G. Stanley Hall. Applying Charles Darwin's theory

1905: The first board of managers of the National Congress of Mothers: Helen Lewis, Letitia G. Stevenson, Alice M. Birney, Phoebe A. Hearst, Mrs. William L. Wilson, Frances Benjamin Johnston, Clara B. Finley, Mrs. James H. McGill, Helen Birney, Cora E. Fuller, Mary Louisa Butler, and Harriet McLellan. (Library of Congress)

of evolution to child development, Hall argued that every child passed through stages that retraced the evolution of the human race. Members of the National Congress of Mothers embraced Hall's racialized view of child development and celebration of "natural" motherhood. Although most members were elite whites and most chapters were (like the public schools) racially segregated, the congress saw itself as speaking for women of all races and cultures. Prominent African Americans such as Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and Mary Church Terrell spoke at national conventions. A National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers was established in 1926; it merged with the National PTA in 1970.

The work of the National Congress of Mothers was three-pronged: Members educated themselves about child psychology, they distributed information on scientific child rearing to the poor, and they took their "mother love" into the community, fund-raising for and running local school and child welfare programs until governments began to do so themselves. In the second decade of the twentieth century, typical projects included parent education; school hot lunch programs; fund-raising for playgrounds, music teachers, books, and school supplies; and lobbying governments for kindergartens, health clinics, and paved roads (to improve access to rural schools). The association also campaigned for juvenile courts and the abolition of child labor and was the major force in the crusade for mothers' pensions, which evolved into Aid to Dependent Children (welfare).

The Mothers Congress never took a stand on woman suffrage, but by the early 1920s, it was so closely associated with progressive causes that the notorious Spider Web Chart listed it, along with fourteen other women's organizations, as part of an international socialist-feminist-pacifist conspiracy. Subsequently, the congress turned away from child welfare to focus more narrowly on schools. Today, the National PTA's 6.5 million members remain vigorous advocates of public education, and its Web site still reflects the maternalist philosophy of putting "children first."

Molly Ladd-Taylor

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Maternalism; Maternalist Policy

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National Congress of Neighborhood Women

Founded in Brooklyn, New York, in 1974, the National Congress of Neighborhood Women (NCNW) is an organization of working-class women that aims to meet the needs and strengthen the abilities and power base of poor and working-class women by helping them recognize and develop the strengths they already have and by teaching skills to enable them to take more-active roles in the revitalization of their neighborhoods and communities. NCNW-sponsored leadership-training programs for women from around the country led to the creation of numerous affiliate organizations in both urban and rural areas of the United States. NCNW also has developed into an international organization, forming part of the Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood (GROOTS), which NCNW helped found after the UN-sponsored International Women's Conference in Nairobi in 1985.

Jan Peterson had moved to Brooklyn in the early 1970s to direct a Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) antipoverty program in the Williamsburg-Greenpoint neighborhood. Believing that both the mainstream (largely middle-class-oriented) New York feminist organizations and the overwhelmingly male leadership of the local community were ignoring the needs and concerns of local working-class women, she hired local women through CETA to work on community improvement. Through formal and informal surveys of neighborhood women, they helped identify community concerns and began to organize to meet them. In Brooklyn, NCNW developed programs to train women in leadership skills, engaged in community planning exercises, established a college program in the community through Empire State College, organized to save a firehouse that the city planned to close, worked with others to preserve bus routes in the community and to institute new ones, called local politicians to account, helped rehabilitate an abandoned hospital into housing for low-income families, and engaged in numerous other activities that eventually drew together women from both Italian American and African American neighborhoods.

The centerpiece of NCNW's programs to develop women's leadership is the Leadership Support Group, which brings women together with their peers to share experiences, feelings, ideas, strategies, and skills. Recognizing that a significant part of women's experience, particularly in working-class communities in the United States, is to be alienated from ongoing structures and institutions of power and influence and to be subject to economic and social forces over which those communities have little control, they insisted that working-class women learn how to build bridges to others, who might seem unlike them, to overcome divisions based on race and ethnicity that have traditionally kept such communities apart from one another and in competition for limited resources. Ultimately, NCNW aims to unite women across differences in work to secure for all people decent jobs, wages, housing, and other life basics.

Martha Ackelsberg

See also: Community Organizing

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National Council of La Raza

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) is the largest Latino advocacy organization in the United States. Established in 1968, the NCLR works to eradicate poverty, discrimination, and barriers that impede the overall quality of life for Latinos. In order to accomplish these goals, the NCLR directs its efforts toward four objectives. First, the agency's capacity-building initiative supports Latino community-based organizations that serve needs locally. Second, the NCLR conducts research and policy analyses on Latinos and Latino-related issues. Third, the organization supports and conducts research on international projects that may impact Latinos. Finally, the NCLR is very successful at public outreach and information dissemination, particularly to the media.

The NCLR serves all Hispanic groups within the United States. The organization has offices in thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The NCLR serves more than 20,000 organizations, reaching an astounding 3 million people. The organization is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has field offices in Chicago, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and San Antonio.

The organization's policy think tank, the Policy Analysis Center, located in Washington, D.C., has an excellent reputation for research as well as for being politically nonpartisan. The think tank provides both primary and secondary research on such issues as immigration, education, housing, poverty, civil rights, foreign policy, and special populations. It has provided expert testimony not only on issues related to the Latino community but also on immigration, education, free trade, race relations, health policy, and tax reform, to name but a few. The NCLR works in conjunction with other organizations to carry out comprehensive and related projects and initiatives. The organization also assists Latinos through its use of "issue networks," which channel funding to HIV/AIDS, health, education, and leadership initiatives.

Currently, the NCLR is involved in eight programmatic priorities: education, health, housing and community economic development, employment and antipoverty, civil rights and immigration, leadership, media advocacy, and technological initiatives. These priorities are based on the strategic plan the organization implemented in 1995. These priorities have since been modified to accommodate the issues' changing importance. For instance, since the late 1990s, the organization has focused on immigration reform, given the anti-immigrant rhetoric that has prevailed.

The organization implemented a series of programs and policies with the intention of increasing overall educational attainment. The initiatives have been aimed at students ranging from the Head Start or preschool level to the high school level. The organization has also facilitated programs that encouraged financial and social support for students. The NCLR has created a community program that works with parents and teachers in order to improve further involvement in education. Encouraging educational participation, the NCLR facilitates afterschool programs and educational alternative programs. In one of their most ambitious projects, the NCLR tested low-cost, community-based educational models at forty-six sites in twenty states. The NCLR also serves as a lobbyist against cuts in funding for bilingual education and advocacy work and against the eradication of farmworker education.

In terms of health care, the NCLR administers programs that work at improving the eradication of four curable diseases: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and breast and cervical cancer. The NCLR attempts to do this in a variety of ways, such as health care outreach and collaboration with health care agencies and practitioners. The organization facilitates research and conferences in order to educate the community on the risks of certain ailments.

The NCLR promotes improved community quality of life for Latinos. There are a variety of programs that the organization facilitates in order to accomplish this goal. For instance, the NCLR promotes programs for home ownership among low-income Latinos. It also works to establish strong ties to communities where Latinos reside, such as through technical assistance, leadership development, and programs to improve economic development. The organization also works to build empowerment strategies in conjunction with community leaders, such as assisting in creating community agendas and fellowships to encourage community leadership development.

Furthermore, the NCLR develops programs and policies that serve to eradicate unemployment and poverty, facilitating back-to-work programs and getting jobs for people who have been displaced. It works with AmeriCorps, assisting individuals with literacy and job preparedness. The organization also implements programs that help bridge the gap between welfare and getting back into the workforce. Other programs include working with businesses in order to get students into well-paying jobs after they complete their education. The NCLR works as a lobby group against proposed changes that would negatively impact Latinos.

Finally, the NCLR mobilizes the community by leadership development, media advocacy, and the promotion of positive images in the media. The Hispanic Leadership Development and Support Initiative educates, funds, disseminates information to, and trains Latino leaders. The program has targeted seniors, community activists, women, and youth. The NCLR's media advocacy projects encourage more-positive portrayals of Latinos in the media. It funded a series of important content analysis studies that examined the number and types of Latino characters on television and monitored how those characters were depicted. Finally, the organization also rewards individuals who have worked at establishing a positive image of Latinos. As the Latino population escalates, the NCLR continues to address the needs of the community.

Lisa Magaña

See also: Chicana/o Movement; Community Organizing; Latino/as

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National Labor Relations Act

See Wagner Act

National Lawyers Guild

The National Lawyers Guild is a legal membership organization that, since its founding in 1937, has sought to further a politically progressive, community-focused approach to the law and lawyering. The initial impetus for the Guild came from labor lawyers who had been involved in union struggles during the Great Depression and the New Deal. However, the first national meeting of the Guild attracted 600 lawyers from all over the country, including federal and state court judges, members of Congress, state governors, and law professors. In creating the Guild, these founding members intended to establish an alternative to the American Bar Association, which at the time was open only to whites and was dominated by the conservative legal establishment. Since the 1930s, Guild members have focused their efforts on protecting a wide range of individual civil rights and on poverty and immigration law.

An important aspect of the Guild's early work involved expanding access to legal services. In 1938, the Guild initiated a small-scale experiment to provide low-cost legal services to the poor and middle-class in Chicago and Philadelphia. Though limited, the experiment was a modest success; by 1949, the Philadelphia office was serving 4,200 clients annually. The Guild's neighborhood offices later served as models for the neighborhood legal services offices of the 1960s.

In the 1940s, the Guild went through several years of internal strife over whether the organization should formally condemn communism; in the end, it did not, choosing to remain open to all progressive lawyers. During the McCarthy era of the 1950s, the Guild played an important role in the defense of individuals targeted by the U.S. House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Guild members represented virtually every person subpoenaed to appear before the committee. The Guild itself was singled out by the HUAC as a subversive organization, resulting in the immediate resignation of over 700 members.

The Guild has repeatedly organized members to provide legal representation to those taking on unpopular progressive causes. For example, the Guild provided legal representation and support to the civil rights movement in the 1960s. In 1964, the Guild opened a law office in Jackson, Mississippi, to assist civil rights workers. Guild lawyers ultimately represented hundreds of freedom riders and civil rights activists.

Similarly, during the Vietnam War, the Guild offered legal assistance to those opposing the war for political, moral, or religious reasons. In 1971, three Guild-sponsored military law offices opened overseas to provide legal assistance to hundreds of military personnel facing U.S. Army proceedings. More recently, the Guild's immigration project, based in Boston, has spearheaded Guild representation of the undocumented, asylees, and refugees.

Though its membership has remained small, one of the Guild's particular strengths continues to be its organizing on law school campuses. More than 100 law schools have Guild chapters that serve as a progressive counterweight to conservative campus groups such as the Federalist Society.

Martha F. Davis

See also: Legal Aid/Legal Services; Poverty Law

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National Service

See AmeriCorps; Peace Corps; Voluntarism; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

National Urban League

The National Urban League (NUL) was created as a social service organization in 1910 in New York City to improve the socioeconomic situation of Blacks in the northern cities of the United States. Poverty and all of its related social ills were plaguing Blacks in heart-wrenching fashion in the early 1900s. During this period, many African Americans fled the South for the North in search of economic opportunities and political liberty. Competing with European immigrants for jobs, facing northern forms of racial discrimination, and often having few family members or friends for support, many Blacks were forced to survive in unhealthy and unsafe living and working conditions with limited income and in substandard housing.

Recognizing the numerous social crises in Black urban life, progressive social workers and liberal philanthropists created numerous organizations to provide social services to Blacks and facilitate their transition to life in the North's urban ghettos. The National Urban League (originally the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes) resulted from the merging of the Committee on Urban Conditions among Negroes, the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions among Negroes, and the National League for the Protection of Colored Women. Dr. George Edmund Haynes, a pioneering African American social worker, and Mrs. Ruth Standish Baldwin, a wealthy white advocate for the poor, were two of the key founders and early leaders of the Urban League.

From the NUL's earliest days, its social workers conducted research into the housing, employment, health, education, and general living conditions of Blacks and the urban poor. Based on their findings, these social workers were able to direct information and resources to this vulnerable population. The NUL also played an important role in the training of Black social workers. Because of its effective work and the grim conditions facing Blacks throughout the country, the NUL expanded rapidly, and within a few decades it had affiliates in most major cities with a large Black population. The national leaders of the NUL lobbied government officials in the 1930s and 1940s to include Blacks in New Deal programs that promoted economic recovery and provided jobs to unemployed Americans. Continuing this tradition, Executive Director Lester Granger led the NUL during the 1940s and 1950s. A veteran of the NUL and a newspaper columnist, Granger was especially active in working to integrate the armed forces, defense industries, and trade unions during and after World War II. The NUL also lobbied and pressured major corporations, small private employers, and educational and job-training institutes to give Blacks equal opportunities.

From the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, the civil rights movement's public and confrontational demands for an end to racial discrimination against Blacks created a new energy for social change in the United States. Whitney M. Young Jr. became the NUL's executive director in 1961 and moved swiftly to increase the organization's visibility in favor of civil rights. He defended the organization against charges that it was controlled by and responsive to white corporate elites. Young also called for a domestic Marshall Plan to eliminate poverty in the United States and to decrease the economic gap between whites and Blacks. He believed strongly that the federal government had a large positive role to play in improving the social welfare of its citizens.

In 1971, Young's successor, Vernon E. Jordan Jr., agreed with Young's views and actively engaged the federal government. During the 1970s, and especially during the presidency of Jimmy Carter, Jordan was able to increase the NUL's social service programs and activities. It partnered with the federal government to administer programs in the areas of housing, health, education, and minority business development. Under Jordan's leadership, it also began to publish its annual report, *The State of Black America,* in which outstanding social scientists, writers, and policy analysts examine the important economic, social, political, and cultural issues facing African Americans.

John E. Jacob became National Urban League president in 1982 and had the unenviable task of leading the organization during the republican presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush (1981–1993). During the 1980s, the NUL lost most of its government funding and returned to the private sector for support to continue its programs and activities. These were very difficult years because Jacob and most National Urban League leaders and social workers believed that the Reagan administration's social policies increased poverty and decreased the quality of life for most African Americans. The NUL also established youth development programs and addressed such social issues as teenage pregnancy, single-mother families, drug abuse, and violent crime in urban Black communities.

Since 1994, Hugh B. Price has led the National Urban League. As president and chief executive officer, Price has successfully increased funding for the organization while restructuring it internally to eliminate annual budget deficits. The NUL now has more than 100 affiliates in thirty-four states and the District of Columbia. Price has challenged corporations and businesses to invest in urban America to provide jobs and regular incomes to those citizens who would otherwise continue to experience a lack of opportunities. The National Urban League is currently emphasizing the importance of partnerships among the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to provide resources, policies, and programs to reduce poverty and increase social welfare. Price is also encouraging African Americans to deepen their own strong traditions of philanthropy, community development, and self-empowerment.

Ollie A. Johnson III

See also: Civil Rights Movement; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Urban Poverty

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National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO)

See Feminisms; Poor People's Campaign; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement

Native Americans/ American Indians

American Indians and Alaska Natives represent one of the smallest minority groups in the United States by population, but they have one of the highest rates of poverty and unemployment.

The shape of contemporary American Indian poverty and the social welfare system around it is rooted in historical experience. Although much controversy surrounds this point, generally accepted population estimates indicate that there were between 5 million and 7 million Indians in North America at the time of contact with European settlers. Indians comprised diverse cultures and political economies adapted to distinct ecological niches. Most tribal peoples approached poverty and social welfare as the responsibility of family, clan, and kinship groups, though some highly stratified societies developed elaborate tributary polities. Contact with European colonial powers across North America dramatically transformed the circumstances in which indigenous peoples lived. The trade and evangelization that came along with European settlement brought cultural transformation, changed gender roles, and unleashed epidemic diseases. The colonial presence also introduced conflicting attitudes toward land, production, and exchange, while the ravages of war and conquest increased Indian dependency, exacerbated poverty, and undermined traditional means of providing for the collective welfare.

Indian poverty grew more severe during the nineteenth century as the United States pursued a policy of establishing reservations through treaties and agreements. It was also during this period that the federal government effectively institutionalized the relationship of dependency it had long fostered by making programs of Indian social services, "civilization," and assimilation part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Subsequently, in response to the need for opening new land for non-Indian settlement and to the deplorable conditions on many reservations, the treaty period ended in 1871 and was followed by allotment shortly thereafter. Through the General Allotment Act of 1887 and other related legislation, the federal government broke up reservation lands into individually owned parcels. The resulting "surplus land" that went unallotted was then opened to homesteaders and corporations. Not all tribes' lands were allotted, but the consequences proved disastrous for those that were. Tribally owned land plummeted from 138 million acres in 1887 to 55 million acres in 1934 (Trosper 1996, 179). Much of the land that was retained proved insufficient for subsistence. Consequently, many Indians turned to leasing out their lands and subsurface mineral rights to outsiders as a means of survival.

By the 1930s, it became widely recognized that past policies had failed to improve the economic conditions in which Indian people lived and that the problem lay not, as legions of missionaries and reformers had claimed in the past, in Indian culture but in the systematic subordination of Indian tribal rights and access to economic opportunity. The *Meriam Report*, named for Department of Interior official Lewis Meriam, based on a comprehensive investigative survey conducted by a multidisciplinary team of researchers and released in 1928, revealed devastatingly high incidences of poverty, disease, and poor health on reservations. Moreover, with the beginning of the Indian New Deal—through passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934—Indian culture was no longer targeted as the cause of poverty. Indians engaged in the full panoply of New Deal programs aimed at generating employment, from the Civilian Conservation Corps–Indian Division to the Works Progress Administration. Meanwhile, the Indian Reorganization Act instituted a means for the restoration of tribal self-governance, put an end to the allotment program, created a revolving loan fund for economic development, and advocated cultural preservation initiatives.

During the postwar period, the pendulum of federal social policy toward Indians swung between, on the one hand, efforts to erase their cultural distinction by fostering assimilation and, on the other, tribal self-determination. These policies were accompanied by parallel shifts in the official treatment of tribal land rights. During the 1950s, the federal government inaugurated a policy of termination. Enunciated in House Concurrent Resolution 108, the policy called for the severing of the federal government's trust relationships with tribes. When this occurred, treaties and agreements were no longer recognized as binding and Indian lands became legally indistinguishable from those held by non-Indians. Termination ultimately affected the lives of 13,263 Indian tribal members and removed 1.3 million acres of land from trust status (Prucha 1984, 1048). It also created a crisis for local and state welfare bureaucracies that were not prepared to provide services for this massive influx of impoverished people.

During the 1960s, with the failure of termination policies becoming more salient, Congress began to make Indian tribal governments eligible for area redevelopment, education, and health programs developed for the general population. With the War on Poverty, this emphasis on larger federal investments merged with the idea of community action and self-determination. The latter was then codified as federal policy with the signing of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. This act enabled tribes to contract for control over various programs administered by the

D. W. C. Duncan, Testimony to the Senate Regarding the Dawes Act, 1906

Under our old Cherokee regime I spent the early days of my life on the farm up here of 300 acres, and arranged to be comfortable in my old age; but the allotment scheme [limiting Cherokees to sixty acres of land] came along and struck me during the crop season, while my corn was ripening in full ear. I was looking forward to the crop of corn hopefully for some comforts to be derived from it during the months of the winter. . . . I have 60 acres of land left to me; the balance is all gone. I am an old man, not able to follow the plow as I used to when a boy. What am I going to do with it? For the last few years, since I have had my allotment, I have gone out there on that farm day after day. I have used the ax, the hoe, the spade, the plow, hour for hour, until fatigue would throw me exhausted upon the ground. Next day I repeated the operation, and let me tell you, Senators, I have exerted all my ability, all my industry, all my intelligence, if I have any, my will, my ambition, the love of my wife—all these agencies I have employed to make a living out of that 60 acres, and, God be my judge, I have not been able to do it.

Source: Senate Report 5013, 59th Cong. (1906), 2nd sess., part 1

Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service. The 1990s then witnessed the advent of "self-governance" whereby tribes compacted with the federal government in order to receive block grants to develop, implement, and administer programs in the areas of health, education, and social welfare.

Policies may have improved since the late 1970s, but poverty remains prevalent. Many tribes possess natural resources, while others have taken advantage of gaming and tourism. However, the remoteness of most reservations from large markets presents a structural barrier to economic development, state governments are often hostile to tribal initiatives, investment capital is difficult to obtain, and dependency on federal dollars persists. Reservation employment opportunities are seldom available outside the BIA or tribal government, and Indians continue to face discrimination when seeking nonreservation jobs. Another struggle revolves around securing hunting, fishing, and resource rights guaranteed in law by government-to-government treaties but often not realized in practice (Trosper 1996, 179–181). Finally, the gross mismanagement of individual money accounts by the BIA has recently led to multimillion-dollar legal suits seeking compensation.

Contemporary indices reveal that despite increased federal assistance, most of the 562 federally recognized tribal entities that qualify for BIA services remain underfunded, and few can afford not to be dependent on even these sums. In 2001, the unemployment rate within these tribes stood at 42 percent of the available labor force, while 33 percent of those employed earned wages below the poverty line. The figures for self-governance tribes that have entered into compacts with the federal government demonstrate that even the most recent policy and administrative reforms have yet to bring substantial economic changes (U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Tribal Services 2001, ii–iii). According to the 1990 census, in the twenty-five largest tribes, most Indians worked in service, administrative support, and manual labor occupations (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995). Finally, while the degree of poverty among males continues to be high, census data further indicate that Indians have experienced the "feminization of poverty" no less than other groups have. Poverty among single-parent, female-headed households has risen since the mid-1970s (for statistics, see Snipp 1996, 178).

In order to alleviate poverty in Native America, the federal government will need to continue to support on- and off-reservation Indian communities with sustained social services. Meanwhile, tribes will continue to explore new strategies to promote long-term economic development and seek ways to diversify their economies. The long history of poverty and social welfare among Indians has shown, however, that tribes will not sacrifice their rights as sovereign nations in order to gain economic parity. Therefore, the continued shift toward compacting and self-governance, in addition to the retention of tribes' federal trust status, will play a crucial role in creating an administrative structure reflective of these larger economic aspirations.

Daniel M. Cobb

See also: Alaska Natives; Area Redevelopment Act; Great Depression and New Deal; Native Hawaiians; War on Poverty

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Native Hawaiians

Tourism is Hawaii's big business. During the late 1990s, some 6 million tourists arrived every year, eager for a respite from their ordinary lives. Many are hungry for an authentic "Hawaiian" experience—a luau or local music in the hotel bar. Few know that Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of the Hawaiian Islands, live in poverty in the midst of a land of plenty. It is a cruel irony that Native Hawaiians, who are prominently featured in tourism ads—as barely clad warriors and hula girls—are the poorest social group in the islands.

The 2000 census found 254,910 Native Hawaiians and part-Native Hawaiians, or 22 percent of the state population. This figure represents a major increase in the size of the Native Hawaiian population, which was listed as 12.5 percent of the state population in 1990 and 9.3 percent in 1970. No doubt the dramatic increase between 1990 and 2000 is due, in major part, to two significant changes in race and ethnicity categories new to the 2000 census. First, Native Hawaiians, who had previously been lumped together with Asian Americans, were given their own racial/ethnic identification category. Second, the 2000 census allowed persons of multiracial heritage to check off multiple categories of racial background.

By any measure one uses, Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented in the state's welfare statistics. One of the most telling indications of Native Hawaiian poverty is the proportion of Native Hawaiians who received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) for selected months from 1978 to 2000 (AFDC changed to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] in 1996). In these two decades, Native Hawaiian recipients of AFDC accounted for at least 28 percent and as much as 34.6 percent of total AFDC recipients between 1978 and 2000. In 1999, Native Hawaiians accounted for 28.8 percent of AFDC cases, 25.91 percent of the food stamp recipients, 20.04 percent of general assistance cases, and 10.16 percent of aged, blind, and disabled cases in the state. In 1999, overall, Native Hawaiians made up more than a quarter (27.55 percent) of individuals receiving assistance from the department of human services.

Among families living below the poverty level, families on public assistance, and individuals living in persistent poverty, Native Hawaiians are the largest racial group.

Data on income and poverty for Native Hawaiians give us a better understanding of why Native Hawaiians are overrepresented in welfare services. At the beginning of the 1990s, approximately one-fifth of all Native Hawaiian families were earning under $15,000 a year. Moreover, average family income for Native Hawaiians was almost $9,000 below the average family income for the state of Hawaii. Also, Native Hawaiians were more likely to be poor across the board, but this was especially true for female-headed households. Even the fact of owning a home seems to be only a slight protection from poverty. In 1990, one-fifth of female households in owner-occupied units were below the poverty level, and almost one-quarter of all Native Hawaiians in owner-occupied homes received public assistance. More generally, among female-headed households, 35 percent of Native Hawaiians were below the poverty level, compared with non-Native Hawaiians, 20 percent of whom were below the poverty level.

The above pattern of income inequality and poverty among Native Hawaiians has been consistent over time. Indeed, even since the major welfare reform of 1996, there appears to be little change in the pattern for Native Hawaiians. The social ecology of poverty in the islands matches closely the geographic areas in which Native Hawaiians live. The poorest areas have the highest concentrations of Native Hawaiian people, and the wealthiest areas have the lowest concentrations of Native Hawaiians. The *State of Hawaii Data Book 1999* found that Native Hawaiians are concentrated in the state's poorest neighborhoods and census tracts, such as the Waianae Coast and Waimanalo area of Oahu and the town of Wailuku in Maui. These areas, which have the highest concentrations of Native Hawaiians, tend to be what are known as "Hawaiian Homelands." Hawaiian Homelands are small pockets of land, about 200,000 acres spread across the islands (out of 4 million total acres in the islands), that were set aside in 1921 under provisions of a congressional act known as the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, for homesteading by Native Hawaiians with 50 percent or more Hawaiian ancestry.

Landownership is the linchpin for understanding inequality, poverty, and welfare dependency for Native Hawaiians. And the history of landownership in the islands dates back to the U.S. overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom in 1893. The overthrow set in motion a series of land divisions and political relationships between the more recently arrived settlers and Native Hawaiians. Over time, these property and political relationships, like layers and layers of sediment, were laid down, beginning with the annexation of Hawaii by the United States and 1898 and continuing through the admission of the Aloha State to the union in 1959. The sedimented history of land in Hawaii from the Native Hawaiian perspective boils down to this: Native Hawaiians feel they are the rightful owners of approximately 2 million acres, or 50 percent, of the landmass of the state, which is currently held in trust for them or managed by the state government. The 2 million acres includes the Hawaiian Homelands and a more sizable amount of land held in the Ceded Lands Trust (1.8 million acres). The ceded lands are controlled by the state of Hawaii. Native Hawaiians maintain that given the legal improprieties of the 1893 overthrow, the ceded lands should be returned to them. However, the ceded lands are a significant source of state revenues, of which approximately one-fifth is designated to be set aside for the betterment of Native Hawaiians.

The political relationships of Native Hawaiians to both the federal government and the state of Hawaii are complex and unsettled, which makes Native Hawaiian access to their land difficult, almost impossible. One of the central issues is, Who counts as Native Hawaiian? Some agencies, like the Department of Hawaiian Homelands and the administration of some programs under the auspices of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, target only those Hawaiians with 50 percent or more blood quantum. Other state agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), target Native Hawaiians without regard to blood quantum. Native Hawaiians, many of whom prefer the name Kanaka Maoli ("the indigenous people of Hawaii"), also identify as an *indigenous* people rather than a *racial* group. The political difference between *indigenous* and *racial minority* is an extremely important one since federally recognized indigenous peoples enjoy rights—sovereign rights, for example—that are not available to minority groups. A recent ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Rice v. Cayetano* (528 U.S. 495 [2000]), found that the right to vote for officers of OHA must be extended to non-Native Hawaiians, a ruling that in essence defined Native Hawaiians as a racial minority subject to civil rights laws that prohibit classifications on the basis of race. Native Hawaiians, however, maintain that they are *not* a racial group—in the way that Asian Americans, for example, are defined by the federal government—but, rather, are a unique indigenous people, a categorization that resembles the categorization the federal government uses for Native Americans. For example, in Hawaii, Kamehameha Schools, a well-known K–12 educational institution, until recently admitted only Native Hawaiians. However, as a result of the *Rice v. Cayetano* ruling, the school has recently, by court order, admitted a student whose Native Hawaiian ancestry records are inaccurate or unverifiable.

In sum, then, the poverty and welfare issues for Native Hawaiians, in particular the dependency of Native Hawaiians on state services, must be understood within the context of the overarching historical and political relationship of Native Hawaiians to the United States and to the state of Hawaii. That current political relationship reinforces poverty and inequality for Native Hawaiians, even as the tourists continue to arrive.

Dana Takagi

See also: Native Americans/American Indians

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Nativism

See Americanization Movement; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy

The Negro Family in the United States, *E. Franklin Frazier*

E. Franklin Frazier's *Negro Family in the United States*, published in 1939, is a pioneering text in American sociology and African American studies. It was the first full-length treatment of the Negro family that repudiated prevailing assumptions about the biological inferiority of Africans and the normative superiority of American culture. It represents years of meticulous data collection by Frazier, who recorded the biographies and personal experiences of thousands of people who would otherwise have been ignored by historians and social scientists. The book addresses a wide variety of issues about the relationships among economics, racism, culture, and family life that are as relevant and pressing in the new millennium as they were prior to World War II.

Frazier's Career

Frazier (1894–1962) was an important member of a cohort of African American activists who, after World War I, came together from vastly different regions of the country to form the cutting edge of a social, political, and cultural movement that would irrevocably change conceptions of race and the politics of race relations.

Frazier is known for his contributions to American sociology, but as a child of working-class parents, growing up in segregated Baltimore, he had to take all kinds of jobs before settling into an academic career. After graduating from Howard University in 1916, Frazier eventually earned his doctoral degree in sociology from the University of Chicago in 1931, all the while supplementing his income with various teaching positions.

Between 1922 and 1927, he worked in Atlanta, teaching sociology at Morehouse College and directing the Atlanta School of Social Work. Almost single-handedly, he transformed the fledgling Atlanta School of Social Work into a professional program that attracted Black students from all over the country.

Frazier returned to the South in 1929 to take a job teaching sociology at Fisk University in Nashville, in part because academic doors in the North were closed to him. In 1934, he assumed the leadership of Howard University's sociology department and remained there for the rest of his career. For all his accomplishments—the first African American president of the American Sociological Association (1948), author of the first serious textbook on African Americans, *The Negro in the United States* (1949), consultant on global race relations to UNESCO (1951–1953)—Frazier was never offered a tenure-track job in a predominantly white university. Near the end of his life, he was targeted and harassed by the FBI and other intelligence agencies for his public support of progressive causes and such activists as Paul Robeson and W. E. B. Du Bois.

Contributions to Sociology and Social Work

Before leaving Atlanta in 1927, Frazier had begun his research on the history and development of the Negro family, a project that would form the basis of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago (completed in 1931) and of his first three books—*The Negro Family in Chicago* (1932), *The Free Negro Family* (1932), and *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939). Frazier himself noted that his first interest in the topic predated his studies in Chicago and was sparked by reading Du Bois's 1908 study *The Negro American Family* and by working as a social worker in the South. *The Negro Family in the United States*, published in 1939, was a synthesis of several previous studies. His approach to studying the family was quite eclectic; his theoretical framework drew on history, sociology, social psychology, and African American studies.

Frazier explicitly set out to repudiate racist stereotypes about the monolithic nature of Black families. He focused extensively on the "disorganized" Negro family in all its historical contexts—under slavery, after Reconstruction, in rural areas, and in the metropolis. Frazier had a tendency to read the modern condition of the family after World War I back into the nineteenth-century slave experience. At times, he used "disorganization" in a normative sense, juxtaposed with "civilization"; occasionally he used it synonymously with "urbanization." With his continued reference to the chaos and disorganization in urban Black family patterns, Frazier seriously underestimated the resources, ingenuity, and organization of "demoralized" families. Moreover, he shared many of the prevailing assumptions of a Victorian-gendered morality, no doubt reinforced by his own conventional marriage and sexual division of household labor. Thus, he assumed that the nuclear family and patriarchal authority represent an evolutionary development and that masculine and feminine gender roles are naturally constituted rather than the result of a socially constructed and negotiated process.

However, it is a mistake to impose contemporary insights on Frazier's ideas of the 1920s and 1930s. When he began his research, the prevailing interpretations were racial and biological, and academic and professional circles assumed the superiority of an idealized, middle-class, nuclear family. Frazier was innovative in demonstrating the social consequences of racism: He showed that the problems of Negro families were socially constructed rather than culturally inherited and that family disorganization was created within and by Western civilization rather than by the failure of Africans to live up to American standards. Moreover, he did not regard the Negro family as permanently and uniformly disorganized by slavery and its aftermath. Frazier's family is, in fact, a broad spectrum of families, constantly in a process of change and reorganization, depending on a complex interrelationship of economic, cultural, and social forces. He was interested in the varieties of the family as an institution that, at different times and under different conditions, was sometimes disorganized and demoralized, sometimes tenacious and resourceful. His perspective on the family was genuinely interdisciplinary, and his solutions to family disorganization were similarly complex and multifaceted. Though he was more of an economic determinist than a social psychologist, he was opposed to one-dimensional approaches to social policy.

Many years after its publication, Frazier's *Negro Family in the United States* gained notoriety when it became the basis of Daniel P. Moynihan's controversial 1965 report, entitled *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*, in which he argued that the lower-class Black family had become mired in a self-perpetuating "tangle of pathology" characterized by dominant matriarchs and emasculated, unemployed men. In the aftermath of the report and in the context of a resurgent cultural nationalism, some objected to Frazier's emphasis on the damage done by racism to family and community. The same controversy was revived in the 1980s with respect to the "underclass" debate. But prior to World War II, when Frazier was trying to document the pathology of race prejudice, such a view was a challenge to racist assumptions about the inherent inferiority of African Americans.

Frazier's study of the Negro family is worth revisiting because it broke the hold of racialized paradigms and opened up African American communities to the possibility of serious historical and sociological investigations. Frazier chronicled community life and everyday customs, sketching portraits of human diversity and articulating contradictions that challenged the prevailing reification of African American families as uniformly deviant and pathological. Since publication of *The Negro Family in the United States* in 1939, this area of study has been transformed by feminism and the women's movements and by complex new developments in African American history. But the problems that Frazier reported about over sixty years ago—the impact of racism on family life, the interconnection between economic inequality and personal problems, and the difficulty of preserving human relationships in a society based on exploitation and inequality—remain ever present.

Anthony M. Platt

See also: Family Structure; Moynihan Report; Poverty Research; Racism; *The Vanishing Black Family*

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New Deal Farm Policy

New Deal farm programs initially either ignored or actually exacerbated the plight of the rural poor during the 1930s. While struggling to restore the solvency of commercial agriculture, the New Deal began developing a second set of farm programs in 1935 to come to terms with the nation's deep-rooted rural poverty. These initiatives achieved, at best, a mixed record before they were eliminated during World War II. Nevertheless, with their short-lived vision of a more cooperative, small-scale, and less commercialized system of agricultural production, they constituted some of the boldest—and most controversial—experiments in U.S. social policy.

Of the 6.2 million farmers in 1930, roughly one-half produced 90 percent of all goods sold off the farm. The other half produced but 10 percent (Baker 1937, 4–5). Many farmers were either tenants and sharecroppers or debt-burdened landowners eking out livings on a few acres of depleted and barren soils with few tools, no power equipment, and little livestock. In addition, there were large numbers of struggling farm laborers and rural workers who moved back and forth from farm to nonfarm work. The rural poor were concentrated most heavily in the South, with its nearly 2 million tenant farmers and sharecroppers, but they were a national phenomenon. Wherever they lived, the rural poor subsisted on miserable diets with virtually no hope of achieving decent housing, health care, or education for their children.

Rural poverty before the New Deal went almost unnoticed in the United States. During the 1930s, however, searing accounts of the rural poor by writers such as Erskine Caldwell, John Steinbeck, and James Agee; brilliant photographs by documentary photographers such as Dorothea Lange; and protests of the unfair treatment of southern tenant farmers in the administration of New Deal farm programs contributed to the discovery of the degraded condition of millions of rural families.

Early New Deal farm programs such as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and the Farm Credit Administration were designed to save a battered system of commercial agriculture. The Farm Credit Administration reorganized and expanded the federally sponsored farm credit system, but since the system's production and mortgage loans required some form of security, they were unavailable to poorer farmers. The AAA sought to boost farm income, and its major emphasis was on implementing voluntary production controls by paying cooperating farmers to cut back on crop and livestock production. Most of the rural poor produced too few goods to benefit from AAA production controls. In much of the South, however, the AAA exacerbated rural poverty by encouraging cotton landlords either to claim excessive shares of the benefit payments at the expense of sharecroppers and tenants or to reduce the number of renters they furnished. The evictions and abuses inspired furious debates within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) over whether the AAA should protect poorer farmers or concentrate primarily on restoring prosperity to commercial agriculture. Outside the USDA, landlord abuses encouraged the formation of groups such as the Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU), which fought to protect tenants and liberalize New Deal farm programs.

More helpful to the rural poor was the New Deal's Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which was established to help state and local governments provide relief to the unemployed and the destitute. Within months, the FERA, and related agencies such as the Civil Works Administration, were supporting 1 million farmers and their families with jobs and monthly relief payments. In 1934, the FERA established a Division of Rural Rehabilitation and began making small loans and grants to distressed farmers as part of a larger program of rural rehabilitation.

As the plight of the rural poor gained greater attention, Congress and the New Deal confronted two policy choices. One was to include farmers and farmworkers under the various provisions of the Social Security Act (1935) and later measures such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938). Such a course, however, faced serious obstacles because of the costs involved, the limited administrative capacities for applying these acts to agriculture, and fierce opposition from politically powerful southern planters and farm interest groups. Instead, the New Deal pursued a second approach, which was to develop new farm programs aimed at keeping the rural poor on the land and creating new opportunities for landownership among tenants and marginal farmers. The first important attempt to formulate this second farm program began in 1935 with the Resettlement Administration (RA), which absorbed the FERA's Rural Rehabilitation program. In late 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy, and its report helped win passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937. The Bankhead-

Jones Act authorized the creation of the Farm Security Administration (FSA), which was established within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the FSA in turn absorbed the Resettlement Administration. What emerged, fitfully, was an alternative farm program aimed at raising rural living standards by developing a system of small-hold farming.

One part of this alternative farm program was the building of government-sponsored rural communities. Such projects had been under way before 1935, but the Resettlement Administration under Rexford G. Tugwell embraced and expanded community building as an antidote to rural poverty. An important adviser to Roosevelt and an undersecretary in the Department of Agriculture, Tugwell was critical of the USDA and the AAA for slighting rural poverty. He envisioned the RA guiding the resettlement of poorer farmers off marginal land and onto more-productive farms and into model rural communities. By the second half of the 1930s, about 150 such projects were under way on government-purchased or government-leased land (Baldwin 1968, 214). A second part of the program was to make available long-term, low-interest loans to tenants and poorer farmers to allow them to purchase farms or expand existing farms. A third part of the program expanded the rehabilitation program begun by the FERA by supplying destitute farmers with small loans. These averaged only $240 in 1937 and climbed to $600 in 1940, and by 1943, 695,000 families—or about one-ninth of America's farm families—had received one or more rehabilitation loans. In addition to the loans, the RA and FSA made available direct grants that averaged about $20 per client and that totaled $136.5 million for 500,000 families by 1943 (Baldwin 1968, 200, 202).

The community-building projects, tenant land purchase programs, and rehabilitation loan and grant programs were part of a larger effort to create a viable system of small-scale farming. RA/FSA clients had to agree to accept home

Farmer on the Farm Security Administration Bois d'Arc cooperative farm. Osage Farms, Missouri, November 1939. (Corbis)

and farm supervision by agricultural and home demonstration agents, who encouraged diversified farming, home food production, and strategies for raising standards of living while minimizing market risks. In addition, the RA/FSA programs sought to improve rural economic and social conditions by developing cooperative and group associations. The agencies encouraged their resettled farmers and rehabilitation clients to form cooperative purchasing and sales associations; cooperative cotton gins, canneries, and other processing facilities; and cooperative farms and land-leasing associations and to group together for services, such as sharing the expenses for veterinarians or harvesting equipment. The RA/FSA also worked with public health officials to establish medical care associations to create prepayment medical, hospital, and dental care plans.

The RA and FSA achieved, at best, limited success. The most beneficial programs were the rehabilitation loans and grants, which kept thousands of rural families off relief rolls and allowed them to survive the Depression and the droughts of the 1930s. The resettlement projects built only 10,000 farm homes, were often beset with internal dissension, and incurred large financial losses (Conkin 1959, 331). The tenant farm purchase program was more successful, but it had funds for only a few thousand of the 150,000 to 175,000 applicants each year (Baldwin 1968, 199). Furthermore, because these programs were intended to be self-liquidating, the RA/FSA limited larger loans and resettlement to those farmers most likely to establish a profitable farm, which meant that most of the rural poor were prevented from obtaining assistance. Overall, RA/FSA spending was but a fraction of what the USDA spent on price support and production-control programs. The national administrators of the RA and the FSA sought to aid Black farmers, but at the local level, the programs limited access and benefits to African Americans. The discrimination notwithstanding, however, for those Black tenants and landowners who did obtain RA/FSA assistance, the programs enabled them to survive the 1930s and remain on their farms after the Great Depression.

By the early 1940s, the RA/FSA programs were under intense attack from anti–New Deal congressmen, farm interest groups such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the state extension services. The resettlement projects drew the brunt of the attack as critics charged they were wasteful and a first step toward a system of "socialist" agriculture. The Farm Bureau objected to government subsidies of poorer farmers while other USDA programs were trying to curtail production. Many state extension services resented and feared competition from the FSA agricultural agents. These forces combined during World War II first to slash the FSA budget and then to eliminate the agency in 1945.

It is doubtful that an attack on rural poverty based on resettlement and converting tenants into landowners could have aided most of the nation's rural poor during the 1930s. Nevertheless, the RA and FSA programs were well-meaning and hopeful experiments, and their demise hastened the elimination of small-scale farmers from American agriculture after 1945.

David E. Hamilton

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Dust Bowl Migration; *The Grapes of Wrath;* Great Depression and New Deal; *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men;* Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Picturing Poverty (I); *Report on Economic Conditions of the South;* Rural Poverty; Sharecropping; Tennessee Valley Authority

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New Left

Poverty and economic inequality were major concerns of the New Left, a politically radical movement of young people during the 1960s. The leading organization of the New Left, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), turned its attention to poverty early in the decade. Inspired by its own social democratic heritage, the civil rights movement, and the publication of Michael Harrington's *Other America,* SDS launched the Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP) in 1963. ERAP would investigate and organize around the problem of economic inequality and the potential for economic democracy in the United States. Although ERAP did sponsor research, action—specifically community organizing around economic issues—soon became its main focus. By bringing individuals living in the same residential area together to fight for their common interests, SDS hoped to build "an interracial movement of the poor" to abolish poverty in America. Over the next few years, New Left organizers established thirteen official ERAP projects in white, predominantly Black, and racially diverse neighborhoods. The largest, most successful, and longest-lasting projects were located in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and Newark. By 1967 and 1968, however, it was clear that ERAP had failed to spark a social movement of poor Americans, and the projects were disbanded. Nevertheless, ERAP participants in all these cities left a community organizing legacy of fighting against poverty that lasted well beyond the 1960s.

The strategy and goals behind ERAP's antipoverty activism were articulated in a 1964 SDS document entitled "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?" by Carl Wittman, a student leader at Swarthmore College who had experience in civil rights and community organizing, and Tom Hayden, a University of Michigan graduate and important leader of SDS. Synthesizing insights and lessons from the labor movement, the Old Left, and the civil rights movement, the document outlined a strategy for building an interracial movement of the poor to target the intertwined problems of poverty, racism, and the lack of democracy in the United States. Given the historical moment, before the second wave of feminism, women's issues were not part of ERAP's political agenda. Instead, Wittman, Hayden, and other ERAP planners sought to mobilize unemployed Black, white, and Latino men into community organizations in the urban North. Organization building, it was hoped, would overcome the experience of oppression and the so-called culture of poverty that left the poor feeling powerless, isolated, and alienated. Poor community residents could thus find their political voice and become a political force. These local organizations would then forge ties with the civil rights and labor movements in order to achieve a national presence.

From there, Wittman and Hayden wanted ERAP to effect a true "war on poverty," arguing that President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty would not be won because it was not radical enough, since it was not intended to redistribute power and wealth. More concretely, "An Interracial Movement of the Poor?" laid out two reform aims for ERAP to be accomplished through unemployment campaigns: national economic planning with democratic participation and full and fair employment or a guaranteed annual income from the state. This call for jobs, income, planning, and participation reflected the New Left's understanding that the expansion of public authority to resolve the problem of poverty needed to be accompanied by the extension of political participation, especially to the poor themselves. Material resources alone could not solve the problem of poverty; citizen participation and empowerment were necessary at both the community level and in national policymaking.

When they put their strategy into practice, however, New Left organizers encountered low-income-community residents who challenged their assumptions and aims. In contrast to the expectation of ERAP planners that men would be their constituency, neighborhood women provided much of the leadership and membership for the ERAP projects. In the course of fulfilling their caretaking duties, women struggled daily with community conditions and, indeed, identified problems as part of their domestic responsibilities. Women's prominence and activism, combined with New Left organizers' commitment to ensuring grassroots participation in the projects ("Let the People Decide" became the favorite ERAP slogan), meant project aims proliferated beyond ERAP's original goals. To meet the range of needs in these low-income neighborhoods, ERAP projects organized campaigns around welfare, housing conditions, urban renewal, children's welfare, and police brutality as well as unemployment. Emphasized in all of the projects were campaigns for greater citizen political participation, with which poverty and inequality could be successfully targeted. In the process, ERAP participants challenged the idea that poor people were second-class citizens because they lacked the economic independence deemed necessary for full citizenship.

Despite a few successes, such as a school lunch program in Cleveland, a food surplus program in Boston, and War on Poverty funding in Newark, ERAP's attempt to realize full political and social citizenship for poor Americans met with failure. Black, white, and Latino, poor and working-class community participants in ERAP may have found their voice and articulated how they defined the problems of and solutions to inner-city poverty in the 1960s. But their voices needed to be heard, and listening and dialogue were not forthcoming from elected and appointed officials. As a consequence, disillusionment and frustration set in and contributed greatly to the disbanding of the community projects in 1967 and 1968. Even so, ERAP can be credited with some successes. Like community organizing efforts before and since, the neighborhood projects concretely improved people's lives in small ways through offering services. They also provided a set of experiences for participants—both New Left organizers and community members—that had the more intangible benefits of political and personal growth and development. As it turned out, SDS's community organizing became an important site for the emergence of both the women's liberation and welfare rights movements. Finally, ERAP left its mark on the community organizing efforts that flourished in the 1970s and helped develop a national vocabulary that has been used to defend local neighborhoods in the decades since.

Jennifer Frost

See also: Citizenship; Civil Rights Movement; Community Organizing; *The Other America;* Urban Poverty; War on Poverty; Welfare Rights Movement

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New Property

In a groundbreaking 1964 article entitled "The New Property," law professor Charles Reich theorized that government largesse, including welfare benefits, constituted a new form of property worthy of legal protection. According to Reich, government benefits of various types were transforming society in the United States by replacing more traditional forms of private property. Reich surveyed a variety of examples of government largesse enjoyed by increasing numbers of Americans, including government jobs, occupational licenses, franchises, contracts, subsidies, services, public resources, and welfare benefits (including Social Security, unemployment, Aid to Dependent Children, and veterans' benefits). He argued, for example, that Americans were relying more on social insurance and less on savings. But Reich was no advocate of the welfare state. Rather, he feared that increased dependence on such largesse threatened to enlarge government power at the expense of individual autonomy. To prevent such loss of liberty, Reich reasoned that government largesse required both procedural and substantive protections similar to those granted to more traditional forms of property. In short, Reich provided a functional framework for continued reliance on property—albeit in its new form—as an economic basis for protecting individual liberty in a society increasingly dominated by government largesse. Reich also foreshadowed themes soon to be prominent among antipoverty advocates and scholars, such as social construction, bureaucratization, privatization, and legalization.

Social Construction of Property

Reich first asserted that wealth or value is created by culture and society. But he acknowledged that property is created by law. After describing the various forms and functions of property, he revealed how property is itself socially constructed. He also described the distinctive system of law emerging to regulate government largesse. This regulatory system was recognizing both individual rights and government powers and was developing procedures for mediating between individual and government interests.

Bureaucratization and Privatization

"The New Property" sounded an early warning about the risks associated with this regulatory system, especially its bureaucratization and privatization. Reich recognized the danger to liberty posed by invasive and pervasive government regulation. He cited many examples demonstrating the absence of standards for constraining bureaucratic discretion and the tendency toward corruption. Reich also recognized that no meaningful distinction existed between the public and private spheres. He criticized the inequalities among private actors in their relations with government and the uses of government power for private gain and advantage.

To address his special concern about impairment of the Bill of Rights, Reich invoked the unconstitutional conditions doctrine, which prohibits the government from doing indirectly (via conditions on largesse) what it cannot do directly (for example, via criminal prohibitions). Citing the problem of caseworkers making unannounced searches of welfare recipients' homes, Reich argued that recipients should not be forced to "choose between their means of support and one of their constitutional rights" (Reich 1964, 762). Here Reich grounded his normative argument on constitutional theory, asserting that "[a] first principle should be that government must have no power to 'buy up' rights guaranteed by the Constitution" (Reich 1964, 779).

Legalization

As the means of addressing these inherent dangers, Reich proposed using law to limit conditions on government largesse. He recommended that government be limited substantively to imposing only those conditions sufficiently relevant to the purposes underlying the attached benefits and that both discretion and delegation be clearly guided and closely monitored. He also urged that all decisions regarding government largesse be subjected to fair procedures.

One year later, Reich elaborated on "The New Property" in a follow-up article, "Individual Rights and Social Welfare." Here, Reich posited that society is built around entitlements, that many entitlements flow from government, and that it is "only the poor whose entitlements, although recognized by public policy, have not been effectively enforced" (Reich 1965, 1255). The U.S. Supreme Court cited and relied on this reasoning in *Goldberg v. Kelly* (397 U.S. 254 [1970]). In that decision, the Court noted that welfare benefits are statutory entitlements for eligible recipients and are thus more like property, which cannot be taken by the government without due process of law. Based on this premise, the Court held that government could not terminate welfare benefits without first providing an evidentiary hearing. Thus, "The New Property" substantially altered administrative procedure, leading to individualized hearings nationwide for welfare recipients threatened with termination of benefits.

Two developments have limited the reach of *Goldberg v. Kelly* and thus of the practical impact of "The New Property." First, in *Mathews v. Eldridge* (424 U.S. 319 [1976]), the U.S. Supreme Court refused to require pretermination hearings for recipients of Social Security disability benefits, instead establishing a three-part test to determine what process is due for government benefits other than welfare. This test requires courts to balance the private interest affected, the risk of error under current procedures, the probable value of additional safeguards, and the government's interests. Second, in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Congress asserted that no individual shall be entitled to benefits under the new federal welfare program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Whether courts will view this "no entitlement" language as limiting the due process rights of welfare recipients remains to be seen, but at least one state appellate court has followed Reich's logic and prohibited the government from compromising TANF benefits without procedural due process protections (*Weston v. Cassata*, 37 P.3d 469 [Colo. Ct. App. 2001]).

"The New Property" undoubtedly will provoke continued debate as its premises challenge the postwelfare ideology increasingly popular today.

Julie A. Nice

See also: Poverty Law; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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New Right

The term "New Right" refers to a coalition of conservative activists, intellectuals, politicians, and religious leaders who gained media attention and political power in the United States in the last third of the twentieth century. Imbued with an intense—if not necessarily internally coherent—ideological commitment to free-market capitalism, Christian morality, "traditional" (that is, patriarchal) family values, and anti–"big government" individualism, the American New Right combined pro-market libertarians, disillusioned liberals, traditional conservatives, and the Christian Right. Together, these groups helped shift the focus of public debate about poverty and welfare from market failure to the dangers of welfare "dependency." The New Right built a powerful base in the Republican Party during the 1980s and 1990s. Blaming New Deal and Great Society liberalism for economic decline, excessive taxes, bloated bureaucracy, crime, expanding welfare rolls, and moral permissiveness, the New Right discredited the liberal and social democratic goals of achieving social equality through purposeful government action. With the help of conservative foundations, grassroots organizations, think tanks, and a reinvigorated business lobby, the movement also scored major legislative victories, including the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996), which replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), made work a requirement for receiving welfare, and devolved responsibility for social welfare programs to the states in the name of the "New Federalism."

The emergence of the New Right as a political movement can be traced to a group of hard-core conservative activists who, having watched the overwhelming defeat of their presidential candidate Barry Goldwater by Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, vowed to recapture electoral politics for the conservative Right. Aided in these efforts by a politically potent backlash against the expansion of civil rights and social welfare instigated by Johnson's Great Society programs and against the civil rights, feminist, youth counterculture, and New Left activism of the 1960s, the New Right began to gain momentum in the early 1970s by appealing to the resentments and anxieties of an economically vulnerable white working class. It made inroads among political elites, including a group of once–left and liberal intellectuals, who came to be known as neoconservatives as they turned rightward for their ideas and politics. Daniel Patrick Moynihan's warnings about the looming "crisis" of the Black family and about exploding welfare rolls expressed a growing disillusionment among liberals with ambitious welfare programs, urban riots, surging crime rates, and the growth of an "underclass." Concerned about "moral decline," neoconservatives helped revive a moral discourse that ascribed poverty to the moral failings of the poor.

Economic crisis in the early 1970s favored the New Right activists who were building the organizational infrastructure for a political movement to counter the New Left proponents of greater social equality. Financially supported by corporations alarmed at the costs of promoting greater equality, newly created New Right think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and already-existing organizations like the American Enterprise Institute advocated government retrenchment, privatization, and curbs on welfare spending. Accusing feminists, liberals, Black radicals, gay and lesbian activists, and welfare rights advocates of endorsing immoral and irresponsible behavior, New Right intellectuals disseminated their views through grassroots networks, publications, and the mainstream media. George Gilder's *Sexual Suicide* (1974) argued that social policy should reinforce marriage rather than enabling poor mothers to live without male support. By the late 1970s, New Right arguments that welfare benefits constituted a "moral hazard" had gained increasing support in an economy where the majority of Americans were facing a declining or stagnant standard of living.

Christian Right organizations also played a central role in the political rise of the New Right, exerting influence in local battles over "sex education," the Equal Rights Amendment, gay rights, and Christian schools in the 1970s. Founded in 1979, the Moral Majority defended "family values," opposed sexual permissiveness and feminism, and accused an activist welfare state of usurping the roles of families, churches, and charitable organizations in the 1980s. Its successor, the Christian Coalition, continued these campaigns while gaining increasing strength in the Republican Party. These groups mobilized grassroots electoral support for conservative causes and candidates through television and direct mail while influencing the Republican Party platform and candidates to support their issues.

Reagan's presidential victory in 1980 played a particularly pivotal role in galvanizing the New Right's disparate components around an antiliberal social policy agenda. The Heritage Foundation's *Mandate for Leadership* (1980) advised the incoming administration to distinguish between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor. Programs for the poor and AFDC, or welfare, in particular, were the first and most vulnerable targets. Cuts in benefits, stronger work requirements for welfare recipients, and a devolution to the states of authority for AFDC soon followed. Journalist Ken Auletta popularized the term "underclass" to describe a deviant subculture, and President Reagan attacked "welfare queens," implicitly stereotyped as African American women. Intellectuals at the Manhattan Institute and other think tanks, including George Gilder in his *Wealth and Poverty* (1981) and Charles Murray in his *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950–1980* (1984), advocated a punitive approach to welfare provision to overcome the moral failings of welfare recipients, and Lawrence Mead's *Beyond Entitlement: The Social Obligations of Citizenship* (1986) criticized the welfare system for failing to set behavioral standards for the poor. Through expanded use of welfare waiver provisions, the Reagan and Bush (I) administrations permitted states to test new work and discipline-oriented programs that were developed, in part, by think tanks like the Hudson Institute and the Heritage Foundation and were funded by the John M. Olin Foundation and the Lynne and Harry Bradley Foundation.

In response to the increasing power of the New Right discourse about "welfarism," a group calling themselves "New Democrats" began to distance themselves from their party's historic commitments to organized labor, civil rights, and New Deal and Great Society social welfare, in part by focusing on the dangers of long-term reliance upon welfare and on the need to make the poor economically self-sufficient. Agreeing that welfare reduced the incentive to work, New Democrats advocated expanded child care provisions and income support but also advocated tougher work requirements to wean poor mothers off welfare. Their discursive support aided the passage of the Family Support Act (1988) endorsing workfare. As a leading New Democrat, Bill Clinton, the governor of Arkansas, advocated workfare. Riding on that record, he campaigned for the presidency in 1992 to end "welfare as we know it."

Aided by New Democrats, the New Right won control of the antipoverty agenda during the 1990s. Presaging the repeal of AFDC, Lawrence Mead's *New Politics of Poverty: The Nonworking Poor in America* (1992) characterized "dependency at the bottom of society" as the issue of the day (Mead 1992, ix) while denying that racism underlay the attacks on welfare. Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein's *Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* (1994) placed welfare recipients in a discursive framework associated with addiction, disease, and genetic deficiencies as they lamented "chronic welfare dependency" (Murray and Herrnstein 1994, 196). As part of their 1994 "Contract with America," Republicans proposed legislation to replace AFDC with a time-limited, conditional, and disciplinary program of temporary assistance. Having won control of Congress, the Republicans set about enacting the relevant legislation. In 1996, Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, bringing many long-standing New Right welfare reform objectives to fruition. The new law requires welfare recipients to find work or to participate in work programs, strictly limits the amount of time a family can receive welfare, repeals the federal guarantee of aid to families, and devolves welfare administration and discretion to the states while requiring states to enforce penalties against recipients who do not meet the new work and morality criteria of the federal law. The 1996 law also included a "charitable choice" provision to facilitate delegation of welfare administration and services to religious groups interested in the moral reeducation of the poor in keeping with its sponsors' ideological alliance with the Christian Right. Upon assuming the presidency in 2001, George W. Bush proposed to make federal funding even more accessible to "faith-based charities" and less supervised.

Avoiding any recognition that child rearing and domestic duties involves work, and ignoring market failures, a New Right discourse blaming immorality, irresponsibility, fatherlessness, and the welfare state for poverty and advocating work, sexual restraint, and marriage as the cure for poverty had become increasingly influential in the United States by the century's end due to the political strength and the astute media management of the New Right coalition.

Dolores E. Janiewski

See also: Christian Fundamentalism; Liberalism; *Losing Ground;* New Left; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area, *Harry Monroe Caudill*

For the generation of the 1960s, no other book fixed the image of Appalachia as a region of poverty and hopelessness quite as boldly as Harry Monroe Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*. Published in the summer of 1963, within months of Michael Harrington's *Other America* and the creation of a special antipoverty task force within the Kennedy administration, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* quickly became the definitive text on poverty in Appalachia among journalists, academics, and government bureaucrats concerned with economic inequality in America. Caudill's passionate portrayal of an old and predominantly white part of the nation's heartland, devastated by corporate greed, environmental abuse, and government neglect, helped shape the dialogue about poverty and economic growth evolving nationally and among key White House advisers. After reading an account of unemployed and destitute coal-mining families in eastern Kentucky by *New York Times* reporter Homer Bigart, who toured the mountains with Harry Caudill after reading the book, President John F. Kennedy committed himself to an antipoverty program for the 1964 session of Congress.

Caudill's Appalachia was a land of rich natural beauty and human heritage overwhelmed by mismanagement and shortsighted exploitation. The coal industry and corrupt politicians were largely to blame for turning the Appalachian landscape into a wasteland and mountaineers into a demoralized people, he thought. But Caudill also found within the local culture deficiencies that fueled ignorance, clannishness, and an eagerness to accept public relief. A predominantly absentee coal industry, he argued, had ravaged the land, stolen its wealth of natural resources, and left the people to survive on the dole. Only a massive government effort similar to the New Deal's Tennessee Valley Authority and the European Marshall Plan could restore growth, create jobs, and improve education and housing in this forgotten corner of America.

Caudill was a former Kentucky legislator and lawyer and a native of the region. His understanding of poverty in Appalachia mirrored the dual perspectives on poverty prevalent among postwar American liberals, at once blaming the structural inequalities in the region's political economy and the individual decisions and cultural values of the mountain people themselves. Embracing both the "culture of poverty" and the new economic theories of growth and human capital, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* appealed to a wide spectrum of 1960s liberals and became the bible of antipoverty warriors and environmental activists in the region for decades to come. Subsequent generations of Appalachian scholars would take issue with Caudill's pejorative, almost eugenic view of the region's traditional culture, but *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* would remain a landmark study, defining for most of the nation the conditions and tragic history of one of America's most persistently distressed areas. Caudill subsequently published ten books and more than 100 articles on Appalachia. He died in 1990.

Ronald D. Eller

See also: Appalachia; *The Other America;* Picturing Poverty (I); Poor Whites; Rural Poverty; Tennessee Valley Authority

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Nonprofit Sector

Since the colonial era, nonprofit social welfare organizations have been an important part of America's response to poverty and social welfare needs. But since the 1960s, this nonprofit role has been fundamentally transformed due to extensive federal funding of social services, the emergence of new social movements, and a profound restructuring of public policy and public service delivery that together constitute a revolution in America's approach to addressing social problems. Nonprofit social service agencies are now more central to America's response to poverty and other social problems than ever before.

Background

The current configuration of nonprofit, public, and for-profit social service organizations has been shaped by developments and trends that go back to the earliest decades of the republic. In the colonial period, churches, voluntary organizations, neighbors, and relatives provided emergency or supplemental cash and in-kind assistance, counseling, and support for people in need. Few formal voluntary service agencies existed. But in the early 1800s, volunteer societies proliferated throughout the country to care for children, mothers, and the disadvantaged (Crenson 1998; Katz 1996; Trattner 1999; Smith and Lipsky 1993).

As the nineteenth century progressed, more and more voluntary service organizations emerged, especially serving children and youth (Crenson 1998; Warner 1989; Brown and McKeown 1997). Many of these organizations were founded through religious sponsorship and affiliation, reflecting the surge of immigrants into urban America in the late nineteenth century and the concomitant need to provide them with support and social care. For instance, the major expansion of Catholic Charities occurred during this period (Brown and McKeown 1997). Many of these sectarian agencies, especially those in urban areas, received public subsidies, although often these subsidies were very controversial politically. In the late nineteenth century, a number of other voluntary organizations with at least some faith and social care components were also established, including the YMCA, the YWCA, Goodwill Industries, Volunteers of America, and the Salvation Army.

With the growth of nonprofit service organizations in the nineteenth century, the administration of social care became increasingly complicated. Nonprofit organizations emerged as central to service provision in child welfare (including foster care, adoption, and residential care), relief of the poor through cash and in-kind assistance (usually as a supplement to the public sector), immigrant assistance, and recreation. Public subsidies of nonprofit organizations tended to be quite targeted, with child and family service agencies the principal beneficiaries, particularly in urban areas with substantial immigrant populations (Warner 1989; Smith and Lipsky 1993). Also, public organizations, including state and local institutions for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled and for delinquent youth, continued to grow in size and number. Poor farms and almshouses continued to be a central component of public assistance, especially for the poor elderly and disabled. Typically, these institutions were administered directly by counties and towns or were managed under a contract to a private entrepreneur (Vladeck 1980; Katz 1996).

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the number of nonprofit social welfare agencies continued to grow, albeit at a modest pace. Perhaps the most notable new type of nonprofit agency was the settlement house, which represented a genuine departure from previous services: The staff and volunteers of settlement houses viewed social problems such as poverty and joblessness as rooted in the social and economic environment—a marked break with the previous conception of poverty as rooted in individual and moral failure. Given their focus on the community and social environment, settlement houses emphasized outreach activities, group and community programs, and programs to change the social norms of poor and especially immigrant communities. Typically, settlement houses depended on small private donations and fees; they rarely received direct public grants or subsidies (Chambers 1963; Fabricant and Fisher 2002).

This period also witnessed the establishment of the Community Chest, the predecessor organization of today's United Way. Chapters of the Community Chest were founded by leading members of the business and nonprofit sectors in communities across the country as federated fund-raising organizations; their goal was to enhance the overall efficiency of local services. The member agencies of the Community Chest agreed to abide by certain fund-raising practices, including a joint campaign whose proceeds would be distributed to the member agencies. Thus, member agencies agreed to relinquish some autonomy in exchange for the benefits of a consolidated fund-raising campaign. Established in Cleveland in 1914, the Community Chest movement grew slowly at first, but after World War I, it spread quickly throughout the country. By 1929, 329 cities and towns had autonomous Community Chest chapters, under the loose umbrella of the Community Chest name (Katz 1996; Brilliant 1990). In general, member agencies were the established, elite voluntary agencies of the community: the YMCA, the YWCA, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and child and family service agencies. Most of these agencies did not receive public subsidies; their revenues came from the Community Chest campaigns, other private donations, and service fees.

The Depression of the 1930s created daunting problems for nonprofit and public social service agencies. Many nonprofit agencies were forced to close or merge, and many were simply overwhelmed with the demand for help from jobless and impoverished citizens. In response, the federal government created numerous relief programs, but most of these programs were temporary. Eventually, these programs closed, leaving the underlying structure of the nonprofit social services intact: a relatively small array of agencies in local communities primarily focused on child and family services, recreation, and emergency assistance. These agencies were largely dependent upon private charity and client fees, with some agencies receiving small public subsidies. The federal government had almost no presence in the nonprofit social service sector.

More permanent substantive change in the administration and mix of services began in the late 1940s and 1950s. The federal government created new grant-in-aid programs to encourage local governments to increase the quality and scope of an array of social and health services, including mental health, vocational rehabilitation, and child welfare services (Merriam 1955). Congress passed the Hill-Burton Act in 1946 for the support of hospital construction and renovation. This act proved a boon to nonprofit hospitals, which used the construction loans to significantly expand their capacity and the centrality of their role in health care. Public institutions for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled also used these loans to renovate their facilities (Vladeck 1980).

Nonetheless, change in social services was very slow and incremental, and most new programs were small and undercapitalized. During the 1950s, nonprofit social service agencies that were members of the Community Chest typically depended upon donations from the Chest for 50 percent or more of their income. Agencies outside the Community Chest umbrella depended upon modest private donations and fees from clients (Smith and Lipsky 1993). Public funding of nonprofit agencies tended to be on a small scale and restricted to specific service niches, such as residential programs for youth administered by long-standing agencies such as Lutheran Social Services and Catholic Charities. Most nonprofit social services remained clustered in the family and child services and emergency assistance categories.

The New Federal Social Role and Its Implications for Nonprofit Agencies

Despite modest changes in social policy in the 1940s and 1950s, nonprofit social services possessed relatively limited capacity to address poverty and the problems of the disadvantaged. Some analysts blamed this situation in part on the disengagement of private social welfare agencies from the poor as these agencies strove to become more professional (Cloward and Epstein 1965). Others, such as Alfred Kahn (1962), argued that only with a concerted commitment by the public sector to comprehensive social services would the needs of the poor be adequately addressed. The clear implication was that private agencies were trapped in part by their dependence on private charity and client fees, which created large obstacles to the ability of these agencies to serve the poor.

These arguments helped spur a more widespread effort to alter the role of nonprofit social welfare agencies within the social service delivery system as part of the federal government's War on Poverty in the 1960s. The federal initiatives of this period—driven in part by emergent social movements—had profound consequences for nonprofit social service delivery, including a tremendous growth in the number and diversity of nonprofit social welfare agencies and a shift from reliance on private donations and client fees to reliance on public financing.

Growth and Diversification of Services

During the 1960s, the federal government funded a broad array of new social services: senior services, community mental health services, community action programs, job training, rape crisis centers, domestic violence programs, counseling for the poor and the disabled, specialized foster care, home care for the disabled and elderly, and intensive preschool for disadvantaged children (Head Start).

The increased availability of federal funding for social services encouraged the establishment and growth of new nonprofit agencies. These new agencies were usually heavily dependent on government funding; many were outside the established network of Community Chest agencies that had formed the core of the nonprofit social service system in local communities. (Many of the established agencies eventually expanded their programs through government funding as well.) These new agencies quickly took their place as central actors on the local social service scene, especially in service areas that more traditional nonprofit agencies had largely eschewed, such as drug treatment and services for the disabled and mentally ill. Indeed, the new community action agencies, in their effort to mobilize the citizens to help the disadvantaged, often took a confrontational stance toward the more established local service agencies, both nonprofit and public.

The Shift from Private to Public Funding

Since the colonial era, nonprofit agencies had been greatly constrained in their ability to address poverty and other social problems by their dependence on private charity and client fees. But the advent of extensive federal funding fundamentally changed the revenue mix of nonprofit agencies. For instance, federal spending on a bundle of social services including child welfare, vocational rehabilitation, and nutrition assistance rose from \$2.2 billion in 1970 to \$8.7 billion in 1980 (Bixby 1999, 89). This sharp increase in funding boosted the government's share of nonprofit social agency funding to well over half. Concomitantly, the relative contribution of private fees and donations to the revenue stream of nonprofits fell dramatically (Lynn 2002; Smith and Lipsky 1993; Smith 2002). The growth in public support also reduced the relative role of the Community Chest and its successor organization, the United Way, in funding nonprofit social services. This decline continues to the present day, although local United Way chapters are increasingly important in convening key stakeholders in the community to help define pressing social service priorities.

For nonprofits, the rise in public funding also meant that their funding was usually accompanied by rules and regulations on programmatic standards, client eligibility, and the allocation of expenses. These regulations can be at variance with a nonprofit agency's original mission and focus, creating profound internal organizational challenges for these agencies (Smith and Lipsky 1993).

Since the 1980s, the role of nonprofit agencies in addressing social problems has been directly affected by a number of important public policy developments. In the early 1980s, President Ronald Reagan reduced federal funding for many nonprofit social welfare programs and devolved responsibility for many federal social programs to the states (Gutowski and Koshel 1982). Many nonprofit agencies were forced to substantially retrench during this period, leaving many of their clients without services.

But over time, federal funding of social services rose again for four key reasons. First, state governments, often with the support of federal officials and nonprofit executives, refinanced social services by tapping into other sources of federal financing, especially Medicaid, the matching federal/state health insurance program for the poor and disabled, which has been rising rapidly since the mid-1980s. Today, many key social welfare services provided by nonprofit agencies are substantially funded by Medicaid, including child welfare services (particularly counseling and residential treatment), mental health care, rehabilitation services, residential programs for the developmentally disabled and chronic mentally ill, and home care.

Second, many new federal funding programs for social services were created or additional funds were provided for existing programs in several important service categories, including AIDS services, domestic violence, AmeriCorps, job training, mental health, drug and alcohol treatment, home care, day care, and child protection. These services are delivered primarily by nonprofit agencies, with the exception of home care and day care, where for-profit agencies play a substantial role. In an important change, many federal departments that historically did not directly fund social services, such as the Departments of Justice, Education, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD), emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as major funders of local social service programs.

Third, welfare reform was passed in 1996 by Congress and implemented in 1997. This legislation replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and gave states much greater flexibility in the administration and spending of federal dollars under the new program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Due to the work requirement of TANF and a rapidly growing domestic economy, the number of people receiving cash benefits plummeted nationwide. Many states spent the resulting savings on cash assistance (coupled with additional federal aid for social services) on a variety of welfare-related services. Many nonprofit agencies have thus found themselves in an unusual position: Most agencies stridently opposed welfare reform (because of the new restrictions on cash assistance), and at least some of their clients have lost cash benefits, but many agencies have received additional funding to provide job training, welfare-to-work aid, and child care. In a very real sense, the United States has essentially abolished cash assistance for the poor and replaced it with a mix of support services, primarily provided by nonprofit organizations, designed to move the poor into the labor force as quickly as possible. To an extent, nonprofit agencies focused on providing services to the poor now receive funds that were previously devoted to cash assistance.

The fourth and final factor contributing to the continued growth of nonprofit social welfare agencies and their role in social services is the diversification in the tools of government social support. While direct funding for social services remains the norm, new tools of social support have expanded, including tax credits, loans, and tax-exempt bonds. For instance, the federal child care tax credit has fueled the growth in demand for nonprofit (and for-profit) child care. Tax-exempt bond financing has been used by state and local governments to help nonprofit social service agencies with their capital needs.

Next Steps for Social Policy and Nonprofit Service Agencies

In many respects, the transformation of nonprofit social service agencies since the mid-1970s typifies America's unique approach to social policy. In other advanced industrial countries, personal social services such as child care, mental health care, and rehabilitation programs are championed by major political parties as an essential right of every citizen. Extensive networks of government-funded public social services exist as a consequence. The United States has been much more reluctant to enact entitlement programs in the area of social services. For example, the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), created in 1981 as part of the Reagan cutbacks, was a symbol of the federal government's reluctant commitment to social services. (Most of this money is channeled to nonprofit social welfare agencies.) The decline of SSBG in real terms since 1981 demonstrates the enduring ambivalence about major federal support for extensive social services.

Yet the social needs remain, so policymakers and advocates have done an end-run around SSBG. Instead of focusing on SSBG, policymakers and advocates greatly expanded federal support for nonprofit social services through a variety of other routes. But this expansion carries with it great risks for nonprofit agencies. Relatively modest technical changes to existing law could have a major negative impact on funding for nonprofit social welfare agencies. (For example, changes to eligibility for Supplemental Security Income [SSI], a federal program for the disabled and elderly poor, could significantly reduce certain clients' eligibility for nonprofit services.) More generally, the substantial tax cuts implemented by the administration of President George W. Bush in 2001–2003 will sharply curb the revenues of the federal government in the coming years, creating a budget squeeze that will make it much more difficult to continue federal funding of many service programs. Also, the refinancing of social services through Medicaid and to a lesser extent Medicare means that the future of social services is now tied to the ongoing national debate on the role of the federal government in health care. Significant reform of Medicaid, for example, would have far-reaching effects on nonprofit social service agencies. Policy changes affecting the clients of nonprofit agencies, such as changes in eligibility for TANF and food stamps, can have a direct impact on the demand for nonprofit services. The restrictiveness of public and private funding today makes it very difficult for many nonprofits to respond to changes in client circumstances.

Further, the emphasis on performance and outcome measurement by government and private funders alike and the stepped-up competition for public and private funding have forced many nonprofits to wrestle with very complex issues pertaining to mission and their role in the community. This is all the more difficult given the broader debate under way in the United States about community service, voluntarism, and the community-building role of nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit social service agencies have a great opportunity to help rebuild distressed communities, stimulate more voluntarism, and provide a locus for community service activities. But these activities may conflict with the pressure to be accountable to funders or with the desire to ward off competitors who do not have the same type of community obligations. Successful nonprofit organizations will be those agencies that can use their community connections to their competitive advantage and at the same time develop the capability to be accountable to funders and their communities. The success of nonprofits in responding to social need also hinges upon the capacity and willingness of government to adequately fund nonprofit agencies and address the multiple needs of the poor and disadvantaged through income support and other social policies.

Steven Rathgeb Smith

See also: Charitable Choice; Charity; Community Chests; Community-Based Organizations; Mutual Aid; Philanthropy; Privatization; Salvation Army; Settlement Houses; Voluntarism; Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA); Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

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North Carolina Fund

Governor Terry Sanford established the North Carolina Fund in 1963 as an experiment in public-private cooperation. The fund grew out of a confluence of interests between a progressive young governor, who was searching for ways to improve educational and job opportunities for disadvantaged families, and Paul Ylvisaker, director of the Ford Foundation's Gray Areas project, which for a number of years had been addressing issues of poverty and racial justice in urban areas across the nation. With additional support from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, and various agencies of the federal government, the fund employed a racially integrated staff and supported a variety of community development programs in rural and urban areas across the state.

The fund initially emphasized public education, but its focus quickly shifted to community action and manpower development programs. The fund supported eleven community action agencies, ten of which are still in operation. Reflecting the special needs of local constituencies, rural projects focused on economic stability, housing, and employment, while urban initiatives were more oriented toward problems of juvenile delinquency, health care, and illiteracy.

Child sitting on steps outside of house, North Carolina/Billy Barnes for the North Carolina Fund. (Library of Congress)

The fund developed a number of cutting-edge antipoverty interventions. The North Carolina Volunteers, a model for Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), recruited over 300 college students, Black and white, men and women, to spend the summers of 1964 and 1965 working with local social service agencies on poverty-related issues. The Community Action Technicians program trained over 100 people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, including many grassroots leaders, to staff the eleven community action agencies supported by the fund. The fund also created nonprofit corporations that focused on specific policy areas: manpower development, education, low-income housing, and community economic development.

The fund's fortunes tracked those of the larger civil rights and antipoverty movements, both of which it sought to advance. The fund took seriously the need for the "maximum feasible participation of the poor" in antipoverty programs, and it worked to give the poor the institutional and financial footing from which to press their demands. This strategy helped unleash a wave of activism in poor communities across the state. Two of the most notable grassroots organizations supported by the fund were the United Organizations for Community Improvement in Durham and the People's Program on Poverty in Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, and Northampton Counties. As the poor began to organize, picket, and protest, however, local elites intensified their opposition to the fund and to the War on Poverty more generally.

In 1968, the fund's directors closed up shop, partly by design and partly because of tensions within the liberal coalition that had sustained both the civil rights victories of mid-decade and President Lyndon B. Johnson's vision of a Great Society. The fund's legacy, however, stretches far beyond its five-year life span. Involvement with the fund permanently altered the objectives of several North Carolina foundations; many of the community development organizations it spawned continue to shape public policy at the regional, state, and local levels, and a large number of fund veterans occupy key positions in both public and nonprofit social service agencies today.

Robert Korstad

See also: Community Development; Community Organizing; Community-Based Organizations; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA); War on Poverty

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NOW *Legal Defense and Education Fund*

From its inception in 1966, the National Organization for Women (NOW) has viewed litigation as a strategy to help women gain rights and access to economic opportunity. In 1970, NOW created a separate litigating and education entity, the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, eligible for tax-deductible contributions.

While NOW Legal Defense has always supported a wide array of women's rights endeavors, initially its legal work focused on employment discrimination cases and the implementation of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, which barred sex discrimination in educational institutions. In 1979, NOW Legal Defense participated as amicus in *Califano v. Westcott* (443 U.S. 76), which successfully challenged discriminatory welfare policies, and in 1984 NOW Legal Defense also filed an amicus brief in the Washington State pay equity case *AFSCME v. State of Washington* (770 F.2d 1401 [9th Cir.]).

In 1993, NOW Legal Defense began a more aggressive defense of poor women's rights, which were threatened by growing interest in federal welfare reform. A class-action lawsuit challenged New Jersey's policy that refused additional welfare benefits to children born to mothers receiving public assistance (the "family cap"), arguing that such a policy worked to coerce the reproductive choices of poor women; NOW Legal Defense continues to wage this fight. NOW Legal Defense also asserted that state welfare laws that provided lower benefits to new residents discriminated against women who moved to escape violent relationships. The Supreme Court ultimately reaffirmed the position that differential welfare benefits for new state residents violated the U.S. Constitution (*Saenz v. Roe* [526 U.S. 489 (1999)]).

In 1996, the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund lobbied against the proposed revision of the federal welfare program and helped to prevent a mandated "family cap" in the new statute. NOW Legal Defense drafted the language that offered protection to poor women affected by domestic violence. In 1999, NOW Legal Defense established a national coalition of activist organizations to develop a progressive agenda aimed at ending poverty.

In 2002, the coalition focused on the pending reauthorization of the 1996 law, with NOW Legal Defense coordinating lobbying efforts. In addition, NOW Legal Defense played a key role in drafting a progressive welfare reauthorization bill, which was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressmember Patsy Mink.

A feminist leader in the early-twenty-first-century welfare debate, NOW Legal Defense advocated for poor mothers as their children's caregivers; it also argued against increased work requirements and for access to education and training, increases in federal funds for child care, rejection of heterosexual marriage promotion as a means to reduce poverty, additional assistance for recipients affected by domestic violence and other employment barriers, protection for the civil rights of program participants, and access to benefits for legal immigrants. Republican dominance of Congress, however, made enactment of progressive legislation unlikely.

NOW Legal Defense continues to litigate in this area to protect the rights of women forced to work for benefits, to oppose the family cap, and to ensure that eligible recipients get benefits to which they are entitled.

Cynthia Harrison

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Employment Policy; Feminisms; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Sexism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Nutrition and Food Assistance

Nutrition and food assistance in the United States consists of a range of public and private programs designed to enable low-income and other "special needs" households to meet their most basic nutritional needs by providing vouchers, or food stamps, for food purchases, free food packages, and subsidized or free cooked meals. In fiscal year 2002 the U.S. government spent approximately $32.6 billion on eleven different programs to feed needy and hungry Americans. It is virtually impossible to determine the total number of individuals who benefit from one or more of these food programs, since each program tallies its own participation data without asking whether its clients are receiving food from other federal programs as well. Some programs do not count participants at all but, rather, report the number of meals served or pounds of food distributed. Nor is it clear that these programs reach all those in need: The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2000, 33 million people in the United States lived in "food insecure" households, that is, households in which members were uncertain about their ability or unable to acquire adequate food on a regular basis to meet essential needs. But we know from surveys that many eligible people, including many who are classified as "food insecure," never enroll in any food program at all. Nevertheless, data from the individual programs show that the number of people who receive federal food assistance is substantial. The food stamp program, for example, served over 17 million people in 2001; the Special Supplemental Nutrition for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program served more than 7.3 million (see the accompanying table).

Table 1

Major federal food assistance programs: participation rates and cost, 2001

	# of participants	*$ cost*
Food Stamp Program	17,313*	17,797
National School Lunch	27,504	6,475
School Breakfast	7,792	1,450
Child/Adult Care Food	2,725	1,739
Summer Food Service	2,115	215
WIC	7,306	4,150
Commodity Supplemental	407	103
Elderly Feeding	—	152
Indian Reservations	113	68
TEFAP	—	377

Note: All figures, participants and dollars, in millions. Elderly Feeding and TEFAP report only meals served and pounds distributed, respectively.

In addition to the various federal food assistance programs, there exists an extensive parallel system of private, nonprofit food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. Perhaps as much as 15 percent of the food distributed by these street-level providers is federal surplus commodities or food purchased with federal government grants, primarily through the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), but the rest is raised through donations by individuals, religious institutions, food-processing corporations, farmers, supermarkets, and restaurants. These private programs tend to fill a niche that federal programs do not reach: About half the clients of charitable food programs do not receive federal food stamps, and two-thirds of women with small children who visit pantries do not take advantage of the WIC program.

The largest nonprofit food assistance organization, Second Harvest, which oversees a network of more than 70,000 street-level food providers, estimates that its programs serve nearly one-tenth of the American population in any given year. The affiliates of Second Harvest represent only a portion of the food pantries and soup kitchens in the United States, however. Estimates suggest that there could be as many as an additional 150,000 food pantries, mostly associated with religious congregations.

The structure of federal food assistance to the needy is based on the foundation of a large entitlement program open to any eligible person—food stamps—and a number of smaller, specialized programs designed to provide assistance to particularly vulnerable or needy categories of people. The modern food stamp program dates from a 1961 pilot program initiated by President John F. Kennedy. In 1964, food stamps were made a permanent part of the federal government's range of social welfare programs.

The food stamp benefit—which now comes in the form of an electronic benefit card, similar to a bank debit card—is available to American citizens and a small number of eligible legal immigrants whose gross household income does not exceed 130 percent of the federal poverty line. The amount of the benefit, which in 2001 averaged just under $75 per person per month, is designed to cover the gap between 30 percent of a household's net cash income and the cost of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan.

The program reached its peak coverage in 1994, when more than 27 million people were receiving benefits. The 1996 welfare reform legislation (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act) cut off food stamp benefits for the vast majority of legal immigrants by making them ineligible. These eligibility restrictions, along with the economic boom at the end of the 1990s, reduced program participation substantially. For various reasons—lack of knowledge, inconvenience, pride—a substantial number of eligible people (perhaps as many as 35–40 percent) do not participate in the food stamp program. Participation is highest among people with incomes at or below the federal poverty level, women with young children, and African Americans. It is lowest among the elderly and those whose net incomes are just below the food stamp eligibility cutoff.

In addition to food stamps, designed to cover all segments of the needy population, the federal government maintains an array of targeted programs for children, the elderly poor, women with small children, and Native Americans. One rationale for these programs is that they provide food for certain groups of people who cannot easily buy food for themselves and thus cannot count on coverage from the food stamp program. Children are usually dependent on others in the household to buy and prepare sufficient food, but normal food gathering and preparation cannot be taken for granted in socially dysfunctional or poor households. Another rationale is that children's physical and cognitive development is especially vulnerable to nutritional deficits.

The School Lunch program, which dates from 1946, and the School Breakfast program, authorized in 1966, are the two major childhood nutrition programs. Both programs are open to all children, regardless of income, but low-income children receive free or reduced-price meals. Just under half of all school lunches served are free, while approximately 7 percent are reduced-price. Coverage of the needy population is far greater in the lunch than in the breakfast program. While the former serves nearly 28 million children, only about 8 million children take advantage of the breakfast program. This disparity is less a function of individual household decisions to enroll than it is of the decisions of a number of schools not to participate in the breakfast program.

Additional federal food programs provide aid for infants and children, up to age five, of low-income mothers (WIC), for young children in day care facilities (Child and Adult Care Food Program), and for schoolchildren during the summer vacation (Summer Food Service Program). Federal food programs, then, cover children from birth to the end of public schooling. Evaluations of these programs suggest that they increase the nutritional intake and quality of food for participating children without reducing household expenditures on food. Participation in these programs among eligible children is not universal, however. Even for school lunch, an estimated 5 million to 7 million children who could be eating free or reduced-price meals are not doing so.

Other groups targeted by special programs include lactating women (WIC), the elderly (Nutrition Service Incentive Program, which helps fund Meals on Wheels and food served in senior citizen centers), and Native American families who live far from retail food outlets where the food stamp electronic benefit transfer may be used (Food Distribution on Indian Reservations).

Even with the combination of a comprehensively designed federal food assistance system and a network of private, nonprofit food providers, as many as 3.3 million households actually experienced hunger at some point in 2000. Complex eligibility rules for public programs, skimpy program benefits, lack of commitment to outreach, occasionally punitive administration, inadequate funding of nonentitlement programs like WIC, and fluctuations in private donations of food to charitable pantries and soup kitchens all mean that a system capable of eliminating hunger nevertheless works imperfectly.

Peter Eisinger

See also: Antihunger Coalitions; Food Banks; Food Stamps; Hunger

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Office of Economic Opportunity

See War on Poverty

Old Age

Throughout recorded history, people at advanced ages have felt helpless as strength waned and resources diminished. Many had to rely on family and neighbors for essentials. In the modern era, relief often came from public sources. In this context, a basic paradox characterizes the U.S. experience. Although older Americans were more likely to be economically vulnerable prior to 1935 than afterward, their fellow citizens paid scant attention to late-life poverty. Only after World War I, when senescence was equated with pauperism, did the nation begin to mobilize institutional support and enact policies (corporate, religious, labor, philanthropic, state, and federal) to ameliorate the situation.

Americans of all ages, not just the old, generally lived marginal existences during the first century of U.S. history. Only 49 percent of all adult males held property according to the First Direct Tax (1798), which inventoried every residence, barn, wharf, and mill in the country and set values for land in urban and rural areas. Economic inequality grew during the first decades of the nineteenth century (Soltow 1989, 41, 190). In 1850, only 40 percent of all adults over the age of twenty held any real property. Of the adult white population, 59 percent possessed no land. Economist Lee Soltow (1975, 22, 24) has stated that a third of the nation's population had only the clothes on their backs and the petty cash in their pockets. Intestacy was common: Many people died with nothing to distribute.

The risk of pauperism was not borne equally by all Americans. In terms of material wealth, those who tilled the soil probably were not God's chosen, as Thomas Jefferson declared in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787), yet as late as 1870, farmers were roughly twice as likely as nonfarmers to own property. Half of the adult males living in cities were poor (Soltow 1975, 34–35). Slavery denied African Americans the right to acquire or possess property. Despite some states' efforts to liberalize divorce and property laws in the 1840s, few married or single women owned businesses or property in their own name. Arriving without much money, most immigrants came to the United States ambitious to capitalize on opportunities unavailable in Europe or Mexico. America was extolled as a land of opportunity, particularly compared to Old World countries, where greater gaps existed between rich and poor. But few immigrants made fortunes approaching that of Andrew

Carnegie, the Scottish-born millionaire industrialist whose self-described rags-to-riches story became an emblem of the immigrant success story. (The top decile of U.S. property owners tended to be native-born men whose fathers had been well-to-do.) Business downturns, bad crops, disabilities, or just bad luck dashed middle-class citizens' hopes and dreams. Most Americans muddled through, content to improve prospects for their children.

That said, during the first century of U.S. history, most frugal, hardworking men did increase their wealth as they grew older. Individuals were most likely to acquire property between the ages of twenty and thirty. Cumulative increases in wealth were modest after the age of forty, but unless a tragedy (such as disability) required them to liquidate assets after middle age, older men typically retained the property they had acquired. Two-thirds of all men between the ages of sixty-five and sixty-nine held some real estate in 1870. (Thus one-third had none.) When no longer able to work, aged men transferred assets to obtain assistance. Women were more vulnerable than men to old-age poverty. So, too, were African Americans freed by masters unwilling to provide care for them in their declining years. Foreign-born persons who remained in the United States also risked a miserable old age, since they were less likely than native-born citizens to acquire property or secure better-paying jobs over their lives.

Such were the modal life-course patterns for ordinary people. Examining the latter years of some of the Virginia Dynasty underscores the fact that the hazards of economic misfortune threatened both rich and poor. George Washington was sixty-five when he left the presidency. He returned to his estate in Mount Vernon, which he had taken pains to maintain better than he had when he commanded Revolutionary soldiers. His land was rich and his properties were well located; he owned many slaves. Indeed, Washington was probably the second- or third-wealthiest man in the United States when he

Adult with Art Therapist (Laura Dwight)

died in 1799. Thomas Jefferson was not so fortunate. The nation's third president, after age sixty-five, devoted himself to civic projects, such as founding the University of Virginia, when he left the White House in 1809. Although he had been affluent in youth, chronic illness and financial reversals plagued him until his death at age eighty-two. Jefferson mismanaged assets. He lost money when crops and banks failed, land prices fluctuated, and personal notes were forfeited. Only his death in 1826 spared Jefferson from seeing his possessions auctioned off to cover bad loans and mounting debts. Five years later, Monticello was sold in disrepair (Peterson 1962, 380). James Madison, crippled with rheumatism, was confined to one room in his latter days. James Monroe had to sell his family estate in Albemarle, Virginia, to pay his debts. If even these venerable men faced financial ruin, it is little wonder that the specter of economic vulnerability—attributable to advanced age, declining health, financial losses, or all three—stalked their fellow citizens throughout their lives.

So what options existed for men and women in dire straits in their declining years? Census data indicate that most older people maintained independent households as long as possible. As late as 1895, only one-tenth of all native-born men and 13 percent of foreign-born males over the age of eighty in Massachusetts lived with strangers or were institutionalized (Achenbaum 1978, 76). Elderly women, in contrast, rarely were reported to be heads of households; roughly 70 percent lived with a child, a grandchild, or an in-law.

In keeping with tradition (and, in the colonial era, with British poor laws), the family was the primary source of charity to the aged. A 1692 Massachusetts Bay Colony act made kin legally as well as morally responsible for infirm and poor family members. By 1860, eighteen of the then thirty-three states had enacted measures to deal with dependency at all ages; another fourteen states had done so by 1914. None stipulated special provisions for the elderly, though Colorado, Kentucky, and Ohio made it a criminal offense not to care for an aged relative. Elder abuse doubtless was as prevalent in the past as it is today, yet most families made the necessary arrangements so that their parent(s) and grandparent(s) were not abandoned in old age.

Local communities were the next line of defense against poverty in old age for the elderly people legally residing in their jurisdiction (Haber and Gratton 1994, 118). Some places gave the aged poor food and firewood so that they could stay at home. Others bid out the needy to households willing to give them care economically. A few cities and counties erected almshouses to shelter anyone, including the old, who could not maintain his or her autonomy. Prior to the Civil War, men and women over sixty-five constituted about 16 percent to 25 percent of the almshouse population. As new institutions were created to care for the deaf, blind, orphans, and criminals, the percentage of older people in poorhouses soared: By 1910, roughly 45 percent of all native-born and 70 percent of all foreign-born almshouse inmates were at least sixty years old. Almshouses were notorious for their filth and sickness; going "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse," as Will Carleton wrote in a heart-wrenching poem (1871), was the option of last resort.

Religious groups and philanthropists offered alternatives to the public poorhouse. Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish congregations erected private facilities for the aged. Of the 1,200 such benevolent homes operating in 1939, roughly two-thirds were built between 1875 and 1919. As social work emerged as a profession, new regulations and standards for old-age homes went into effect. A few rich donors directed funds for the elderly. In 1905, through the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Andrew Carnegie set aside $10 million to ensure that college professors would be secure in their retirement. Benjamin Rose left $3 million in 1911 to assist the deserving, aged poor in Cleveland.

Some corporations (beginning with American Express in 1875) provided old-age pensions. They wanted to reward loyal aging employees and to ensure an efficient labor force. Yet by 1910, only sixty companies offered retirement plans—really gratuities, which were legally unenforceable. Unlike Britain, annuities attracted little interest in the United States. The American Federation of Labor, concerned with bread-and-butter issues for younger workers, voted against providing members old-age benefits in 1903. Thus only 1 percent of all American workers potentially had old-age-related benefits in 1914 (Achenbaum 1978, 83).

The major source of financial relief came from veterans' benefits. A U.S. Naval Home was established in 1833, a U.S. Soldiers Home in 1851. Elderly veterans of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Mexican-American War belatedly received land or money; in 1840, 3.7 percent of all surviving soldiers and their widows over age sixty received military pensions. Beginning in the late 1870s, the Grand Army of the Republic lobbied for aging Union soldiers. The number of pensioners rose from 126,772 in 1886 to 921,083 in 1910, with disbursements increasing commensurately from $60 million to $160 million. In 1912, Congress granted a pension to every Yankee veteran over age sixty-two who had served at least ninety days in the war. Military pensions constituted 18 percent of the federal budget a year later. As part of the Civil War Pension Acts, the Act of May 11, 1912, was consistent with the growing conviction, confirmed by medical researchers, that old age itself was a disability (Cole 1992, 190).

Investigators began to document the extent and causes of old-age dependency. Although other subjects, such as the plight of children, attracted more attention, William D. P. Bliss in *The New Encyclopedia of Social Reform* (1908, 849) pronounced old age to have become one of the two or three major causes of pauperism. Lee Welling Squier's *Old Age Dependency in the United States* (1912), a pioneering work, was followed by studies by Lucille Eaves, Abraham Epstein, Robert Kelso, and Alice Willard Solenberger. New York and Massachusetts commissioned surveys. By the eve of the Great Depression, six states had enacted old-age assistance measures. Despite these innovations, military pensions remained the major support for Americans over age sixty-five: 82 percent of all beneficiaries and 80 percent of all funds expended in 1929 came from this single source.

The history of old-age dependency in the United States changed dramatically with the enactment of the Social Security Act (1935). Its expansion and liberalization—as well as the enactment of Medicare, Medicaid, the Older Americans Act, and Supplemental Security Income—meant that a smaller proportion of old people than of children lived below the federal poverty line (Katz 2001, 39, 237). Corporate pensions and private savings strengthened the safety net. Rather than celebrating success in the war against old-age dependency, however, conservative critics in the 1980s began to excoriate "the Greedy Geezers" and to urge privatization of old-age welfare. How ironic, for without Social Security, two-thirds of the elderly in the United States would be poor.

W. Andrew Achenbaum

See also: Ageism; Health Policy; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Social Security Act of 1935; Supplemental Security Income; Townsend Movement; Veterans' Assistance; Welfare Capitalism

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Operation Breadbasket

In 1962, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) formed a subsidiary organization with the goal of putting "bread, money, and income into the baskets of Black and poor people." Operation Breadbasket used a number of different techniques to improve the low socioeconomic status of the Black communities in America, and, as it spread across the nation during the late 1960s, the program made concrete gains. Black consumers were organized to pressure companies to employ Blacks in proportion to their presence in the local population. In Atlanta, Georgia, the birthplace of Operation Breadbasket, their first large-scale campaign won a promise from local companies to create 5,000 jobs for Blacks over the next five years.

After initial organizing in the South, Chicago became the real hotbed of the organization's activities. Jesse Jackson helped found the Chicago chapter in 1966; his work there led Martin Luther King Jr., head of the SCLC, to appoint Jackson national director of Operation Breadbasket in 1967. The Chicago chapter's successes also indicate the extent of the challenge they confronted, for, though protests against local dairy and supermarket businesses to extract guarantees of future job creation and support for Black businesses did produce agreements with several large corporations, change was slow to come. It was not until 1970, when a second wave of demonstrations was launched to target the A&P supermarket chain (which had failed to deliver on its promise of 770 permanent and 1,200 summer jobs), that these guarantees began to be fulfilled.

Under Jackson's leadership, Operation Breadbasket became increasingly centered on Chicago and on Jackson's high-profile image. The program's focus expanded to cover a number of important projects, including running a free breakfast program and the Poor People's Campaign in Washington, D.C. (1968), battling against severe assaults on welfare spending, endorsing political candidates concerned with the needs of the Black community, and gaining space on local and national political agendas. In the face of these crucial initiatives, Operation Breadbasket was quickly overwhelmed, and by 1971, it was mired in obligations that simply overtaxed its already slight resources, as well as in charges of financial corruption. In addition, it was hindered by the perception that its orientation was more Chicago centered than national. Jackson finally left his position as head of Operation Breadbasket, dissolved its Chicago chapter, split from the SCLC, and formed Operation PUSH.

Operation Breadbasket continues to operate under the guidance of the SCLC, but on a much smaller scale than during the critical years of the 1960s. In its heyday, Operation Breadbasket allowed the Black communities of twelve major American cities to solidify the hard-won progress of the decade. By steadfastly boycotting and shaming companies that failed to employ Blacks in meaningful numbers, the program is estimated to have increased the income of the Chicago Black community by $2 million annually during the 1960s. And in seeking a proportional representation for Blacks in the workplace, the program's demands went well beyond subsequent affirmative action measures, which generally require only good-faith efforts to improve representation of minorities in workplaces and schools.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Black Panther Party; Civil Rights Movement; Poor People's Campaign

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Orphanages

For nearly a century, orphanages were one of the most prominent parts of charity in cities across the United States. They were built and managed by private religious and secular groups as well as by county and state governments, in the hope that they would rescue children from lives of

Constitution, By-laws, &c., of the Female Orphan Asylum of Portland, Maine (1828)

General Directions

From the first of April to the first of October, the Children shall rise at six o'clock, say their Prayers, wash themselves, comb their hair, make their beds, and clean their chambers; breakfast at seven; play or work in the garden until nine, when the governess shall read a chapter in the Bible and pray with them; attend school until twelve, dine at one, play until two, attend school until five, after which, play one hour. In the evening say their Prayers, go to bed at eight, wash their feet every night.

From the first of October to the first of April, the Children shall rise at seven o'clock, say their Prayers, wash themselves, comb their hair, make their beds and clean their chambers,—breakfast at eight, attend prayers, school and play hours as before. In the evening, say their Prayers, go to bed at Seven; and wash their feet once a week.

Source: From *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need,* ed. June Axinn and Herman Levin, 2d ed. (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1982), 79.

poverty. Though still rare in the early nineteenth century, orphanages spread rapidly as urban centers grew and as immigrants flowed into them before and after the Civil War. Despite the name "orphanage," many of the children living within orphanages in the mid-nineteenth century had at least one living parent. By 1900, there were almost 1,000 orphanages spread across the country, but even so there were never enough orphanage beds to care for all the children in need of a home. Most children who entered orphanages in the early twentieth century had a family of some sort to return to, and most did so within a few years, as the family recovered from the death, illness, or unemployment that had driven it deep into poverty. The number of orphanages began to decline in the 1930s with the creation of Aid to Dependent Children, which allowed many needy children to remain with their mothers. In the 1990s, a few new orphanages were built, but group and family foster care had become the primary placement options for children removed from a poor single parent as well as for poor orphaned children.

In the early 1800s, a handful of orphanages were founded in the United States, mostly in northeastern cities. As cities grew in the decades after the American Revolution, they became home to an increasing concentration of poor people. Colonial methods of taking care of one's neighbors broke down, and one of the results was that some extremely poor children, most of them orphans, lived on urban streets. Concern about this new social problem led some reformers, many them middle-class Protestant women, to open small homes to care for these orphans.

These early orphanages provided shelter, food, and other basic needs for the children within them. They were usually associated with a religion: Some were broadly Protestant, while others were associated with a specific Protestant denomination. Between 1800 and 1830, a number of Catholic orphanages also appeared, run by nuns and seeking to care for Catholic orphans.

Orphanages were very much an institution for the poor. Most children who lost their parents had other family members who were willing and able to take them into their homes. This was also true of many orphans from families of modest means, but families living in dire poverty were less likely than other families to have relatives who were able to care for their children. Children from poor and working-class families, from families in the emerging middle class, and from affluent families were all orphaned, but in general it was only the poorest orphans who wound up being raised in orphanages.

Between the 1830s and the 1860s, two developments led to the creation of several hundred more orphanages, making them an increasingly familiar sight in the American landscape. The first development was the rising tide of immigration to the United States during these years, especially from Ireland and Germany. America's cities swelled with immigrants, who ranged from unskilled workers with limited economic opportunity to families of some means who were able to start their own businesses. The second development was tragic: In the early 1830s and again in the late 1840s, severe cholera epidemics swept through many American cities. These epidemics were especially destructive to families in working-class and poor communities, which had the worst sanitation and whose residents had little opportunity to escape the city when cholera arrived.

Cholera left many children, especially in these growing urban immigrant communities, as either orphans or "half-orphans"—children who had lost one parent and still had one living parent. Churches responded to the cholera epidemic of 1832–1833 by building dozens of new orphanages. These orphanages were more likely to be Catholic than in the past (though many were Protestant), and they tended to be somewhat bigger than earlier orphanages. Whereas the first wave of orphanages had usually simply been houses, now orphanage managers tried whenever possible to actually build more institutional structures in order to accommodate dozens of children at once. The numbers of children served increased as many orphanage managers responded to the destitution of poor families by accepting "half-orphans" as well as orphans. A family might need to ask an orphanage to take children in because one parent had died, because the father had become too ill to work, or because the mother fell too ill to care for her child. In almost all instances, families came to orphanages as their last resort.

Religious and ethnic pride played an important role in the growing orphanage movement, especially after the cholera epidemic of 1849. Many Catholic asylums were built with the express purpose of "saving" their children from Protestant orphanages. Their supporters feared, with some reason, that when Catholic children had nowhere else to turn except to a Protestant orphanage, they would be converted; hence building Catholic orphanages to care for Catholic children was not only a way to save the children from poverty and a life on the streets but also a way to save their souls. As more and different ethnic groups arrived in America later in the nineteenth century and during the early twentieth century, the same sort of logic played out within the Catholic community. Newly arriving Italian or Ukrainian Catholics, for example, had to rely on Irish Catholic orphanages when children in their community needed help, and so it became a point of both pride and ethnic solidarity to build an Italian or Ukrainian Catholic orphanage. The same logic would play out over and over during the next seventy years, as various ethnic groups built their own institutions so that the poorest children from their community would be raised within both the religious and cultural traditions of the community.

Children in these institutions had places to sleep and food to eat. Whether they had emotional shelter, however, varied from institution to institution and from child to child. Most orphanage managers were far more concerned with raising children to have a certain kind of moral sense and to be hard workers than they were with protecting children's emotional or psychological health. Orphanage children were almost always raised in a religious setting. School was usually held within the orphanage itself, as much to further children's religious education and to develop specific values in children as to give them a formal education. (This did not make orphanage schools terribly different from public schools of the mid-nineteenth century, which also tended to care as much about providing a moral upbringing as about how well children learned their reading, writing, and arithmetic lessons.) Most orphanage children also spent a considerable portion of the day working at chores around the institution, which were seen as job training for their later lives. Girls tended to be trained to be domestic servants—receiving skills also expected to help them if they became wives—and boys were trained as farmers or in a specific skill such as carpentry.

The terrible destruction and destitution brought to many communities by the Civil War filled orphanages to the bursting point in the 1860s and 1870s and helped lead both to the construction of dozens of new orphanages and to the expansion of many older institutions to care for more children. State governments also became involved in orphanages in the decades after the Civil War. Both New York and California adopted systems in which the government helped pay for the support of children in orphanages in those states. Several states, most notably Ohio, developed systems of county-based public orphanages to care for orphans, half-orphans, and even destitute children with living parents but no feasible home. Michigan led a number of states in developing "state public schools" that served as temporary orphanages before placing children out in people's homes.

By the late nineteenth century, the majority of children in most orphanages had either one or two living parents. This created a problem for orphanage managers, who in many cases wanted to separate their wards from their former lives of poverty, assuming that the children's families had been to blame for their poverty due to immoral behavior (such as excessive drinking) or to not having a proper work ethic. Whereas orphanage managers wanted to raise children within their walls and possibly place them out with families other than their own, the surviving parents or other family members of orphanage inmates wanted to reunite with the children once their family was more stable financially. The end result was that most children left orphanages after a stay of between one and three years, and their most common destination upon leaving was to return to their own families.

Orphanages faced a rising tide of criticism in the decades before and after 1900. The heart of these attacks was the belief that orphanages raised "institutional" children who were moved through the day by bells, marched in silence from one place to another, and never taught the kind of decision-making skills they would need once they were on their own. Paralleling this critique was another charging that orphanage children did not receive the kind of emotional warmth that a family could provide, that orphanages, no matter how hard they tried, could never really be homes for children in the best sense of the word.

There was some truth to these accusations. Some orphanages were harsh places, many staff members were poorly paid and untrained, and various kinds of abuse might be heaped on children by either staff or older inmates. At the same time, these attacks on orphanages combined with changes in society to lead to a noticeable improvement in how orphanages cared for their children. By the early twentieth century, many orphanages were helping their children interact with the outside world in a way that would have been considered undesirable by orphanage managers a half century earlier. Orphanage children became more likely to attend public schools, to go on outings to the city or the countryside, and to join the new groups that were forming, such as the Boy Scouts. As time passed, they had more and more contact with the outside and were less likely to be isolated behind asylum walls, especially after 1900.

In the 1890s, a consensus among charity workers (not including orphanage managers themselves) slowly began to develop that poor families should be helped to keep their children. If that was not possible, this consensus held, children should be cared for in other people's homes in what is now called foster care; orphanages should be a refuge of last resort. In the second decade of the twentieth century, many states passed mothers' pension laws that helped some destitute mothers keep their children at home. This idea was turned into a joint federal-state program in the New Deal's Aid to Dependent Children program, thus allowing many children with the kinds of family and financial problems that would once have led them to an orphanage to stay at home. At the same time, growing state agencies concerned with dependent children turned to foster care because it was less expensive than orphanage placement and was also considered healthier for children. Although orphanages provided alternatives to home care when the Great Depression ravaged families, the end of the orphanage era was at hand. Over the next few decades, orphanages would virtually all either close their doors, become foster care agencies, or shift from taking in children whose main problem was poverty to taking in children with serious behavioral or medical problems. Although a few conservative politicians during the 1990s called for reviving orphanages as an alternative to welfare and although the number of homeless children has been steadily rising, no actual return to orphanages as temporary homes for destitute children has occurred.

Timothy A. Hacsi

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Catholic Church; Child Welfare; Child-Saving; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Foster Care; Homelessness; Immigrants and Immigration; Protestant Denominations; Urban Poverty

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The Other America, *Michael Harrington*

In 1962, Michael Harrington published a short book on what was, until then, an obscure topic: *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. He argued that there was an "invisible land" in the United States, consisting of 40 million to 50 million citizens whose income placed them below the poverty line: "the unskilled workers, the migrant farm workers, the aged, the minorities, and all others who live in the economic underworld of American life" (Harrington 1962, 2). This "other America" existed in rural isolation or in crowded urban slums where middle-class visitors seldom ventured. "That the poor are invisible is one of the most important things about them," Harrington wrote in his introductory chapter. "They are not simply neglected and forgotten as in the old rhetoric of reform; what is much worse, they are not seen" (Harrington 1962, 7).

Harrington's own background was far from that of the "other America" he described in his book. Born into a middle-class family in Saint Louis in 1928, he went on to graduate from Holy Cross College, attend Yale Law School, and receive a master's degree in literature from the University of Chicago, all by the time he turned twenty-one. But in 1951, his life took an unexpected turn when he joined Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker movement and spent two years caring for the poor in the Worker's "House of Hospitality" on New York's Lower East Side. Breaking with Catholicism, he joined the socialist movement, and by the early 1960s, he was a rising figure within the Socialist Party of America led by Norman Thomas.

Harrington's expectations for his book on poverty were modest; he hoped to sell at most a few thousand copies. Instead, the book went on to sell over a million copies and remains in print decades after its publication. *The Other America* awakened a generation of affluent Americans to the continued existence of a sizable population of poor people in the United States, and it helped spark the War on Poverty launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964.

Harrington's book also helped popularize the concept of the "culture of poverty." Poor people, he argued, were not simply confined to their status by inadequate incomes or bank accounts; rather, the poor were "people who lack education and skill, who have bad health, poor housing, low levels of aspiration and high levels of mental distress. . . . Each disability is the more intense because it exists within a web of disabilities" (Harrington 1962, 162). Harrington later came to criticize some of the uses to which the "culture of poverty" notion was put, especially by conservative opponents of social welfare programs. There is no question, though, that *The Other America* remains a landmark study of poverty in the United States. On the eve of the twenty-first century, *Time* magazine described it as one of the ten most influential nonfiction books published in the preceding century.

Maurice Isserman

See also: Catholic Worker Movement; Socialist Party; War on Poverty

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P

Pauperism

See Charity Organization Societies; Dependency; Poor Laws; *Poverty;* Society for the Prevention of Pauperism

Peace Corps

The Peace Corps is a federal agency, created in 1961, that sends American volunteers to poor and less-developed regions of the world to provide a range of educational, technical, and infrastructural assistance while also acting as unofficial goodwill ambassadors from the United States.

Americans "discovered" poverty abroad before they discovered it at home in the 1960s. The post–World War II decolonization of Africa and Asia, combined with competition for the support of these new nations during the Cold War, led the United States, Australia, Britain, and Canada all to develop youth volunteer programs to combat poverty in the third world.

President John F. Kennedy created the Peace Corps by executive order on March 1, 1961. He appointed R. Sargent Shriver (who would later go on to run the domestic War on Poverty) to head the agency, which became a popular symbol of Kennedy's "New Frontier." Within months, the Peace Corps began sending Americans abroad to work for two years in developing countries. Their purpose was to cement friendship with the third world, fight poverty, and promote peace. In doing so, the Peace Corps provided an opportunity for citizens to respond to the spirit of civic activism stimulated by the president when, in his 1961 inaugural address, he exhorted youth to "ask not what your country can do for you—but what you can do for your country." A key premise of the Peace Corps was that volunteers would live at the same level as the people whom they hoped to help, meaning that they would share the experience of poverty.

Sargent Shriver obtained authorization for the Peace Corps from Congress on September 22, 1961. The Peace Corps Act established three goals: "1) To help people of interested countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained manpower; 2) To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and 3) To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans" (Executive Order 10924, 1961).

The first volunteers went to Ghana in August 1961. Volunteers to twelve additional countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America followed immediately. There were 750 participants in the first year, and over 15,000 by 1965. Volunteers brought a wide range of professional skills

Peace Corps volunteers and villagers build a drinking-water well in Bihar, India, in 1967. (Library of Congress)

(from agronomy to zoology), but most were liberal arts graduates. They filled the largest program, which was elementary and secondary education. This component was strongest in Africa in response to the requests of recently decolonized nations. The Peace Corps also focused on community development, primarily in Latin America. This work, Kennedy believed, would help direct regional change into channels consistent with American strategic interests.

President Lyndon B. Johnson subsequently chose Shriver as the first director of the Office of Economic Opportunity because of his successful launching of the Peace Corps. To many, Shriver represented the potential for aggressive, optimistic leadership to produce quick results in the War on Poverty. In 1965, the Peace Corps became the model for Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), a domestic program that sent volunteers to poor communities in the United States, also started by the Johnson administration.

The Peace Corps declined in the late 1960s as U.S. policies in Vietnam created disaffection among American youth. By the end of the war, the agency had shrunk by more than 50 percent. The Peace Corps retained its humanitarian mission, however, and continued sending an average of 6,000 volunteers abroad annually. By the turn of the twenty-first century, more than 150,000 Americans had served in 133 countries at the request of those nations.

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman

See also: U.S. Agency for International Development (AID); Voluntarism; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA); War on Poverty

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Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

The Philadelphia Negro, *W. E. B. Du Bois*

In 1897, W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963) was given a temporary post in the sociology department at the University of Pennsylvania to conduct a social survey of the Black community in Philadelphia. Du Bois, the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, carried out a study dauntingly broad in scope. He intended to learn as much as possible about Black life in Philadelphia—everything from Blacks' occupational and home lives to their recreational activities and relations with white citizens. After canvassing nearly every household in the Seventh Ward of Philadelphia, Du Bois found that the Black population, which at the time of the study was about 40,000, represented a "city within a city," a segregated group of people continually beset with the insults and hardships of racial discrimination and abject poverty. The result of his research was *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), not only a detailed chronicle of Black living conditions but also a revealing analysis of the root causes of the chronic poverty encountered by households in the Seventh Ward.

Portrait of W. E. B. Du Bois. **The Philadelphia Negro** ***(1899) examined the root causes of the chronic poverty encountered by households in the Seventh Ward of Philadelphia. (Corbis)***

Du Bois's painstaking and detailed investigation produced a portrait of a diverse, institutionally complex community struggling, with only limited success, to gain a stable foothold in Philadelphia's industrial and service economy. Using concepts and methods that were innovative at the time and that have since become standard in sociological and economic analysis, he documented the complex interplay of historical struggle, demographic change, racist attitudes among whites and immigrants, and discriminatory institutional practices that effectively ghettoized African Americans and kept them at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. His fieldwork also revealed the existence of serious social pathologies and health concerns within the Black community. Illiteracy, crime, alcoholism, and pauperism were rampant, the infant mortality rate was alarmingly high, and Blacks suffered disproportionately from consumption, diseases of the nervous system, and pneumonia. Although showing some disdain for the "improvident" behavior of the lower classes, Du Bois challenged prevailing racist ideology to show that Philadelphia Blacks were largely not responsible for these dire conditions. These conditions were the result of a racist system that denied Blacks the opportunities whites enjoyed and took for granted.

Du Bois found that Philadelphia Blacks were especially hard-pressed to find and keep gainful employment. Regardless of their training or credentials, Blacks could rarely hope to find much more than menial work. Black men were generally denied clerical or supervisory work except under extraordinary circumstances, could not get teaching jobs except at a few of the Black schools in the city, and, largely because of blatantly racist union practices, could only hope to find skilled work temporarily. Opportunities for Black women were even more limited. The three options open to them were domestic service, sewing, and married life.

When a Black person was fortunate enough to find a job, his or her hard-earned place was always vulnerable to the caprices of the employer or the economy. Du Bois found that employers rated Black employees not by their individual performance but as members of a group employers believed had a poor work ethic and inferior capabilities. As a result, Black men routinely earned less money than white men in the same position. In addition to being saddled with low-level jobs and poor wages, Blacks were often compelled to pay higher rents for worse housing. And if they had any disposable income left to spend, they often received reluctant (or even hostile) service in many restaurants, hotels, and stores, as well as in theaters and other places of recreation.

The result of these countless insults and injuries, according to Du Bois, was a general discouragement and bitterness in the Black community, a feeling of hopelessness that often fueled crime, recklessness, and dependency. Du Bois's conclusions were groundbreaking, and his book would become a classic in social science literature. Du Bois would go on to become a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and a seminal voice on the problem of race in America.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: African American Migration; Poverty Research; Racial Segregation; Social Surveys; Urban Poverty

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Philanthropy

Philanthropy, literally "love of one's fellow man," involves organized giving for improvement or for some benevolent or altruistic purpose and is related to charity. Both involve the donation of money or the volunteering of time to others less fortunate or viewed as needing intervention or improvement, but charity also comprises informal mutual helping, especially among poor people and in ethnic and racial communities. Philanthropy implies formal organization and larger-scale giving than charity and is a more modern phenomenon. Its twentieth-century form, the philanthropic foundation, reflects the increasing systematization and bureaucratization of modern life. Foundations, like other charitable entities, are nominally private, but government acknowledges their contribution to the public good by granting incorporation and tax exemption. Rather than focusing on poverty and its associated problems, twentieth-century foundations have directed the majority of their philanthropy to health, education, and religion (in that order), with arts and cultural organizations a distant fourth and human service organizations far behind.

The main characteristic of philanthropy, and what distinguishes it from publicly funded programs, is its voluntarism and thus its quirkiness. Philanthropy stems from the ideals, beliefs, enthusiasms, and prejudices of the giver. What counts are the donor's intentions, not the objective qualities of the recipient. In contrast, state provision is based on a system of entitlement (although administration of funds may be discretionary). Philanthropic ventures take shape according to the ideals and goals of the funders rather than the needs of recipients.

In colonial America, the relief of poverty was an obligation of citizenship, for the English poor laws obliged the inhabitants of each township to tax themselves for the support of the poor living in their midst. Publicly funded poor relief continued alongside private philanthropy and in dynamic relationship to it. In the nineteenth century, responsibility for the destitute remained a public charge that poor law officials (trustees) met by constructing dozens of specialized institutions to care for the insane, orphans, and the disabled.

Philanthropy in this early period can be seen in the altruism of a few wealthy people who founded colleges or benevolent institutions, often named after them. But in Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia, the whole community developed philanthropic institutions for self-help and self-improvement, such as libraries and fire companies. Citizens also organized charitable institutions to aid the poor. Philanthropic efforts continued in the antebellum period, when wealthy white, urban elites, often inspired by evangelicalism and the ideal of stewardship, founded numerous charitable and benevolent associations that were then linked to one another in reform networks. Most scholars have focused on such philanthropy as part of the self-making of the middle and upper classes or as an arena for the reconstruction of Victorian class and gender relations. For example, Lori Ginzberg (1991) has described how unenfranchised middle- and upper-class women entered public work under the cloak of benevolence and care for their poorer sisters. However, few have attempted to assess the impact of this complex charitable intervention on poor families (exceptions are Gordon 1988 and Broder 2002).

Philanthropic ventures take shape under different historical conditions in different communities. In the era of Jim Crow and Black disenfranchisement (1877–1941), communities of color turned to private solutions when they did not receive their share of either government funding or mainstream philanthropic giving. Under the rubric of "self-help," "improvement," or "uplift," Black women organized to meet the critical needs of their communities. They raised funds to found institutions like Neighborhood House in Atlanta, or the Women's Improvement Club that supported Indianapolis's Flanner House, or Cleveland's Phillis Wheatley Association (Rouse 1989; Crocker 1992). This was philanthropy as reform politics, aimed to lift the race and elevate Black women as well as to meet the needs of communities ignored by segregationist politicians. Similarly, when Black Richmond, Virginia, banker Maggie Lena Walker gave $500 to activist-educator Nannie Burroughs, she engaged in philanthropy that was at once civic reform and racial uplift and a form of politics (Hine 1990, 76). In the ethnic and racial communities of Tampa, Florida, philanthropy also took many forms, from informal neighborly helping, to clubs and labor unions, to the benevolence dispensed by Anglo elites (Hewitt 1990).

Philanthropy underwent rapid change between the Civil War and the New Deal. While government continued its nominal obligation to support the "deserving poor," taxpayer-funded aid to the unemployed (called "outdoor relief") was stingy, erratic, and highly politicized. In New York City between 1875 and 1931, aid was cut off altogether in the name of reform. The primary response of philanthropy to the poor in this period was the charity organization society (COS), imported from England. Self-described reformers, COS advocates aimed to improve the administration of private charity using the model of the professionalizing field of medicine. They sought to base poor relief on the "scientific" diagnosis and treatment of need. The privately funded COS pioneered modern techniques of casework but opposed an expansion of welfare state responsibility, including mothers' pensions.

Foundation Philanthropy

Foundations were devised as a way to put private funds to public use while insulating the giver from direct appeals. Some were memorials created by the new rich and had perpetual funds dedicated to charitable or benevolent purposes. Modeled on business corporations but designed for public purposes, foundations were incorporated under state or federal law and administered by trustees appointed for life (Sealander 1997). The General Education Board (GEB) was set up by Standard Oil multimillionaire John D. Rockefeller Sr. (1839–1937) in 1903 to promote education in the United States "without distinction of sex, race or creed." The Carnegie Corporation was founded "by steelmaker Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919) to promote the advancement of knowledge" (Sealander 1997). Neither of those foundations focused primarily on poverty. Carnegie, who declared he would give away his entire fortune in his lifetime, made huge donations to world peace and to education: the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1905) and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (1911). Yet Carnegie's philanthropy also illustrates the personal and capricious character of philanthropy. Carnegie's gift of 2,800 libraries to communities across the nation showed he was more concerned about what he saw as cultural deprivation than about poverty. Rockefeller established several notable philanthropic foundations, including the Rockefeller Foundation (1911), for the "well-being of mankind throughout the world." His total philanthropic giving has been estimated at $245 million, but educational and health concerns, not poverty, absorbed the bulk of his giving.

It is difficult or impossible to gauge the impact on poverty of this vast spending. We know far more about the motivations of the givers than about the impact of their philanthropy. None of the major foundations adopted a goal of redistribution of wealth or viewed poverty as an economic problem. Foundation philanthropy nevertheless marked a significant response to poverty because foundations funded social science research and produced new knowledge about the poor, knowledge that was available to policymakers. When Margaret Olivia Sage (1828–1918) set aside $10 million in 1907 to endow the Russell Sage Foundation "for the improvement of the social and living conditions in the United States of America," she did not plan to give directly to the poor, but her foundation significantly advanced the study of poverty. It established the modern social work profession, funded innovative work on working families in the Pittsburgh district (the Pittsburgh Survey), and supported research on child labor, industrial relations, work accidents, housing, and consumer economics.

In the twentieth century, governments came to depend on foundation-supplied data on poverty and other issues. More recently, the foundations have become the institutional home of a sophisticated "poverty research industry" of sociologists, economists, and other experts, but the resulting data sometimes end up being used to frame policies that stigmatize the poor, especially poor women and people of color, rather than to construct better policies for poor families (O'Connor 2001).

Early-twentieth-century critics of foundations had feared them as “philanthropic trusts,” undemocratic accumulations of great power and wealth standing in the way of reform. Populist opposition again found a voice in the congressional Patman Committee, chaired by a populist congressman, Wright Patman (D-Texas), and active throughout the 1960s. The resulting Tax Reform Act of 1969 demanded more public accountability from foundations, compelled them to be more open, and required a 6 percent annual payout of assets. New foundations sometimes tackled problems of “poverty amid plenty” that older ones had ignored. The Ford Foundation, established in 1936 by carmaker Henry Ford (1863–1947) gave millions to education, culture, and the arts and millions more to developing nations. In the early 1960s, encouraged by the liberal reformism of the Kennedy administration, Ford Foundation officials cooperated with antipoverty coalitions in programs to end race-based poverty in America’s cities (Raynor 1999, 185; O’Connor 2001).

During the Reagan and Bush administrations of the 1980s and early 1990s, devolution of federal responsibility for social welfare to the states and cuts in government spending created pressure to shift responsibility for poverty from government to private philanthropy. By 1990, a huge nonprofit sector had developed, comprising by one calculation 8 percent of the gross domestic product and employing nearly 10 percent of the American workforce. In one year during the prosperous 1990s, Americans donated $143 billion to nonprofit organizations. Of this total, $109 billion was from individuals; $13 billion, from bequests; another $13 billion, from foundations; and $8 billion, from corporations (“Giving USA” 1998, 19–21). The size of this sector prompted conservatives to propose private philanthropy as a viable alternative to government for the delivery of social services. Religious organizations, they claimed, would do a better job serving the poor than government, and the retreat of government would release the pent-up charitable giving of the private sector. It is ironic that right-wing think tanks now support such “faith-based” (conservative evangelical) social agencies, for local, discretionary relief giving (direct service) was just the kind of retail philanthropy that foundations initially were designed to replace. Moreover, spending by nonprofits (“philanthropic spending”) supplements but cannot replace government spending. Economist Lester Salamon draws attention to a shift in the focus of nonprofit social service agencies away from the problems of poor people. “Fewer than 30 percent of the agencies surveyed reported that the poor constitute half or more of the agency’s clientele. By contrast, over half of the agencies reported serving few or no poor clients and over 60 percent of the resources went to the nonpoor,” he writes. This finding was true for the human services in general. Salamon also found that government programs targeting the poor were far more effective than nonprofit ones. He predicted that cuts in government funding, rather than prompting a corresponding increase in private spending on the poor, would produce a decline (Salamon 1992, 171).

Moreover, nonprofits today rely on direct government support for one-fourth of their income. Thus, spending on the poor is not a matter of either-or, either government or private; instead, the two sectors are interdependent, or “synergistic,” according to scholar Peter Dobkin Hall. Philanthropic giving for cultural and educational purposes—to found museums of art or concert halls, to support medical research, to fund colleges and schools—continues to exceed giving to the poor. Foundations continue to give far more to education and to scientific and medical research than to research on poverty and its associated problems: homelessness, unemployment, and low wages resulting from race or gender discrimination. New foundations created from the boom economy of the 1980s and 1990s include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Packard Foundation (with assets in 1999 of $17 billion and $13 billion, respectively), with the Pew Charitable Trusts and the

Eli Lilly and Company Foundation not far behind (Dowie 2002, 194). The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation philanthropy includes millions for AIDS research (*New York Times,* January 15, 2003). In January 2003, a donation of $8 million by auto insurance philanthropist Peter B. Lewis to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reminds us that philanthropy can be directed to liberal as well as to conservative ends.

Ruth Crocker

See also: Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Nonprofit Sector; Pittsburgh Survey; Poverty Research; Social Surveys

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Picturing Poverty (I) (1880–1960s)

Although images of poverty circulated in a variety of forms during the nineteenth century (in

Men gather in an alley called "Bandit's Roost" in Manhattan's Little Italy. Around the turn of the century, this part of Mulberry Bend was a notoriously dilapidated and dangerous section of the city. Photography by Jacob Riis. (Bettmann/Corbis)

chapbooks, penny magazines, and religious tracts), they are most commonly associated with what came to be known as the "social documentary" tradition of photography. Social documentary emerges at the intersection of a set of technical, economic, and political forces. The technical preconditions (emulsions capable of capturing movement, high-speed shutters, and the ability to reproduce photographs in books and newspapers) had coalesced by the late 1870s. We see the initial manifestation of a social documentary impulse in Great Britain. Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* was published in 1849–1850 with engravings drawn from Richard Beard's daguerreotypes. In 1868, photographer Thomas Annan was commissioned to document the slums of Glasgow, and by 1877, John Thomson had published *Street Life in London*, replete with images of the "crawlers" of Saint Giles. The technical innovations that allowed for the creation of images of the poor in situ coincided with the high point of Victorian-era industrialization and urbanization. These processes proved to be particularly unsettling in the United States, which had long held that its vast frontier would immunize it from the European "disease" of urban class conflict. This proved, of course, not

Jacob Riis,* An All Night Two Cent Restaurant, *1890 (Museum of New York)

to be the case, and in the period of intense industrialization following the Civil War, America's cities became home to an increasingly large immigrant working class.

This immigrant population transformed perceptions of the American city, or at least of its impoverished regions. Increasingly, the city was seen as a haven for disease (cholera, tuberculosis) and disorder (anarchism, labor organizing), even as the middle and upper classes were beginning their long march to the suburbs. The result was a growing spatial and psychological distance between the urban poor and the rich. This distance accounts in part for the frequent reliance on a quasi-colonialist rhetoric in nineteenth-century social documentary, in which the photographer casts himself as an intrepid explorer traversing the "dark continent" of East London or Lower Manhattan. The more sequestered and concentrated the poor became, the more imperative the demand to investigate, classify, and reveal them. This process of disclosure ran along a continuum from the dryly scientific (Charles Booth's seventeen-volume *Life and Labour of the People in London,* 1889–1903) to the frankly sensationalistic (Gustave Doré's *London: A Pilgrimage* or Charles Loring Brace's *The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years' Work among Them,* both 1872).

The social documentary tradition in America can be traced to the 1880s, when the Danish immigrant and police reporter Jacob A. Riis began using photographs of poor, mostly immigrant New Yorkers to proselytize for improvements in housing. Riis combined the quasi-scientific investigative approach pioneered by Mayhew with a finely tuned ability to excite his audiences' voyeuristic fascination with race and class "others." Making use of the new German technology of *blitzpulver,* "flash powder," Riis would often surprise his subjects while they

Lewis Hine,* Portrait of an Immigrant, 1915 *(Bettmann/Corbis)

were asleep or inebriated in dives and lodging houses. In order to galvanize public support, it was necessary for Riis to solicit the viewer's empathetic identification with the urban poor. At the same time, this humanitarian impulse was carefully balanced with a more self-interested appeal based on the potential threat (of crime, disease, and disorder) posed by immigrants confined in overcrowded tenements. We can identify a visual corollary for this frisson of danger in Riis's frequent use of the alley as a framing device. *Bandit's Roost* (1888) invites the viewer to enter the chaotic urban interior while simultaneously evoking a dangerous gauntlet, ringed by a phalanx of menacing slum dwellers.

Riis's lantern slide shows, newspaper articles, and books (for example, *How the Other Half Lives*, 1890) were part of a larger struggle to reform housing regulations in New York State, a struggle that led to the passage of the Tenement House Law of 1901. Fueled in part by the success of the tenement reform movement, New York's Russell Sage Foundation sponsored surveys of several American cities during the early twentieth century. In these projects, the overtly moralistic character of Victorian-era reform gave way to an environmentalist approach in which poverty was viewed as the product of a complex set of spatial and economic forces associated with city life. Early-twentieth-century surveys addressed a wide range of issues, from urban congestion to tuberculosis to women's labor to prison reform. All were seen as interrelated components of a larger social gestalt. The survey findings were presented in books as well as at public exhibitions that combined photographs, charts and graphs, dioramas, and models to generate support for specific legislative remedies. The rise of the survey methodology marks the transition to a professionalized approach to municipal reform. Riis's somewhat haphazard forays into the city, and his often-sensationalistic narratives of "the other half," were supplanted by more systematic techniques, epitomized by the six volumes of the Pittsburgh Survey of 1908.

The Pittsburgh Survey featured numerous photographs of the city's poor and working-class neighborhoods. Among the most powerful of these images were Lewis Hine's portraits of immigrant steelworkers. Whereas Riis was willing to indulge the not-so-subtle racism of his uptown audiences, Hine was determined to portray immigrants in a more dignified and compassionate manner. Although not immune to contemporary anxieties over the need to Americanize foreign-born workers, Hine's photographs (often borrowing formal conventions associated with art and middle-class portraiture) mark a significant break with the exoticizing stereotypes of his predecessors. At a time when immigrants were widely reviled in the press, Hine produced a series of photographs that portrayed new arrivals at Ellis Island not as parasitic

Lewis Hine,* Girl Worker in Carolina Cotton Mill, 1908. *(Corbis)

invaders but as more fully human, simultaneously hopeful and uncertain about their new lives in America. Hine was also active with the National Child Labor Committee, producing images of young workers in textile mills, mines, and factories throughout the United States during the second decade of the twentieth century. In his "work portraits" of the 1930s, Hine endeavored to show both men and women as skilled craftspeople, in control of complex machinery, at a time when Taylorist managerial literature portrayed the worker as little more than a brute laboring body.

By the early 1930s, America was entering the Great Depression. Beginning in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs represented the most sweeping political and economic reforms in the country's history. Among the groups hardest hit by the Depression were small farmers and farm laborers in the Midwest and the Southeast. The economic downturn, combined with an ongoing drought, forced tens of thousands of tenant families off the land in search of work. In 1935, the Resettlement Administration (RA) was established to coordinate New Deal rural relief, including debt adjustment programs, farm loans, and the creation of migrant camps and resettlement communities. In 1937, the RA became the Farm Security Administration (FSA). Roy Stryker, head of the "historical section–photographic" of the agency's Information Division, was respon-

Dorothea Lange, An eighteen-year-old mother and migrant agricultural worker from Oklahoma. Imperial Valley, California, ca. February–March 1937. (Corbis)

sible for commissioning images documenting the progress of New Deal agricultural programs. These were distributed free of charge to mainstream picture magazines, newspapers, and book publishers. Stryker recruited a remarkable team of young photographers, many of whom would go on to have distinguished careers in photojournalism and art, including Jack Delano, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, Carl Mydans, Gordon Parks, Arthur Rothstein, Ben Shahn, John Vachon, and Marion Post Wolcott. Despite the severity of the Depression, FDR's policies remained deeply unpopular with many business and corporate leaders, who viewed them as dangerously socialistic. As a result, the FSA historical section under Stryker functioned as a kind of publicity office. It was necessary to provide photographic proof of both the severity of rural poverty and the efficacy of government programs designed to ameliorate it. This dual mission is reiterated in FSA imagery that shows, on the one hand, scenes of deserted farms and malnourished children and, on the other, images of happily "rehabilitated" FSA clients.

The relationship between the FSA and the rural poor was, however, somewhat more complex than this description suggests. Rural poverty was the result not simply of drought and depression but also of a larger process of agricultural modernization involving widespread mechanization and the centralization of farm ownership. For Stryker, the proper role of the government was not to retard the displace-

Arthur Rothstein, 1936. A farmer and his sons flee from an approaching dust storm in Oklahoma. (Library of Congress)

ment of tenants and sharecroppers but to rationalize it, to replace a process that was haphazard and chaotic with one that was orderly and humane. Farm families would be gradually adjusted to urban and suburban life through resettlement camps, job training, and Greenbelt incubator communities. Thus, despite the frequent paeans to America's yeoman farmer evident in New Deal literature and imagery, one of the primary effects of FSA policies was to further undermine small family farms. Stryker's photographers, who could observe the contradictions of FSA policies firsthand, tended to view the rural poor less as an inchoate mass to be managed and "rehabilitated" by the state than as individuals struggling through a traumatic and bewildering period in their lives. This movement between specificity and abstraction, between the immediacy of the photographic exchange and the pages of *Life*, was a frequent point of tension between Stryker and photographers, such as Dorothea Lange, who resented having their captions cut and their images edited to suit the shifting exigencies of FSA publicity and mass-circulation picture magazines.

The FSA was absorbed into the Office of War Information in 1943. It would be more than two decades before the photographic image would again play such a central role in debates over poverty and public policy. In his 1964 State of the Union address, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared "unconditional war on poverty," launching a plethora of programs and new federal agencies. Although there was some concern with the rural poor during the early 1960s, urban poverty, especially among African Americans, was the defining issue of Great Society–era public policy. The linkage to policy is most evident in a series of official commission reports produced in the aftermath of the riots that rocked America's cites between 1964 and 1968. The Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots of 1965 published more than a hundred photos of the riot along with a color-coded map of deaths and property damage, evoking the lurid sensationalism of a Victorian penny dreadful. The 1967 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders was more sober, closer in tone to the Russell Sage Foundation's urban surveys, but the voyeuristic quality of the descriptions and photographs remained. By the 1960s, the inner city was a mysterious place to most white, middle-class Americans, and the photographic image was again called upon as a vicarious witness for viewers who were simultaneously fascinated and repelled by the spectacle of urban poverty. The riot reports, along with an ancillary literature of histrionic picture books and novels (*Anarchy Los Angeles*, *The Siege of Harlem*, and *Burn, Baby, Burn!*), generated an iconography of poverty that was both new and familiar, as Italian immigrants crowded into New York City tenements were replaced by African Americans crowded into the public housing projects of Chicago and Los Angeles. The reports reiterate the complex calculus of compassion and self-interest, fear of insurrection and outrage at the conditions that might spawn it, evident in Riis's work of almost a century before.

Grant H. Kester

See also: Child Labor; Dust Bowl Migration; Great Depression and New Deal; *How the Other Half Lives; Hull-House Maps and Papers;* Kerner Commission Report; *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men;* New Deal Farm Policy; Pittsburgh Survey; Social Surveys; *Survey* and *Survey Graphic*

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Picturing Poverty (II) (1960s–Present)

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, there were 32.9 million poor people living in the United States in 2001, and 22.7 million of them were white. These 22.7 million people accounted for slightly less than 10 percent of all whites. By contrast, 22.7 percent of Blacks and 21.4 percent of Hispanics were poor. In addition, 40.7 percent of the poor lived in central cities, as compared to 28.9 percent of all people in the United States. These data demonstrate that while there are more poor whites than nonwhites, Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be poor, and poor people are more likely to live in urban areas. For many observers, these numbers describe a particular type of poverty that since the 1960s has become equated primarily with Blacks in a national discourse that often treats poverty and Blackness as synonymous. What began as an attempt to understand the seemingly intractable and highly concentrated poverty of Black inner-city communities from a range of perspectives had, by the 1990s, used the iconography of the ghetto not only to make poverty urban and Black but also to remove the majority of the poor from the national gaze. This partial picture of poverty came to tell a universal story of pathological behavior according to the norms and mores of a "culture of poverty" that eschews waged work, embraces crime, and exhibits family dysfunction. Trends in labor force participation and welfare receipt, in criminal offending and incarceration, and in the numbers of single-female-headed households bolster the connection between race and poverty that these "underclass" communities have come to represent. Based on this racialized picture of poverty, most Americans now support antipoverty initiatives aimed at reducing welfare dependency and crime, encouraging the formation of two-parent families, and discouraging extramarital childbearing.

Beginning in the 1960s, a number of events helped link race and poverty. Buoyed by recent legal victories intended to end racial segregation in public education, the civil rights movement pursued a racial justice mandate that included employment, housing, and access to voting for a population that was disproportionately poor. Urban rebellions from Watts to Newark further solidified this link, since much of the assessment of what had caused the riots and many of the recommendations for avoiding similar outbreaks in the future spoke directly to the need to address inner-city poverty. Moreover, research and studies from all political and ideological positions were influential not only in determining what social welfare policy should be but also in painting a picture of the poor, a picture that was largely urban and Black. Consequently, as the 1970s commenced, the prevailing picture of U.S. poverty featured single Black women and their dependent children in "matriarchal" families and communities and supported by government largesse. Although many Black single mothers were among the working poor, a significant number relied on government assistance to make ends meet.

According to the prevailing narrative of Black poverty, "matriarchal" families had been abandoned by husbands and fathers who were in turn replaced by government. Some contended that poor Black men's emasculation began with slavery, continued as a by-product of an understandable but unfortunate cultural adaptation, and was exacerbated by government programs that required them to be absent if their families were to be eligible for aid. The story continued: Without strong ties to familial dependents—who chose to rely on public assistance rather than on the work effort of individual men—these men opted for intermittently interrupted inner-city idleness. The only responsible adults to be found in these inner-city communities, it was thought, were the selfless matriarchs who had come to realize they were better off partnering with the government than with the poor men with whom they had children.

Although matriarchs were assumed to exist without adult men, there were other poor Black mothers whose presumed sexuality compromised their claims to public assistance. The fitness of their parenting and the suitability of their homes were questioned because of their relationships with men who were neither their legal husbands nor the biological fathers of their children. Many such women successfully maintained the division between their roles as mothers and as adult women engaged in consensual heterosexual relationships as they challenged the presumption that certain aspects of the latter necessarily compromised their ability to perform the duties of the former.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the matriarch and the sexual mother morphed into the welfare queen in public imagery. She was portrayed in political rhetoric and popular media as an irresponsible and immoral baby-making machine who defrauded the government, whether by collecting cash assistance to pay the note on her Cadillac or by having more children to collect more cash assistance. Unlike the selfless matriarch, she used welfare to finance her own conspicuous consumption at the expense of her dependent children. Like the sexual mother, she relied on the government for economic assistance while maintaining relationships with a series of men who eventually fathered more children they neither would nor could support. Unlike both the matriarch and the sexual mother, this popularly imagined welfare queen was apparently unable to raise her children, whom she unleashed to wreak havoc on her community and society. She also tied welfare to crime, for it was widely believed that she scammed the system, feigning need and taking money for nothing. The neoconservatism of the 1980s branded this welfare queen as willfully pathological and in need of a complete cultural, moral, and behavioral overhaul. She was responsible not only for the micro-dysfunction of herself and her family but also for the macro-dysfunction plaguing the increasingly marginalized inner-city communities in which she lived. She taught daughters to expect a life of government checks, baby daddies, and no marriage. She turned sons out onto the streets in search of male role models, for whom babies and baby mothers were unquestionable signs of virility and manhood. The availability of welfare was thought to retard the work ethic of "the underclass," plunging them deeper into the pathological culture of poverty. The imagery of the welfare queen, her family, and her community was indispensable to linking race, gender, class, and crime in the dominant national picture of poverty.

The poor were criminalized in two related ways. First, being visibly poor was seen as criminal because it was thought to be caused by conscious and deliberate choices to act in ways that were out of step with mainstream norms and mores regarding wage work, family structure, and reproduction. The high rates of unemployment, single-female-headed households, and extramarital childbirth in poor communities were thought to be driven by the culture of poverty, the mere adherence to which was deemed criminal. Second, visibly poor communities (particularly those in urban areas) were seen as dangerous public spaces that engendered criminals and criminal behavior. In this way, criminality and poverty were merged so that welfare rights and welfare participation were believed to facilitate pathological, poverty-causing behavior.

The merging of criminality, culpability, and poverty allowed the implementation of punitive measures and programs whose primary goal was to end the pathology of poverty by modifying behavior. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, the federal government granted states waivers from federal welfare program requirements to enable them to experiment with stipulations and rules affecting reproduction, family structure, and waged work. Many of these experiments became codified in the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which relied heavily on the imagery of the Black inner city to support the criminalization of "the underclass" and its culture of poverty. Central to these punitive measures were stereotypes of the welfare queen, her man and her progeny, all of which seemed to justify making receipt of aid subject to conditions that would further stigmatize welfare receipt and demonize welfare recipients. The racialized picture of poverty that emerged made it easier to blame the poor for their poverty, linked poverty and criminality in ways that seemed to justify increasingly harsh measures intended to force the poor to behave differently, and allowed the government to substantially relieve itself of both obligations to the poor and responsibility to mitigate poverty. Despite the specificity of the Blackness on which this picture relies, the alleged pathology now transcends race to justify punishing those racial transgressors who choose to act like the Black and inner-city poor of "the underclass" (Crooms 2001).

Lisa A. Crooms

See also: African Americans; Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Family Structure; Kerner Commission Report; Moynihan Report; 1940s to Present; Picturing Poverty (I); Racism; *Regulating the Poor;* "Underclass"; Urban Poverty; *The Vanishing Black Family;* Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Pittsburgh Survey

Between 1907 and 1908, over seventy well-known social scientists, including Paul Kellogg, Florence Kelley, John R. Commons, Peter Roberts, Crystal Eastman, and Robert Woods, conducted an extensive social survey in Pittsburgh and nearby Homestead, Pennsylvania. The area seemed an ideal location for a thorough social survey because of the local prominence of the iron and steel industries. The project received generous funding from the Russell Sage Foundation. Between 1909 and 1914, the researchers published six large reports detailing their work, illustrated by photographs, including some by Lewis Hine. Four of the monographs focused on job accidents, on the steel industry, on mill-town life, and on low-paid female workers. The other two books collected essays on working conditions in the factories and on corruption in the local government.

Like other reformers of the Progressive Era, the survey team criticized the overwhelming influence of corporations on American life, blaming them for endangering the health and welfare of employees, damaging the environment, and corrupting local government. Although they blamed the iron and steel industries for most of Pittsburgh's social problems, the reformers also viewed Americanization of immigrant workers as an important aspect of civic improvement.

The Pittsburgh Survey was in many ways a major achievement in Progressive Era social investigation: multidisciplinary, methodologically sophisticated yet conducted with the participation of volunteers from the community and social welfare practitioners, and pitched to a broad general readership. It also served as a model for hundreds of community-based surveys in localities across the country. In other ways, however, the survey fell short of its most ambitious goal: reforming the city of Pittsburgh. Although the survey's authors believed they had provided city leaders an objective, clear-eyed overview of urban problems that needed attention, local city boosters and the press resented what they perceived as an overly negative portrait. Some of the survey investigators were also unable to transcend their own cultural biases to write about the immigrant workforce without stereotype and condescension. Still, the Pittsburgh Survey anticipated major urban reforms of the twentieth century, and it remains significant as a resource for studying the social conditions of early-twentieth-century industrial workers.

The excerpt below comes from an essay by Paul Kellogg, chief researcher of the survey.

Sarah Case

See also: Americanization Movement; Philanthropy; Poverty Research; Social Surveys; *Survey* and *Survey Graphic*

By minute specialization of jobs, by army-like organization, by keeping together a staff of highly paid regulars at the top, the industries of Pittsburgh are independent of the rank and file. Two-thirds of the steel workers are unskilled immigrants, and thousands of them in their ignorance of English are as uncomprehending as horses, if we may judge by the kind of Gee! Whoa! and gesture commands that suffice for directing them. Specialization, elimination, speeding up,—these are inherently the aims of Pittsburgh business men, and the methods that turn out tons of shapes for the skilful [sic] workers of other cities to put into finished products. Without its marvelous framework of organization, eliminating dependence on personality in the masses and thereby rendering personality more indispensable in the captains, it would be impossible for Pittsburgh to convert its stream of labor into the most productive labor power known in modern industry. Large rewards for brains,—to overseers, manager's foremen, bosses, "pushers," and gang leaders in descending scale; heavy pressure toward equality of wages among the restless, changing, competitive rank and file,—these are the principles which Pittsburgh applies to the distribution of the wealth in the production of which she holds supremacy.

Source: Paul Underwood Kellogg, ed., *Wage-Earning Pittsburgh* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1914; reprint New York: Arno Press, 1974), 117.

Piven, Frances Fox

See Regulating the Poor; Welfare Rights Movement

Politics and Federal Policy

The politics and political processes of poverty and social welfare in the United States are linked to partisan politics; to labor, civil rights, antipoverty, and women's movements; to local, state, and national politics; and to legislative, administrative, and judicial politics. In addition, debates about poverty and social welfare are deeply racialized and gendered, that is, closely tied to racial and gender inequalities in income and political power, to gender and sexuality norms, and to ambivalent attitudes toward assistance to the poor and toward programs in aid of racial minorities.

The foundations of contemporary poverty politics were laid by the New Deal legislation of the 1930s. Up to that point, most antipoverty programs were administered by voluntary organizations, and the main sources of relief were almshouses or workhouses. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some reformers advocated transforming the Civil War pension system into a universal system of benefits for "workingmen and their families." Others, notably women's organizations, advocated instead the nationalization of the mothers' pensions that many states had implemented (Skocpol 1992). There was little development of either option until the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression forced poverty onto the national agenda. The Depression left over one-quarter of the American workforce unemployed, and unemployment rates were even higher among African Americans; in 1930, 50 percent of Blacks were unemployed.

President Herbert Hoover attempted to stimulate the economy with subsidies for industry, and private charities and local governments tried to assist the needy and the unemployed. However, none of these programs ended the Depression, and groups of unemployed people pressed for national relief. When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1932, he promised a "New Deal" to provide Americans with security from "the cradle to the grave." Beginning in 1933, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) provided direct relief in the form of cash assistance, while the Civil Works Administration provided work relief (Patterson 1994). By 1935, however, the "dole" (or "handouts") had come under increasing criticism. The 1935 Social Security Act, therefore, distinguished between employable and unemployable recipients and made "social insurance" rather than welfare the main tool for combating poverty. The act laid out a four-part system of general assistance, work relief, categorical aid, and social insurance, providing old-age insurance and unemployment compensation, as well as Old Age Assistance and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) for those outside the labor force. In addition to distinguishing between "deserving" and "undeserving" needy people, the law codified the regulation of women's personal lives, for ADC allowed states to tie eligibility for aid to such criteria as the "suitability" of the home and the "propriety" of the parent. Such criteria also amplified the ability of officials to discriminate based on race (Mink 1990).

Many New Deal policies responded to the increasingly strong and vocal labor movement. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 enacted the first federal minimum wage, and the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) granted workers the right to organize unions and to bargain collectively. Along with unions, civil rights and women's organizations also helped shape the New Deal. However, because the legislation was passed by a coalition of northern and southern Democrats, there were many racial inequities in New Deal programs. For example, neither the NLRA nor Social Security covered occupations commonly filled by Blacks, such as agricultural and domestic workers. Consequently, approximately two-thirds of Black workers were not initially covered (Hamilton and Hamilton 1992). Similarly, the FLSA and Social Security excluded many occupations dominated by women, such as many retail clerks and seasonal workers. In addition, women's entitlements and exclusions were tied to their roles as mothers, assumed their heterosexuality, and perpetuated their economic dependence on men. For example, the National Economy Act of 1933 legislated that a husband and wife could not both work for the federal government, including in work programs. Because men's salaries were higher, many women quit or refused federal jobs (Mink 1990). In addition, the categories of assistance that Blacks were eligible for were left to the discretion of state workers. Often, especially in the South, Blacks were therefore denied assistance. Nonetheless, the association of the Democratic Party with the antipoverty programs of the era precipitated a move by Black voters from the Republican Party, "the party of Lincoln," to the Democratic Party, "the party of the New Deal."

In the two decades following World War II, policymakers devoted scant attention to poverty, and the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act reduced much of the labor movement's power to press for economic reforms. Still, Social Security retirement pension coverage was expanded in the postwar era, the federal share of contributions to ADC was increased, cash assistance was extended to caregivers (usually mothers), and disability insurance was added to Social Security (Patterson 1994).

When John F. Kennedy was elected president in 1960, he owed his victory in several states to Black voters. Kennedy took office in the midst of rising civil rights activity and increased attention among civil rights activists to economic issues such as housing, jobs, welfare, and education (Quadagno 1994). Rather than confronting civil rights for Blacks directly and risking alienating white southern Democrats, however, Kennedy initiated antipoverty programs including the Manpower Development and Training Act (1962), which actually benefited whites more than it did Blacks.

Kennedy's assassination cut short his antipoverty endeavors. When Lyndon B. Johnson assumed office, he made poverty and civil rights domestic priorities. In 1964, Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), intended to address juvenile delinquency, civil rights, job training, and education. This law was the foundation of Johnson's War on Poverty and included such programs as Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Job Corps, College Work Study, and Head Start. In a significant departure from previous policy, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) delegated authority to community action agencies to achieve "maximum feasible participation," to empower community organizations, and to attenuate the ability of local officials to discriminate against Blacks in the distribution of benefits. However, the level of community involvement ranged widely, from Chicago, where the Community Action Program (CAP) was controlled by Mayor Richard J. Daley's political machine, to Newark, where civil rights activists used the CAP to challenge the municipal government (Quadagno 1994). Moreover, funding for OEO was never adequate and was further reduced as opposition among local officials grew and spending for the Vietnam War increased.

Advocates also used the courts to establish rights for the poor. In 1968, *King v. Smith* (392 U.S. 309) struck down rules that denied benefits to the children of women who had sexual relationships, and *Shapiro v. Thompson* (394 U.S. 618 [1969]) struck down residency requirements for welfare benefits as abridging constitutional rights to interstate travel. *Goldberg v. Kelly* (397 U.S. 254 [1970]) upheld due process standards, mandating hearings for the termination of welfare benefits (Mink 1998). *Dandridge v. Williams* (397 U.S. 471 [1970]) sought unsuccessfully to make an equal protection argument against maximum grant limitations on family benefits.

Combined with direct action by groups such as the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), the court successes helped to liberalize rules for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC, formerly ADC) and other benefits, increasing participation in welfare. Between 1961 and 1971, the number of individuals enrolled increased from 3.5 million to 11 million (Mink 1998). President Richard M. Nixon took office as this welfare rights movement was in full swing. Although Nixon abolished the OEO, he expanded the food stamp program, supported increases in Social Security, and added benefits for people with disabilities (Quadagno 1994). In addition, he proposed a Family Assistance Plan (FAP) that would have guaranteed a minimum income to low-income families while encouraging work. Though some hailed this proposal as a great improvement, it was very controversial, mainly because Nixon intended it to forge a coalition between southern conservatives and white working-class voters in the North. By the time of its demise in 1972, the FAP was opposed by southern conservatives, welfare activists such as the NWRO (which thought benefit levels were too low), and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

When Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in 1981, he abolished or severely cut funding for many of Johnson's War on Poverty programs, including CAP, the Legal Services Corporation, and school lunches. He also tightened eligibility requirements for AFDC and food stamps, capped state spending for Medicaid, and cut the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act and federal subsidies for housing. In 1982, Congress made further cuts, increased workfare provisions, and further tightened AFDC eligibility requirements. Though poverty rose to the highest levels since 1963, participation in programs fell.

In addition to such cuts, the Reagan administration fomented public opposition to welfare by deploying racialized and gendered stereotypes such as that of the "welfare queen" who rides around in a Cadillac (Imig 1996). Liberal policymakers, though generally supportive of public assistance, did little to combat these stereotypes. In addition, Reagan-era cuts had rendered many welfare programs, in particular AFDC, less effective at lifting people out of poverty. By the late 1980s, there was a growing consensus that welfare had to be "reformed." In 1988, Congress passed the Family Security Act. Although the new law did not address the depreciation in the value of benefits, it imposed new education, training, or work requirements and toughened paternity and child support conditions (Amott 1990).

The effort to "reform" welfare gained momentum in 1993 when President Bill Clinton took office promising to "end welfare as we know it." When the Republican Party won a majority in the House of Representatives in 1994, Speaker Newt Gingrich unveiled a ten-point "Contract with America." Among the items on this agenda was reforming AFDC. Though Clinton did not support many of the provisions in the Republican-sponsored bill, in 1996 he signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). This law ended AFDC, replacing it with the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

The TANF program made major changes in welfare. It ended the entitlement status welfare had held since the *King v. Smith* decision, imposed five-year time limits on benefits, and added work requirements, more restrictions on pursuing education while on public assistance, and an emphasis on marriage. The PRWORA also devolved many decisions to the states. Although the federal government sets key standards, states have the discretion, for example, to demand that recipients work outside the home earlier than required by federal law, to establish stricter time limits, to deny benefits if recipients fail to establish paternity, to deny certain benefits to noncitizens, and to require drug testing of recipients (Mink 1998).

In spite of the impact of the 1996 reforms on women and people of color, few feminist, African American, or Latino organizations and leaders made opposition to the PRWORA a priority (Mink 1998; Williams 1998). Six years later, however, women's, civil rights, and antipoverty organizations actively engaged debates surrounding the reauthorization of the TANF program. With grassroots groups, these organizations have spearheaded efforts against Republican calls for tougher work requirements and for marriage promotion programs. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender groups have also begun to work on welfare issues, addressing the fact that marriage promotion and paternity-establishment policies assume that all recipients are heterosexual.

Dara Z. Strolovitch

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Homophobia; Racism; Sexism; Social Security Act of 1935; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement

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Poor Laws

"Poor laws" is a term that refers to the collection of legal statutes, principles, and policies—including criminal penalties—that societies establish to regulate the behavior of poor people and to establish rules and restrictions for providing aid to the poor. Although poor laws have varied throughout history and in different countries, the Anglo-American poor law tradition has been singularly pronounced and enduring and continues to have a profound influence on social policy and politics to this day.

The English poor laws date back to a period of acute labor shortage in fourteenth-century England, during which the Statute of Laborers (1349) was passed prohibiting the giving of alms to "sturdy beggars" as a way of forcing those considered able-bodied to work (Trattner 1984). The prohibition, however, was continued even when labor was in surplus. It was recognized that certain categories of the poor were legitimately outside the labor market—the aged, the impotent, the sick, the feeble, and the lame. At first, the "worthy poor" were given licenses to beg in designated locations; later, publicly gathered alms were provided so they would not have to beg. The able-bodied, those "lusty or having limbs strong enough to labor," were kept in "continual labor." The various provisions were codified in the Elizabethan Poor Law (1601): The able-bodied must work, and the family was primarily responsible for the welfare of its members; relief was for community residents, not strangers (and under the 1662 Settlement Act, paupers could be forcibly returned to their original places of residence), and was administered at the local level, usually by the parish, and by established members of the community designated as "overseers" of the poor.

The foundational poor law distinction between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor served a number of purposes. It aimed to save taxpayers money, never a minor consideration in welfare policy. It served to validate basic values. "Pauperism," the failure of the able-bodied to support themselves and their families without recourse to charity or public assistance, was designated a *moral* failure. Moreover, this moral failure was multidimensional. It was usually linked with other forms of deviant behavior—intemperance, vice, criminality, sexual promiscuity, or illegitimacy, all often imbued with racial and ethnic overtones. The goal of the English poor law principles was to ensure that the able-bodied did not slide into "pauperism." At the same time, by making provisions for public relief, they sought to stave off the threat of mass uprising in the face of widespread hunger and want. These basic English poor law principles significantly shaped welfare policy in colonial North America, and by the mid-seventeenth century, several colonies had enacted poor laws patterned after English legislation.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, welfare in both England and the United States was in one of its periodic "crises." Underlying this sense of crisis were increasingly visible signs of poverty as both countries experienced periodic economic downturns, rapid urbanization, and industrialization along with the accompanying rises in the relief rolls, in perceived threats to the social order, in higher public relief expenditures, and in concerns about the supply of labor. Sidestepping the more fundamental roots of poverty, critics instead focused their energies on the poor laws themselves, which became subject to sustained reform campaigns on both sides of the Atlantic. The problem, as early reformers saw it, was that welfare was too difficult to administer in the field and had become too lax. Moreover, building on the ideas of English cleric Thomas Malthus, reformers argued that public relief only compounded the problems of poverty and pauperism by shielding the lower classes from the consequences of their own (mis)behavior and, in effect, encouraging them to have children and remain idle without suffering the consequences. By the 1830s, reform activism had culminated in important policy shifts, embodied in the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 in England and the wave of poorhouse construction in the United States. "Outdoor relief" was to be abolished. Henceforth, relief would only be given within the confines of the poorhouse. According to the logic of the reformers, the threat of being sent to the poorhouse would deter the able-bodied from seeking public assistance by making it contingent upon the loss of liberty and confinement in miserable conditions. Those who could not work still had to go to the poorhouse. Thus, the "deserving" poor were held "hostage" in order to enforce deterrence (Katz 1986, 32).

Eventually, the poorhouse reform movement proved too costly, cruel, and ineffective to sustain, and it was replaced by the presumably more humane doctrine of scientific charity. Nevertheless, the basic principle of the original poor law—and especially its distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor and its imperative to uphold the work ethic—remained. Charity, the new generation of poor law reformers argued, had several advantages over public assistance. Charity would be uncertain and up to the discretion of the donor, thus not weakening the work ethic. Moreover, private charities were more resistant to political pressure to liberalize benefits and more effective in exerting "those moral and religious influences that would prevent relief from degenerating into a mechanical pauperizing dole" (Trattner 1989, 86). Although the proposed measures were clothed in new theory, the assumptions as to the causes and cures of poverty remained the same. The task was to keep the poor from starving without breeding a class of paupers who chose to live off the public rather than to work. The goal of relief, therefore, was not primarily to relieve misery but rather to preserve—and enforce—the work ethic (Handler 1995, 17–20).

The Development of the American Welfare State

The poor law tradition continued to influence social provision through the early development of more systematic state and federal government policies, which continued to keep a careful check on aid recipients even as they gradually expanded the reach of public assistance. The characteristic feature of the American welfare state is its categorical nature: There are separate, distinct programs for specific categories of the poor. Categories began to develop in the nineteenth century with the start of separate state institutions for the blind, the deaf, and the insane. Next, institutions were created for poor Civil War orphans; they were not to be treated with the general mass of poor at the local level. This was followed by pensions for Civil War veterans, which grew into an extensive program before being abolished by progressive reformers at the turn of the century because of widespread corruption (Skocpol 1992). Workers' compensation was adopted during the first decades of the twentieth century.

During the nineteenth century, poor single mothers were considered no different from the general mass of undeserving poor, which meant that they had to work in the paid labor force. Toward the end of the century, children began to be distinguished as a separate category, and child protection laws were instituted to remove children from their impoverished mothers. At the same time, however, there was a growing number of social reformers, known as the child-savers, who claimed that if the mother was poor but otherwise fit and proper to raise the child, then perhaps it would be more conducive to child welfare to support the mother rather than to break up the home. This idea was endorsed in a White House conference in 1909, and in

1911, the first mothers' pension statute was enacted. By 1925, similar statutes had been enacted in almost all the states (Bell 1965, 6–7).

From its earliest days, ADC was an exercise in myth and ceremony. The myth was that poor mothers would be allowed to stay at home and take care of their children—hence the popular name "mothers' pension." The ceremony was that a small number of deserving white widows were helped; this validated the myth. The reality was that for most poor, single mothers and their children, at best, nothing had changed; at worst, they were stigmatized further by being excluded from the mothers' pension program. In contrast to welfare programs for the aged and the disabled (the "deserving poor"), which were administered by the local welfare departments, the mothers' pension programs were part of the local juvenile courts or county courts, which had jurisdiction over delinquent, neglected, and dependent children. Thus, the "fit and proper" mother was an alternative probation officer. Otherwise, the children could be removed from the home. In practice, mothers' pension programs remained small. Relatively few families were enrolled, recipients were predominantly white widows, and because benefits were rarely enough to live on, recipients were still pushed into the low-wage labor market to supplement the pensions (Bell 1965; Abramovitz 1988).

During the New Deal era, the Roosevelt administration concentrated more on old-age pensions, unemployment, and work programs than on welfare. Mothers' pensions, along with other state categorical programs, were incorporated into the Social Security Act of 1935 as Aid to Dependent Children (ADC, later Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC), as grants-in-aid, supported in part by the federal government and administered by the states. Thus, while establishing a federal role in relief provision, this landmark legislation preserved the poor law principle of localism. And yet, although state and local administrators still exercised considerable discretion over who did and who did not receive aid—through "suitable mother" standards, "man in the house" rules, and other such regulations—broader political and economic developments transformed welfare in ways that threatened to undermine age-old poor law prohibitions against aid to the "undeserving." Dramatic changes started to become evident in the 1950s and 1960s, as African Americans moved northward seeking civil rights and industrial rights, as the Democratic Party courted urban African Americans, and as the civil and legal rights revolutions encouraged more of those eligible for welfare to claim benefits—including growing proportions of divorced, separated, deserted, and never-married women and women of color. The federal courts and welfare rights activists forced open AFDC gates. For them, welfare had become a "right" rather than a matter of charitable or administrative discretion. Other observers, however, greeted the changes with growing alarm. To them, welfare was once again in a "crisis," which was captured in the "exploding" relief rolls. And once again the sense of crisis would eventually lead critics to reassert traditional poor law principles over a sustained period, culminating in a massive "reform" that, in 1996, would once again restrict cash relief and enforce work requirements for the "able-bodied," deny poor relief to the "undeserving" and to "outsiders," and devolve responsibility and authority in poor relief to the state and local levels.

From Welfare to Workfare

As one response to the so-called welfare crisis, the federal government, in 1967, enacted the Work Incentive Program (WIN), which combined both incentives and mandatory work requirements. All adults and children over age sixteen, with certain exceptions, were required to register and be referred to state employment services for training and employment services. But only 2–3 percent of the eligible recipients actually obtained jobs through WIN. The vast majority of eligible recipients were put on "administrative hold," and only 20 percent of those who were employed held their job for at least three months (Handler 1995, 58–59).

Nevertheless, the 1967 welfare "reforms" launched a thirty-year campaign to restore disciplinary controls characteristic of poor laws.

For the rest of the twentieth century, welfare (AFDC) remained a deeply divisive political issue. Although conservatives in both political parties led the charge for welfare discipline, some liberals eventually joined conservatives in demanding stiff work requirements. The emergence of antiwelfare New Democrats in the 1990s sealed the fate of AFDC. Himself a New Democrat, President Bill Clinton promised "to end welfare as we know it" during his quest for the White House. The promise was fulfilled with the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), which replaced AFDC with the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. The legislation repealed the welfare entitlement and amplified state and local discretion over cash assistance through a block grant system of welfare funding. Work requirements, more stringent now than ever before, are strictly enforced through penalties and time limits. Welfare reform today is still in the shadow of the sturdy beggar.

Joel F. Handler and Danielle S. Seiden

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Malthusianism; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Speenhamland; Vagrancy Laws/Settlement Laws/Residency Requirements; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Poor People's Campaign

The Poor People's Campaign was organized in 1968 by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a civil rights group, to draw attention to the plight of the poor and underprivileged. The campaign was designed to be not a one-day demonstration but an extended display of massive civil disobedience, with poor people from around the country erecting tents and living on the Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., until their demands were met. From mid-May until the end of June, when police destroyed poor people's homes in what SCLC called Resurrection City, several thousand people camped out in the nation's capital to dramatize their needs. The Poor People's Campaign consciously sought to draw in people from diverse racial, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds. It targeted institutionalized policies of racism, poverty, and militarism, contrasting the massive spending in Vietnam with the squalor in which most poor Americans lived. It demanded federal action to alleviate the poverty and suffering of the nation's neediest.

The central platform of the campaign, the Economic Bill of Rights, called for a $30 billion antipoverty package, which was to include a federal jobs program, housing for low-income families, an increase in welfare spending and education, a guaranteed annual income, and free food stamps for people out of work. The government, organizers charged, could easily afford to raise the standard of living of the poor. They argued that money to fight an unjust war killing civilians and soldiers halfway across the world was ill-spent and that those resources were sorely needed at home to alleviate the suffering of massive numbers of the nation's poor. They believed that poverty was the most pressing problem of the late 1960s.

Planned in 1967, the Poor People's Campaign signaled a shift in SCLC strategy away from civil rights toward economic inequality. Although most civil rights organizations, including SCLC, had included jobs and income as a part of their political platforms even in the early 1960s, the civil rights and voting rights campaigns dominated their organizing agendas. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended de jure segregation, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which ensured equal access to the ballot, did not cure the poverty of many African Americans. But success in winning formal rights served to reinvigorate SCLC's commitment to eradicating the more intractable problem of poverty. Many activists immersed in the struggle to end racism realized that the legal victories had done little to counter the economic inequality that many African Americans experienced. Upon the suggestion of Marian Wright, the SCLC decided to organize a protest during which thousands of poor people from around the country would descend on the nation's capital to highlight their problems. SCLC hoped both to meet the needs of the poor and to undercut the rising radicalism and violence that were evident among some sectors of the Black Power movement.

Although spearheaded by SCLC, the campaign was the effort of a coalition of groups from around the country, including civil rights groups, welfare rights groups, churches, and labor unions. It was also a multiracial initiative and included Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, Native Americans, and poor whites. The multiracial vision of the campaign, its grassroots character, and its protracted nature made the campaign particularly difficult to organize. SCLC staff were overwhelmed by the number of bureaucratic, bookkeeping, planning, coordinating, and logistical details of the campaign. They had to consider how to bring large numbers of poor people to the capital, raise money, publicize the event, register participants, build semisturdy homes, feed camp residents, provide medical care and sewage services—and the list went on.

The leadership of SCLC was also divided on the feasibility and wisdom of the campaign, with Bayard Rustin and Roy Wilkins expressing doubt. In addition, the campaign faced opposition from its outset. Many public officials and mainstream journalists felt that with the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, the civil rights movement had succeeded and needed to disband. Others believed that racism was a regional problem, confined to the South, and that the new focus on poverty, which crossed geographic boundaries, was misplaced. Radicalization in the Black community also made organizing more difficult, for many African Americans had concluded that working within the system and pushing for legislative change was an ineffective strategy. All of these obstacles made raising money and coordinating the campaign difficult.

The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in April 1968 changed the course of the campaign. His death sparked a series of riots and uprisings in Baltimore, Chicago, Newark, Washington, D.C., and dozens of other communities

Unitarian Universalist Association, Poor People's Campaign, General Resolution, 1968

The Poor People's Campaign brought together a broad coalition of welfare rights, social justice, labor, and faith organizations, which pledged to work for its legislative goals, as indicated by the 1968 resolution of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Seventh General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges support of the Poor People's Campaign of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and endorses the following legislative goals sought by the Poor People's Campaign:

1. Meaningful jobs at adequate pay scales in both public and private sectors for the unemployed and the under-employed, with the government to be employer of last resort, and effective enforcement of anti-discrimination statutes;
2. A system of income maintenance, including a guaranteed minimum income for all, and family allowances modeled after the Canadian program;
3. Welfare payments brought up to realistically defined minimum levels, with punitive and family-disruptive qualifications rescinded;
4. Redoubled efforts at school desegregation and provision of quality education for all Americans from kindergarten through college;
5. A massive program of building and renovation to provide decent housing, both for the poor and for those on minimum income;
6. Adequate medical and dental care for all Americans to be implemented by a program of national health insurance;
7. Reform of the law enforcement and judicial system to eliminate all forms of discrimination against minority-group persons and those in poverty;
8. Eliminate subsidies to farmers for non-production of crops and increase government distribution of surplus food to the hungry.

around the country. His assassination led some African Americans to become even more disaffected and wary of peaceful efforts to change the system. The ensuing unrest also heightened anxiety among many white Americans, already fearful of urban protest. In addition, with King's death SCLC lost its central spokesperson and most effective mobilizer. More than other civil rights organizations, SCLC was a hierarchical organization, and King was the glue that held it together. At the same time, news of King's death led to an avalanche of donations to SCLC for the Poor People's Campaign. The campaign became for many people the best way to honor King's legacy. Under the direction of Ralph Abernathy, the new SCLC president, the campaign continued.

From all across the country, poor and homeless people converged on Washington in caravans, some in mule-drawn wagons, others in cars, buses, or pickups. Some came on foot and others, by train. A massive rally kicked off the campaign on May 12. The next day the first stake for Resurrection City was driven into the ground. Initially, Jesse Jackson managed this process; later, Hosea Williams took charge of running the city. During a six-week period, more than 6,000 residents were registered, but people came and left on a regular basis. Toward the end of the campaign, about 1,000 people lived in Resurrection City on the Mall. Residents of the so-called tent city camped out in prefabricated, A-frame homes made of plywood. They lived in the makeshift homes and used portable toilets. Because of SCLC's efforts, they had access to running water, electricity, and telephones. In addition to individual homes, there were dormitories as well as communal tents that housed a dining hall, a medical center, a "city hall," and a nursery. For some, life was more comfortable in Resurrection City than it had been in their rural shacks or dilapidated housing projects. They made daily visits to federal agencies, meeting with officials, pressing their demands but engaging only in nonviolent actions. They went to the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Supreme Court; and the Department of Labor. In addition to being a means of protesting federal policy, Resurrection City was intended to be a multiracial model, where residents from different backgrounds, all equally poor, would share, cooperate, and live in harmony.

The multiracial character of the city proved to be a bigger problem than organizers expected. Most residents felt more comfortable with their own cultural, racial, and linguistic groups and resisted the integrated model that SCLC strove for. Provincialism and interracial tension prevailed. A focused agenda became more difficult to sustain, for each group was intent on pressing its own specific interests. In addition, small gangs of young people living in the encampment intimidated other residents, making life harder. Robberies, harassment, and violence demoralized many residents, and reports of the internal strife brought bad publicity to the campaign. In early June, seemingly nonstop rain dampened the homes as well as the spirits of the tent city's residents. The ground turned to mud, making life miserable for everyone. Finally, SCLC leadership increasingly came under criticism for staying in hotels and not spending more time with city residents. SCLC leaders came and went at their convenience. Few lived in Resurrection City, and many residents felt their absence and the consequent vacuum in leadership.

A major rally on June 19, which SCLC called Solidarity Day, brought out a crowd that police estimated at 50,000, although organizers believed that closer to 100,000 people attended. At the rally, an array of politicians, celebrities, and civil rights leaders, including Coretta Scott King, spoke of the continuing need to attack poverty. A few days after Solidarity Day, SCLC's permit to camp on the Mall expired. The next day, demonstrators who refused to leave were arrested, and some were tear-gassed, by park rangers and city police. Resurrection City was dismantled.

Although generally regarded as a failure by many historians, the Poor People's Campaign had mixed results. The encampment disbanded with most of its demands unmet. The negative publicity, internal conflicts within Resurrection City, and the lack of a strong national leadership left many residents feeling demoralized about the possibility of a broad national coalition. The campaign did little to resurrect SCLC's leadership in the wake of King's death. On the other hand, there were some minor victories. Federal officials promised to replace food commodities with food stamps, to make changes in welfare regulations, and to initiate a jobs program. Some of these reforms were implemented; others were not. Nevertheless, the direct access that many poor people had to high-level government officials exceeded many of their expectations. When confronted with demonstrators, federal officials often were sympathetic and expressed concern about the plight of the poor. In addition to these symbolic victories, the campaign solidified networks among antipoverty activists of different backgrounds and from around the country, and it reinvigorated the organizing of local activists. Many of these activists had been working and organizing to address poverty on the local level with little recognition or support from the major civil rights groups. The Poor People's Campaign brought their concerns front and center and propelled the issue of poverty into the national spotlight. Thus, despite its ostensible failures, the campaign marked a new phase in the Black freedom movement that addressed issues of poverty and that relied more on grassroots work than on national legislation.

Premilla Nadasen

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty (CCAP); Coxey's Army

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Poor Whites

Although most often associated with the rural South of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, poor whites have existed throughout the United States in every period of American history. White poverty has generally been concentrated in rural areas of the United States, and as the nation's most persistently rural and impoverished region, the South has rightly been identified as the home of a significant poor white population in the United States. In a larger sense, however, whites have always, in terms of absolute numbers, made up the largest segment of the poor in the United States, even though poverty rates among the dominant white majority have remained relatively small compared to those among ethnic minorities, such as African Americans or Latinos. In 1993, for instance, 48 percent of those classified as poor by the federal government were white (Henwood 1997, 183). The representation of poor whites as a distinct race or ethnicity can largely be attributed to the characterizations of elite whites. Whether in the South or in the nation as a whole, these elites have typically denied that white impoverishment stemmed from economic factors, since such an admission would implicitly undermine the oft-repeated notion that the United States has been and remains a "classless" society. Rather, white elites have blamed the presence of white poverty in their midst on a variety of noneconomic factors, such as genetic defects caused by racial miscegenation or inbreeding and destructive traits such as drunkenness or laziness. As a result, poor whites, because they are white yet poor, have always generally been viewed as part of an "undeserving poor."

White poverty existed from the earliest days of European settlement of North America. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, more than half of the white colonists arriving in the British colonies of North America came as indentured servants, most from England, Ireland, and Germany (Zinn 1995, 46). These individuals were bound to work for a landowner for a term of years in exchange for payment of the transatlantic passage and a promise of land at the indenture's end. Although some former servants did eventually prosper, the vast majority either perished before their term of service expired, returned to their country of origin, or became landless tenants.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, poor whites remained a significant part of the U.S. population, in both the North and the South. In the North, many poor whites found new economic opportunities in the region's emerging industries, though jobs frequently did not offer either a long-term guarantee of employment or wages sufficient for an existence above the poverty line. Many areas of the North also continued to have sizable rural, landless white populations, although throughout the nineteenth century, a number of these individuals seized new chances for landownership in the West. In the South, poor whites continued to struggle economically because of the growing

Children stand before old slum houses in a small Vermont town where unemployment is high due to a decline in industrial jobs. This town, with many tenement dwellings like this one, had the highest unemployment rating in the state in 1973. (Nathan Benn/Corbis)

importance of Black slavery in the region's economy. Quite simply, the existence of slavery limited the economic possibilities for the many whites who owned neither slaves nor land, a group that made up anywhere from 20 to 40 percent of the region's white households in the 1850s (Bolton 1994, 12, 85). Many of these poor whites remained permanently mired in poverty, struggling to survive by working in a variety of jobs—everything from laborer to tenant farmer to livestock tender to miner. They served as a casual, mobile labor force, plugging temporary labor shortages in an economy largely powered by African American slave labor. Elite white southerners admitted the existence of poor whites in their society, but planters would not attribute the presence of a poor white population to any economic factors because they believed slavery benefited all whites; rather, slave owners believed white poverty in a slave society resulted from cultural deficiencies or from racial impurities and incest in the bloodlines of certain white families.

After the Civil War, the number of poor whites in the South grew significantly. The independent white farmers, or yeomen, of the antebellum South increasingly became enmeshed in a one-crop (cotton) economy that dominated and impoverished the southern economy for almost a century after the Civil War. By 1900, over 40 percent of the region's white farmers toiled as tenant farmers or sharecroppers, while in the same year almost 100,000 whites worked in the cotton-mill villages that dotted the landscape of the southern Piedmont region (Ayers 1992, 111, 508). Neither form of work represented a path out of poverty. At the same time, sizable numbers of poor whites, like almost all African Americans in the region, were disenfranchised in the political transformations that swept the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the southern economy diversified and became less agricultural and less rural in the half century after World War II, the number of poor whites declined in the region, though pockets of white poverty continue to exist, especially in the most isolated rural areas of the South. Since the Civil War, white poverty has also persisted in other parts of the United States, although there, poverty among ethnic minorities has been the more pressing problem.

The poor white stereotypes applied historically to southerners—as people who are ignorant, lazy, sexually promiscuous, and violent drunkards and who are largely responsible for their own poverty—are today used to describe the white poor nationwide. Poor whites continue to be identified with derisive labels, such as "redneck," "poor white trash," or simply "white trash." These characterizations continue to conceal the role that economic factors have played in creating poverty among even the most privileged group in U.S. society.

Charles C. Bolton

See also: Appalachia; Classism; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Rural Poverty; Sharecropping

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Poorhouse/Almshouse

"Poorhouse" and "almshouse" are common terms for publicly subsidized institutions that proliferated in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century United States, nominally created to provide "indoor relief" for their destitute inmates but also meant to discipline the dependent poor or segregate them from the rest of society. These institutions were variously referred to as "the poorhouse," "the almshouse," "the lodging house," "the poor farm," and "the workhouse." Although poorhouses were present in larger towns in the American colonies since the 1600s, it was not until the nineteenth century that they became widespread; they had largely fallen into disuse by the 1940s. They housed a diverse range of people who had little in common but their poverty. They were temporary homes to infants and children as well as the elderly. The same poorhouse might house men and women; the sick and the able-bodied; the sane and those deemed insane; the deaf, blind, and epileptic; and "idiots." Also likely to be present were criminals and alcoholics, who were sometimes sentenced to labor in the workhouse as punishment for their offense. Although there were exceptions, most such institutions were grim, dirty, dilapidated, overcrowded, and ill funded. Residents were likely to be poorly fed, ill clothed (often in uniforms), and treated with brutality or indifference by staff who were often poorly trained and poorly paid. Sickness and disease, vermin, and lack of heat were common features of the nineteenth-century poorhouse. Overseers and superintendents of the poor, the city or county officials usually responsible for the provision of care for the poor, were also badly paid and little supervised. Some almshouses were paid a flat fee per inmate, thus offering them a financial incentive to keep their spending low.

The rise of the poorhouse as a preferred method of relief was very much a response to the rapid growth in "outdoor"—that is, noninstitutional—relief costs in the early nineteenth century. Based on the recommendations in a report of New York State's secretary of state, J. V. N. Yates, entitled "The Relief and Settlement of the Poor," the state legislature of New York passed the County Poorhouse Act in 1834. The act adopted poor-law reform principles that had recently been legislated in England: It demanded that all the dependent poor be defined as either "impotent" or "able"; it directed the county, not the town or municipality, to assume responsibility for managing and supervising relief programs; and it decreed that no able-bodied person between the ages of eighteen and fifty was to be eligible for any assistance except in the workhouse or the prison. Yates urged every county in the state to erect a poorhouse, and many did just that. Other cities and states followed New York's lead. A poorhouse was often established in the hope that it would offer a cheaper alternative to the growing expense of outdoor relief, in part by discouraging poor people from seeking public aid at all.

Work was often required from relief seekers in exchange for their food and shelter, whether the institution was called a workhouse or not. Some engaged their residents in "productive" work, in laundries, in small-goods manufacture, in woodcutting, or in agricultural production on farms in the hopes of making the poorhouse an economically efficient if not profitable way of providing poor relief. Others created make-work projects, like moving stones from one side of the yard to the other and then back again or forcing inmates to run on treadmills, supposedly as a way of inculcating the values and habits of hard work. Indeed, many such institutions saw enforced work as part of their rehabilitative mission, in the belief that poverty was a sign of moral or personal failure. Some required inmates to attend educational or motivational lectures; others imposed religious indoctrination.

Despite their often harsh and punitive conditions, poorhouses were frequently used strategically by the poor as a resource. Given the seasonal nature of unemployment throughout the period, for example, many men did depend upon the refuge of the poorhouse or the workhouse during the winter when employment was scarce. This in part explains why the number of men in the poorhouse tended to exceed the number of women there. Such use of poorhouses by able-bodied men drew the scorn and outrage of reformers and politicians, who characterized some local poorhouses as "winter resorts" for tramps, the newly emerging class of unemployed men who traveled the country in search of work. Families, too, made use of the poorhouse: In particularly dire times, parents would temporarily institutionalize their children until they could again afford to feed and care for them; married couples entered together when maintaining a home proved impossible. Pregnant and unmarried women shunned by their families or neighbors used the poorhouse as hospital and nursery. Most who used the poorhouse did so for brief periods of time and came and went at will. Perhaps no more than 20 to 25 percent of poorhouse inmates were there for one year or more, while two-fifths probably used the poorhouse for fewer than three weeks (Katz [1986] 1996). The poorhouse was also closely associated with and well used by immigrants. One study by Mary Roberts Smith (1895) of the San Francisco almshouse found that between 1869 and 1894, fewer than one in five inmates was native-born, and 68 percent of all female inmates were widows, reflecting the degree to which women were dependent upon male breadwinners.

The Dickensian poorhouse conditions described above were in some measure intentional: The poorhouse operated explicitly on the "less-eligibility" principle adopted from the English poor law—that is, relief should always be less desirable, or "less eligible," than the benefits that could be obtained from any work. The poorhouse was intended to be the most undesirable form of relief, so that it would provide aid only to those most desperately in need and deter the rest from seeking relief. Although the poorhouse loomed large as a warning and a threat to nineteenth-century Americans, in most locales in most years, more people nonetheless received aid outside an institution than within it.

The poorhouse ultimately declined primarily because, contrary to the hopes of many reformers, the almshouse, the workhouse, and the poorhouse were much more expensive than were the systems of paltry outdoor relief otherwise offered. And even when operated by private agencies, indoor relief institutions were generally operated with public funds. Public indoor relief expenditures more than doubled in New York from 1880 to 1891, and from the mid-1880s to the mid-1890s, they nearly tripled in Pennsylvania, doubled in Michigan, and rose fivefold in Wisconsin (Proceedings of the Conference 1887, Sched. B). The widespread devastation wrought and the need created by the depression of 1893 made dependence upon poorhouses prohibitively expensive, fueling growing calls for new and cheaper forms of aid.

The poorhouse also declined as a result of the growing efforts among reformers to better categorize and segregate the poor from one another and to create more specialized and more targeted forms of relief. Often these efforts were pursued through state boards of charities established after the Civil War to coordinate and regulate the growing number of relief institutions. From 1874 to 1875, about one-sixth of New York almshouse inmates were children; one-sixth were "old and destitute"; one-quarter were blind, deaf, epileptic, feebleminded, or otherwise "disabled"; and one-third were classified as insane. Yet by the mid-1890s, most almshouses were devoid of children, and by 1903, only 7 percent of all the institutionalized "insane" were in an almshouse (Hannon 1997, 425–427; Warner and Coolidge 1908, 196ff., and see esp. ch. 6, "The Almshouse and Its Inmates"). The poorhouse had given way to orphan asylums, foster homes, and juvenile reformatories for children, to insane asylums for the mentally ill (thanks in large measure to the efforts of mental health reformer Dorothea Dix), to separate institutions for men and women, and to new facilities for the blind, mute, deaf, alcoholic, feebleminded, and otherwise disabled. By the early 1900s, the poorhouse had become a refuge for the elderly—an old-age home that also served to remove those considered unproductive workers from the labor market (Katz 1983, [1986] 1996). Able-bodied men, especially immigrants and ethnic minorities, were increasingly denied access; they were found instead among the vast numbers of tramps and vagrants using police lodging houses or incarcerated and working in jails and prisons for violating the spate of new laws that criminalized begging or loitering. That said, even as late as the 1920s, children, the insane, and criminals could be found in significant numbers in some poorhouses.

After decades of decline, in part due to the expansion of other forms of available relief, in the 1970s, the United States witnessed the resurgence of the poorhouse in the form of the homeless shelter. By 2002, the number of children and families living in New York City shelters had reached record high levels: This total poorhouse population had climbed to over 32,000 people per night (Coalition for the Homeless 2002).

Stephen Pimpare

See also: Child-Saving; Crime Policy; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Homelessness; Orphanages; Poor Laws; Relief; Vagrancy Laws/Settlement Laws/Residency Requirements

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Populism

See Agrarian Movements; New Right; Nineteenth Century; Share Our Wealth

Poverty, *Robert Hunter*

Robert Hunter, born in 1874 in Indiana, became interested in economic problems after witnessing the effects of the depression of 1893. In his twenties, he worked at Chicago's Hull House, the country's most influential social settlement, and met socialist leaders while traveling in Europe. Both of these experiences influenced his thinking about the poor and economic inequality.

In 1904, Hunter published Poverty, a book that combined vivid descriptions of the dismal working and living conditions of the working poor with an innovative use of statistics. Hunter's main sympathies lay with the working poor of industrialized urban cities; he had little to say about southern poverty. Further, he voiced dismay with the nonworking poor, or "paupers," a group he viewed as morally deficient, idle, violent, and intemperate. In his book, Hunter made a sharp statistical as well as moral distinction between paupers—who were a small minority among poor people—and the vast majority of poor people who were hardworking, respectable men and women who barely survived on their meager incomes. Unlike many nineteenth-century social critics, Hunter viewed low wages and unemployment rather than individual failings as the chief causes of indigence among the working poor, and he advocated for government reform of industry rather than for individual uplift. Better wages, workers' compensation, industrial safety, improvements in public health and sanitation, a ban on child labor, and health benefits with employment were among the reforms Hunter supported.

In the excerpt below, Hunter describes the difficult lives of the urban industrial poor.

Sarah Case

See also: Poverty Line; Poverty Research; Settlement Houses; Social Surveys

In . . . cities and, indeed, everywhere, there are great districts of people who are up before dawn, who wash, dress, and eat breakfast, kiss wives and children, and hurry away to work or seek work. The world rests upon their shoulders; it moves by their muscle; everything would stop if, for any reason, they should decide not to go into the fields and factories and mines. But the world is so organized that they gain enough to live upon only when they work; should they cease, they are in destitution and hunger. The more fortunate of the laborers are but a few weeks from actual distress when the machines are stopped. Upon the skilled masses want is constantly pressing. As soon as employment ceases, suffering stares them in the face. They are the actual producers of wealth, who have no home nor any bit of soil which they may call their own. They are the millions who possess no tools and can work only by permission of another. In the main, they live miserable, they know not why. They work sore, yet gain nothing. They know the meaning of hunger and the dread of want. They love their wives and children. They try to *retain their self-respect. They have some ambition. They give to neighbors in need, yet they are themselves the actual children of poverty.*

Source: Robert Hunter, *Poverty* (New York: Macmillan, 1904; reprinted New York: Garrett Press, 1970), 4–5.

Poverty, Statistical Measure of

The statistical measure of poverty originated in the late nineteenth century to meet the need of developing social welfare programs to determine who needed aid. Statistical measures of poverty (1) are either direct or (more often) indirect, (2) use a relative or absolute standard, and (3) may vary by family composition, place, or both. Direct measurements of poverty measure consumption, and the subjects' *actual* levels of nutrition, health, and the like are assessed. However, since some people may choose to consume less but are not poor, it is far more common to measure poverty indirectly, by measuring the *capability* of income/resources to meet basic needs/necessities. "Relative" standards, such as "one-half of median income," refer to the income distribution as a whole (Fuchs 1967), whereas "absolute" standards are based on some standard of need. Absolute measures are much more common and can be descriptive (reflecting what the average or some subgroup spends), prescriptive (based on expert-derived standards of nutrition, housing, and so on), or some combination of the two.

Mollie Orshansky (1965) developed the most widely used statistical measure of poverty in the United States in the early 1960s, combining descriptive and prescriptive approaches. Orshansky's measure was adopted as the official federal poverty line (FPL) in the late 1960s as part of the federal government's War on Poverty. By the 1990s, the FPL had been compromised by being "frozen," and alternatives emerged to measure income adequacy or inadequacy more accurately. Key limitations and issues in the statistical measure of poverty include the exclusion of the homeless from poverty counts, treatment of noncash resources, the amount of variation by geography and household composition, equivalence scales, and the inclusion of new household costs and new understandings of "poverty." Although created initially by social reformers who abhorred the lack of necessities among the poor, most measures of poverty do not use actual consumption, except in developing countries where the majority of people live largely outside of a cash economy (making income measures meaningless). Most commonly, these consumption measures record levels of calorie consumption, health statistics, or such population-wide characteristics as infant mortality or adult literacy rates.

In a market economy, however, lack of consumption may reflect choice rather than lack of resources. If measured consumption were the criterion for categorizing subjects, someone who is dieting would be considered "poor" while someone who eats at a soup kitchen would not. Almost all statistical measures of poverty in the United States have been income—that is, indirect—rather than consumption—that is, direct measures—and are absolute rather than relative to the income distribution.

Developing a statistical measure of poverty required an important shift in thinking about the causes of poverty. Until the late nineteenth century, poverty was generally thought to be either an unexplained misfortune from God (as happened to the biblical character of Job) or the result of bad character. As theories of the social and economic roots of poverty emerged, charities and settlement houses, as well as public entities, needed to know who needed aid—especially among children.

Although some of the earliest poverty measures were based on detailed prescriptive or descriptive budgets, the first American investigator to attempt to measure the national extent of poverty, Robert Hunter in *Poverty* (1904), used only two thresholds (one each for the North and the South). Other early- and mid-twentieth-century measures of living standards were more detailed; the best known is the U.S. Department of Labor's Lower Living Standard for a City Worker. This standard was calculated for forty urban areas, for four regions, and as a national average (Johnson, Rogers, and Tan 2001). These family budgets were descriptive and were derived from actual consumption patterns.

The FPL developed by Orshansky is a combination of prescriptive and descriptive. The nutrition-standards-based food budget that underlies the FPL is prescriptive, while the multiplier of three (for all other costs) reflects the fact that families spent about one-third of their income on food, and therefore is descriptive.

Unfortunately, although the FPL is updated for inflation, it "freezes" the statistical measure of poverty in several ways: (1) The food budget has never been updated for changed nutritional standards. (2) Using the multiplier of three based on consumption patterns of the 1950s presumes that food continues to be about one-third of family expenditures. In fact, housing (and recently health care) costs have risen relatively faster than food, and spending on food now averages less than one-fifth of average budgets, even with increased consumption of food outside the home. (3) The FPL does not allow for new costs, particularly child care (since the assumption that mothers would remain in the home to care for children has changed and since increasing numbers of parents require out-of-home care) and taxes (particularly increases in payroll and income taxes). Not surprisingly, the FPL has failed to keep up with costs, so that even the U.S. Census Bureau now states that "the official poverty measure should be interpreted as a statistical yardstick rather than a complete description of what people and families need to live" (Dalaker 2001, 5). Over the four decades since its inception, the FPL has fallen from almost half to about 27 percent of median income.

There are three developments currently under way that seek to address the shortcomings of the FPL. First, public programs have begun to use multiples of the FPL to determine need. For example, applicants with incomes below 130 percent of the FPL would qualify for food stamps; applicants with incomes up to 300 percent of the FPL (depending upon the state) can qualify for child health insurance (State Child Health Insurance Plan [SCHIP] /Medicaid). Second, there have been numerous attempts to modify the FPL, culminating in a congressionally mandated study by the National Academy of Sciences, *Measuring Poverty* (Citro and Michael 1995), which summarized a wide range of research and made recommendations. Some of the recommendations are used in the "experimental" poverty measures published each year with the poverty statistics, but no changes have been made to the FPL. Third, both social scientists and advocates for the poor began to create alternatives, such as Basic Needs Budgets (Renwick and Bergmann 1993), "living wages," family needs budgets, and the Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS) (Pearce 1996–2003).

The SSS measures how much it costs to live without subsidies and is calculated from the actual costs of housing, food, child care, and so on, using prescriptive numbers when available (such as nutrition standards) and descriptive numbers when not. The SSS does not impose equivalence scales by family size/composition or by geography. It calculates the SSS for seventy (or more) family types (reflecting child age as well as number of children and adults) and by county (or subcounty, data permitting). The budgets are "bare bones" (for example, there is no restaurant or take-out food in the food budget). The SSS has been adopted by some states, cities, and workforce development (training) councils to determine need/eligibility, to counsel clients, and to assess progress toward self-sufficiency.

Finally, there are several limits and issues in statistical measures of poverty. First, the measurement of the extent of poverty uses household samples. Those who are homeless—living in shelters, on the streets, or in nonhousing units (such as garages, cars, or camps)—are not counted, resulting in undercounting the poor by over 800,000 people, about one-fourth of whom are children (Burt et al. 2001). Second, using broader definitions of resources that include near cash (such as food stamps) and the value of noncash benefits (such as Medicaid or housing assistance) would reduce the count of the poor (using the FPL) by one or two percentage points. However, adding the value of certain benefits (such as employer-subsidized health care) as well as of difficult-to-assess resources (such as stock options and the mortgage interest deduction) would increase the incomes mainly of the nonpoor, increasing inequality and relative poverty, if not changing the absolute measures of poverty. Third, counting only after-tax income would decrease income and might increase the count of poor (depending on how indirect taxes, such as property taxes paid by landlords, are counted). Fourth, using a broader definition of needs that included what is necessary to participate in society socially, politically, and economically—what Amartya Sen (1983) calls "capability-functioning" needs—would affect the statistical measure of poverty, creating substantial variations between societies as well as between individuals in the measured level of poverty.

Diana M. Pearce

See also: Income and Wage Inequality; Living-Wage Campaigns; 1940s to Present; *Poverty;* Poverty Line; Poverty Research; "Working Poor"

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Poverty Law

Poverty law encompasses a wide range of issues facing poor people, ranging from welfare to housing to environmental justice to education. In the United States, poverty law originated with efforts in the late nineteenth century to provide legal assistance to new immigrants. Through the early twentieth century, poverty law developed further, sponsored by local bar associations. In the 1960s, the federal government began providing limited funding to poverty lawyers to provide representation to the poor. State governments also often extended funding to poverty lawyers. Significantly, the body of poverty law that has developed through litigation and legislation underscores the disenfranchised status of poor people in society. In many instances—including, for example, cases involving privacy interests, family relationships, and workplace rights—being poor results in fewer legal rights. This is particularly true because poor people's resources so often derive from government rather than from private property, and the government is seldom held responsible to undertake any affirmative steps to protect the rights of citizens.

What Is Poverty Law?

Poverty law is a loosely defined area of law with changeable boundaries. Unlike the terms "bankruptcy law" and "maritime law," which refer to clear sets of statutes, transactions, or activities, the phrase "poverty law" refers to the status of the *individuals* subject to the law. An analog would be "left-handed people's law" or "blonde people's law." Such a body of law could cover the gamut of human behavior—everything affecting left-handed people, for example. But such a subcategory is only meaningful to the extent that it is different from the laws affecting right-handed people or brunettes. In other words, the phrase "poverty law" has a deeper meaning than merely "law affecting poor people." Rather, the assumption embedded in the phrase "poverty law" is that law affecting the poor is different from law affecting the nonpoor.

A threshold question in defining poverty law must be, Who is poor? There is no single answer, since there is a subjective element to determining what is necessary to subsist. Indeed, one factor in defining poverty is the extent of the gap between rich and poor in a society, rather than subsistence needs alone. The federal poverty line provides one definition of poverty, but many localities calculate different "standards of need" or "self-sufficiency" standards based on the particular state's cost of living. Moreover, the federal poverty line, developed in the 1960s based on then-current diets and lifestyles, has been criticized as antiquated and inadequate. Many people with incomes above the federal poverty line consider themselves poor and may be the subjects of poverty law.

There is little serious dispute that individuals receiving federal or state welfare assistance are poor. Further, welfare is unique to the poor; by definition, no wealthy people will be affected by the welfare system's rules. Because of this, welfare law is a core example of poverty law. Other government benefits, such as food stamps, public housing, legal services for the poor, unemployment insurance, and Social Security, are also generally considered within the realm of poverty law. Beyond these government benefits, poverty law might also address issues arising from low-wage work, gentrification of low-income neighborhoods, environmental justice, funding of public education, and special challenges facing low-income families such as child care, child support, and foster care.

The Origins of Poverty Law

The distinct legal treatment of the poor can be traced back at least to the seventeenth century, to the body of English laws known as the Elizabethan Poor Law (1601), which was adapted to the U.S. colonies. Those laws created particular rules applying to poor people that, among other things, established lines of responsibility for providing financial support to the poor, beginning with immediate relatives. In addition, influenced by British precedents, the early American poor laws made clear that American towns and parishes were responsible for their own poor. Many poor laws dealt with the treatment of poor people who attempted to travel across town, county, or state lines. Thus, poor laws varied from locality to locality, with some places providing workhouses for poor transients and others utilizing "outdoor relief" (that is, relief outside of such institutions as poorhouses), a predecessor of public welfare. Although these laws provided guidance as to how the poor should be treated, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—and indeed, well into the twentieth century—poor relief was viewed as discretionary charity or largesse. As a legal matter, poor people were not deemed to have any enforceable rights to government support.

The distinct practice of poverty law in the United States began much later, with the creation of local legal aid societies in the late nineteenth century. These societies for the first time treated the poor not merely as passive subjects of special legal rules but as individuals who—like other citizens—might assert affirmative rights to fair treatment. This early version of poverty law was qualitatively different from poverty law today, however, because legal aid societies engaged in this practice saw their role as simply providing access to justice. In their view, giving poor people access to legal assistance in enforcing work contracts or negotiating housing needs would facilitate their integration into the social structures and institutions of society. In short, the legal establishment held to the laissez-faire notion that the law was class-blind.

The first legal aid society was created in New York City in 1876 by Edward Salomon, a former governor of Wisconsin, to assist poor German immigrants needing free legal aid and assistance. In 1889, the society's charter was amended to allow it to render free legal assistance to all. Nevertheless, the society's mission remained the same: to introduce immigrants to democracy by demonstrating the benefits of the rule of law. The society's caseload ran the gamut from real estate transactions to family issues. Many of the cases, however, involved unpaid wages arising from sweatshop employment.

Over the years, legal aid societies increasingly became a special project of the organized bar, augmented by pro bono assistance from private attorneys. By 1920, there were forty-one legal aid societies around the country. In 1923, the National Association of Legal Aid Organizations was formed. Most large cities had a local legal aid society by the end of the 1950s. Throughout this time, legal aid societies continued to see their role as apolitical: simply to provide advice and representation to the poor. Rather than aggressively pursuing their clients' rights in order to highlight the need for law reform or to achieve political ends to benefit their clients, most legal aid lawyers settled their clients' cases. From 1876 to 1965, legal aid society lawyers never appealed a case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The practice of poverty law changed dramatically in the 1960s, when the civil rights movement, in combination with the War on Poverty, stimulated poverty rights organizing and encouraged lawyers to be much more aggressive on behalf of their low-income clients. At the same time, beginning in 1965, federal funding of legal services for the poor created a permanent cadre of lawyers dedicated to the practice of poverty law. Between 1963 and 1971, the number of lawyers for poor people rose by 650 percent to more than 2,500 nationwide. In contrast to earlier decades, dozens of poverty law cases were appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. As a result, poverty law for the first time became an accepted area of legal study. Until 1965, no course on poverty law had ever been taught at an American law school. By 1967, poverty law courses were offered at thirty-six law schools.

The practice of poverty law in the 1960s bore scant resemblance to the poverty law practiced by legal aid society lawyers decades earlier. In an influential law review article, Edgar Cahn and Jean Cahn defined the role of a legal services lawyer as giving voice to a "civilian perspective" on the War on Poverty (Cahn and Cahn 1964, 1317). Another leader of the early legal services movement, Edward Sparer, argued that achieving social change should be the highest priority for poverty law offices.

King v. Smith, *392 U.S. 309 (1968)*

Mr. Chief Justice Warren delivered the opinion of the Court.

. . . At issue is the validity of Alabama's so-called "substitute father" regulation, which denies AFDC payments to the children of a mother who "cohabits" in or outside her home with any single or married able-bodied man. . . .

I

. . . Under the Alabama regulation, an "able-bodied man, married or single, is considered a substitute father of all [392 U.S. 314] the children of the applicant . . . mother" in three different situations: (1) if "he lives in the home with the child's natural or adoptive mother for the purpose of cohabitation"; or (2) if "he visits [the home] frequently for the purpose of cohabiting with the child's natural or adoptive mother"; or (3) if "he does not frequent the home, but cohabits with the child's natural or adoptive mother elsewhere." . . . Whether the substitute father is actually the father of the children is irrelevant. It is also irrelevant whether he is legally obligated to support the children, and whether he does, in fact, contribute to their support. . . .

Between June, 1964, when Alabama's substitute father regulation became effective, and January, 1967, the total number of AFDC recipients in the State declined by about 20,000 persons, and the number of children recipients by about 16,000, or 22%. As applied in this case, the regulation has caused the termination of all AFDC payments to the appellees, Mrs. Sylvester Smith and her four minor children. . . .

Mr. Williams, the alleged "substitute father" of Mrs. Smith's children . . . is not legally obligated, under Alabama law, to support any of Mrs. Smith's [392 U.S. 316] children. . . .

II

The AFDC program is based on a scheme of cooperative federalism. . . . It is financed largely by the Federal Government, on a matching fund basis, and is administered by the States. . . .

One of the statutory requirements is that "aid to families with dependent children . . . shall be furnished with reasonable promptness to all eligible individuals. . . ." . . .

. . . There is no question that States have considerable latitude in allocating their AFDC resources, since each State is free to set its own standard of need . . . and to determine the level of benefits by the [392 U.S. 319] amount of funds it devotes to the program. . . . The appellees here, however, meet Alabama's need requirements; their alleged substitute father makes no contribution to their support, and they have been denied assistance solely on the basis of the substitute father regulation. . . .

Alabama's argument based on its interests in discouraging immorality and illegitimacy would have been quite relevant at one time in the history of the AFDC program. However, subsequent developments clearly establish that these state interests are

Underlying this change in the approach to poverty law practice was the recognition that poor people needed more than simple access to courts and lawyers and that poverty law should address the systemic differential treatment of the poor. The issue of unequal treatment of the poor was squarely addressed in an important article by Jacobus ten Broek, a law professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Writing in the *Stanford Law Review* in 1965, ten Broek argued that welfare laws create dual systems of family law in the United States, one set of laws for the indigent and another for everyone else. For example, under the welfare regime at the time, a man found to be cohabiting with a woman on welfare was deemed to be financially responsible for the woman's children, even if he was simply a boyfriend and the children were not presently legitimate justifications for AFDC disqualification. Insofar as this or any similar regulation is based on the State's asserted interest in discouraging illicit sexual behavior and illegitimacy, it plainly conflicts with federal law and policy. . . .

In sum, Congress has determined that immorality and illegitimacy should be dealt with through rehabilitative measures, rather than measures that punish dependent children, and that protection of such children is the paramount goal of AFDC. . . .

III

The AFDC program was designed to meet a need unmet by programs providing employment for breadwinners. It was designed to protect . . . children in families without a "breadwinner," "wage earner," or "father." . . . To describe the sort of breadwinner that it had in mind, Congress employed the word [392 U.S. 329] "parent." . . . A child would be eligible for assistance if his parent was deceased, incapacitated or continually absent. . . .

It is clear . . . that Congress expected "breadwinners" who secured employment would support their children. This congressional expectation is most reasonably explained on the basis that the kind of breadwinner Congress had in mind was one who was legally obligated to support his children. We think it beyond reason to believe that Congress would have considered that providing employment for the paramour of a deserted mother would benefit the mother's children whom he was not obligated to support.

By a parity of reasoning, we think that Congress must have intended that the children in such a situation remain eligible for AFDC assistance notwithstanding their mother's impropriety. AFDC was intended to provide economic security for children whom Congress could not reasonably expect would be provided for by simply securing [392 U.S. 330] employment for family breadwinners. . . .

IV

. . . In denying AFDC assistance to appellees on the basis of this invalid regulation, Alabama has breached its federally imposed obligation to furnish "aid to families with dependent children . . . with reasonable promptness to all eligible individuals. . . ." . . . Our conclusion makes unnecessary consideration of appellees' equal protection claim, upon which we intimate no views.

. . . [N]o legitimate interest of the State of Alabama is defeated [392 U.S. 334] by the decision we announce today. The State's interest in discouraging illicit sexual behavior and illegitimacy may be protected by other means, subject to constitutional limitations, including state participation in AFDC rehabilitative programs. Its interest in economically allocating its limited AFDC resources may be protected by its undisputed power to set the level of benefits and the standard of need, and by its taking into account in determining whether a child is needy all actual and regular contributions to his support.

. . . We hold today only that Congress has made at least this one determination: that destitute children who are legally fatherless cannot be flatly denied federally funded assistance on the transparent fiction that they have a substitute father.

Affirmed.

from a prior relationship. Under the generally applicable family law, however, a mere boyfriend would not be deemed financially responsible for supporting his paramour's family. Ten Broek argued that this dual system violated constitutional equal protection principles.

The ultimate goals of poverty lawyers in this era were to increase resources available to poor people and to facilitate poor people's organizing. And this newly assertive practice of poverty law yielded a spate of significant cases, many of which reached the U.S. Supreme Court. Successful cases whittled away at the legal inequalities facing the poor. Even the unsuccessful cases nevertheless made a difference by bringing the differential treatment of the poor into sharp focus.

Wyman v. James (400 U.S. 309 [1971]) falls into the latter category. New York City welfare

Shapiro, Commissioner of Welfare of Connecticut, v. Thompson, *394 U.S. 618 (1969)*

Mr. Justice Brennan delivered the opinion of the Court.

II

There is no dispute that the effect of the waiting-period requirement in each case is to create two classes of needy resident families indistinguishable from each other except that one is composed of residents who have resided a year or more, and the second of residents who have resided less than a year, in the jurisdiction. On the basis of this sole difference the first class is granted and the second class is denied welfare aid upon which may depend the ability of the families to obtain the very means to subsist—food, shelter, and other necessities of life. . . .

III

Primarily, appellants justify the waiting-period requirement as a protective device to preserve the fiscal integrity of state public assistance programs. . . . This Court long ago recognized that the nature of our Federal Union and our constitutional concepts of personal liberty unite to require that all citizens be free to travel throughout the length and breadth of our land uninhibited by statutes, rules, or regulations which unreasonably burden or restrict this movement. . . .

Thus, the purpose of deterring the in-migration of indigents cannot serve as justification for the classification created by the one-year waiting period, since that purpose is constitutionally impermissible. If a law has "no other purpose . . . than to chill the assertion of constitutional rights by penalizing those who choose to exercise them, then it [is] patently unconstitutional." *United States v. Jackson*, 390 U.S. 570, 581 (1968).

Alternatively, appellants argue that even if it is impermissible for a State to attempt to deter the entry of all indigents, the challenged classification may be justified as a permissible state attempt to discourage those indigents who would enter the State solely to obtain larger benefits. We observe first that none of the statutes before us is tailored to serve that objective. . . .

More fundamentally, a State may no more try to fence out those indigents who seek higher welfare benefits than it may try to fence out indigents generally.

Implicit in any such distinction is the notion that indigents who enter a State with the hope of securing higher welfare benefits are somehow less deserving than indigents who do not take this consideration into account. But we do not perceive why a mother who is seeking to make a new life for herself and her children should be regarded as less deserving because she considers, among others factors, the level of a State's public assistance. Surely such a mother is no less deserving than a mother who moves into a particular State in order to take advantage of its better educational facilities.

Appellants argue further that the challenged classification may be sustained as an attempt to distinguish between new and old residents on the basis of the contribution they have made to the community through the payment of taxes.

. . . Appellants' reasoning would logically permit the State to bar new residents from schools, parks,

recipient Barbara James refused to allow a caseworker into her home to conduct a mandatory inspection. The mandatory inspection rule permitted inspections without a warrant and required such inspections as a prerequisite of receiving welfare benefits. In upholding the law, Justice Harry A. Blackmun wrote for the Supreme Court that no warrant was necessary because welfare benefits were merely charitable contributions from the state. According to the and libraries or deprive them of police and fire protection. Indeed it would permit the State to apportion all benefits and services according to the past tax contributions of its citizens. The Equal Protection Clause prohibits such an apportionment of state services. . . .

IV

Appellants next advance as justification certain administrative and related governmental objectives allegedly served by the waiting-period requirement. They argue that the requirement (1) facilitates the planning of the welfare budget; (2) provides an objective test of residency; (3) minimizes the opportunity for recipients fraudulently to receive payments from more than one jurisdiction; and (4) encourages early entry of new residents into the labor force.

. . . [I]n moving from State to State or to the District of Columbia appellees were exercising a constitutional right, and any classification which serves to penalize the exercise of that right, unless shown to be necessary to promote a compelling governmental interest, is unconstitutional. . . .

The argument that the waiting-period requirement facilitates budget predictability is wholly unfounded. . . .

The argument that the waiting period serves as an administratively efficient rule of thumb for determining residency similarly will not withstand scrutiny. . . .

Similarly, there is no need for a State to use the one-year waiting period as a safeguard against fraudulent receipt of benefits; for less drastic means are available, and are employed, to minimize that hazard. . . .

We conclude therefore that appellants in these cases do not use and have no need to use the one-year requirement for the governmental purposes suggested. Thus, even under traditional equal protection tests a classification of welfare applicants according to whether they have lived in the State for one year would seem irrational and unconstitutional. But, of course, the traditional criteria do not apply in these cases. Since the classification here touches on the fundamental right of interstate movement, its constitutionality must be judged by the stricter standard of whether it promotes a compelling state interest. Under this standard, the waiting-period requirement clearly violates the Equal Protection Clause. . . .

V

Connecticut and Pennsylvania argue, however, that the constitutional challenge to the waiting-period requirements must fail because Congress expressly approved the imposition of the requirement by the States as part of the jointly funded AFDC program. . . .

. . . Congress enacted the directive to curb hardships resulting from lengthy residence requirements. Rather than constituting an approval or a prescription of the requirement in state plans, the directive was the means chosen by Congress to deny federal funding to any State which persisted in stipulating excessive residence requirements as a condition of the payment of benefits. . . .

Finally, even if it could be argued that the constitutionality of § 402 (b) is somehow at issue here, it follows from what we have said that the provision, insofar as it permits the one-year waiting-period requirement, would be unconstitutional. Congress may not authorize the States to violate the Equal Protection Clause. . . .

Accordingly, the judgments in Nos. 9, 33, and 34 are Affirmed.

Court, the state had to be permitted to monitor how its charitable funds were being used. If welfare recipients objected to such inspections on privacy grounds, Justice Blackmun concluded, they could simply forego support.

In contrast, *Goldberg v. Kelly* (397 U.S. 254 [1970]) expanded the rights of the poor. In that case, John Kelly argued that he should not be denied welfare benefits through an exercise of his caseworker's discretion absent an opportunity for

Goldberg v. Kelly, *397 U.S. 254 (1970)*

Mr. Justice Brennan delivered the opinion of the Court.

The question for decision is whether a State that terminates public assistance payments to a particular recipient without affording him the opportunity for an evidentiary hearing prior to termination denies the recipient procedural due process in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

I

. . .

[Welfare] benefits are a matter of statutory entitlement for persons qualified to receive them. Their termination involves state action that adjudicates important rights. The constitutional challenge cannot be answered by an argument that public assistance benefits are "a 'privilege,' and not a 'right.'" . . . The extent to which procedural due process [397 U.S. 263] must be afforded the recipient is influenced by the extent to which he may be "condemned to suffer grievous loss," . . . and depends upon whether the recipient's interest in avoiding that loss outweighs the governmental interest in summary adjudication. . . .

[W]hen welfare is discontinued, only a pre-termination evidentiary hearing provides the recipient with procedural due process. . . . For qualified recipients, welfare provides the means to obtain essential food, clothing, housing, and medical care. . . . Thus, the crucial factor in this context . . . is that termination of aid pending resolution of a controversy over eligibility may deprive an eligible recipient of the very means by which to live while he waits. Since he lacks independent resources, his situation becomes immediately desperate. His need to concentrate upon finding the means for daily subsistence, in turn, adversely affects his ability to seek redress from the welfare bureaucracy.

Moreover, important governmental interests are promoted by affording recipients a pre-termination evidentiary hearing. From its founding, the Nation's basic [397 U.S. 265] commitment has been to foster the dignity and wellbeing of all persons within its borders. We have come to recognize that forces not within the control of the poor contribute to their poverty. . . . Welfare, by meeting the basic demands of subsistence, can help bring within the reach of the poor the same opportunities that are available to others to participate meaningfully in the life of the community. At the same time, welfare guards against the societal malaise that may flow from a widespread sense of unjustified frustration and insecurity. Public assistance, then, is not mere charity, but a means to "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." The same governmental interests that counsel the provision of welfare, counsel as well its uninterrupted provision to those eligible to receive it; pre-termination evidentiary hearings are indispensable to that end.

Appellant . . . argues that the[re] are . . . countervailing governmental interests in conserving fiscal and administrative resources. These interests, the argument goes, justify the delay of any evidentiary hearing until after discontinuance of the grants. Summary adjudication protects the public fisc by

a hearing. The costs to a recipient of having subsistence benefits cut off were simply too great. The Supreme Court, in an opinion by Justice William J. Brennan Jr., upheld his claim, ruling that welfare recipients were entitled to pretermination hearings before losing their subsistence welfare benefits. This is one area where welfare recipients may be entitled to greater rights than the nonpoor, since the Court has limited pretermination hearings to instances involving subsistence benefits.

Outside of the welfare context, cases chalstopping payments promptly upon discovery of reason to believe that a recipient is no longer eligible. Since most terminations are accepted without challenge, summary adjudication also conserves both the fisc and administrative time and energy by reducing the number of evidentiary hearings actually held. [397 U.S. 266]

We agree with the District Court, however, that these governmental interests are not overriding in the welfare context. . . . [T]he interest of the eligible recipient in uninterrupted receipt of public assistance, coupled with the State's interest that his payments not be erroneously terminated, clearly outweighs the State's competing concern to prevent any increase in its fiscal and administrative burdens. . . .

II

We also agree with the District Court, however, that the pre-termination hearing need not take the form of a judicial or quasi-judicial trial. . . . We recognize, too, that both welfare authorities and recipients have an interest in relatively speedy resolution of questions of eligibility, that they are used to dealing with one another informally, and that some welfare departments have very burdensome caseloads. These considerations justify the limitation of the pre-termination hearing to minimum procedural safeguards, adapted to the particular characteristics of welfare recipients, and to the limited nature of the controversies to be resolved. . . .

In the present context, these principles require that a recipient have timely and adequate notice detailing the reasons for a [397 U.S. 268] proposed termination, and an effective opportunity to defend by confronting any adverse witnesses and by presenting his own arguments and evidence orally. . . .

The city's procedures presently do not permit recipients to appear personally, with or without counsel, before the official who finally determines continued eligibility. Thus, a recipient is not permitted to present evidence to that official orally, or to confront or cross-examine adverse witnesses. These omissions are fatal to the constitutional adequacy of the procedures. . . .

In almost every setting where important decisions turn on questions of fact, due process requires an opportunity to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses. . . . Welfare recipients must therefore be given an opportunity to confront and cross-examine the witnesses relied on by the department. . . .

We do not say that counsel must be provided at the pre-termination hearing, but only that the recipient must be allowed to retain an attorney if he so desires. Counsel can help delineate the issues, present the factual contentions in an orderly manner, conduct cross-examination, and generally safeguard the [397 U.S. 271] interests of the recipient. . . .

Finally, the decisionmaker's conclusion as to a recipient's eligibility must rest solely on the legal rules and evidence adduced at the hearing. . . . And, of course, an impartial decisionmaker is essential. . . . We agree with the District Court that prior involvement in some aspects of a case will not necessarily bar a welfare official from acting as a decisionmaker. He should not, however, have participated in making the determination under review.

Affirmed.

lenging the right to Medicaid funding for abortion have raised the constitutional equal protection rights of poor women. In *Harris v. McRae* (448 U.S. 297 [1980]), for example, the Supreme Court examined whether the federal government could deny federal reimbursement for medically necessary abortions while extending Medicaid coverage for other medically necessary procedures. The Supreme Court ruled that the scheme did not deny equal protection rights to poor women since there was no affirmative government obligation to provide abortions. Poor

Dandridge v. Williams, *397 U.S. 471 (1970)*

Mr. Justice Stewart delivered the opinion of the Court.

The regulation here in issue imposes upon the grant that any single family may receive an upper limit of $250 per month in certain counties and Baltimore City, and of $240 per month elsewhere in the State. The appellees all [397 U.S. 475] have large families, so that their standards of need, as computed by the State, substantially exceed the maximum grants that they actually receive under the regulation. The appellees urged in the District Court that the maximum grant limitation operates to discriminate against them merely because of the size of their families, in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. They claimed further that the regulation is incompatible with the purpose of the Social Security Act of 1935, as well as in conflict with its explicit provisions. . . .

I

. . . Although the appellees argue that the younger and more recently arrived children in such families are totally deprived of aid, a more realistic view is that the lot of the entire family is diminished because of the presence of additional children without any increase in payments. . . . Whether this per capita diminution is compatible with the statute is the question here. For the reasons that follow, we have concluded that the Maryland regulation is permissible under the federal law. . . .

Congress was itself cognizant of the limitations on state resources from the very outset of the federal welfare program. The first section of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 601 (1964 ed., Supp. IV), provides that the Act is

> For the purpose of encouraging the care of dependent children in their own homes or in the homes of relatives by enabling each State to furnish financial assistance and rehabilitation and other services, as far as practicable under the conditions in such State, to needy dependent children and the parents or relatives with whom they are living . . . (Emphasis added.)

Thus, the starting point of the statutory analysis must be a recognition that the federal law gives each State great latitude in dispensing its available funds. . . .

Given Maryland's finite resources, its choice is either to support some families adequately and others less adequately or not to give sufficient support to any family. We see nothing in the federal statute that forbids a State to balance the stresses that uniform insufficiency of payments would impose on all families against the greater ability of large fami-

women who could not afford abortions were therefore in the same position with or without the Medicaid program. According to the Court, the constitutional freedom to choose an abortion does not require that government extend the resources to choose one—a ruling that preserves the stark inequality between women who can afford a legal abortion and poor women who cannot.

A major goal of poverty lawyers in the 1960s and 1970s was to establish poverty as a suspect class under the Constitution's equal protection clause. According poverty such a status would mean that classifications based on poverty would be permissible only if they were narrowly tailored to achieve an important government interest. Had this goal been achieved, it would have formed the basis for using the equal protection clause to challenge the dual treatment under family law noted by ten Broek as well as differential treatment in other areas where poor people were treated unequally. No court ever accepted this formulation. Instead, most courts have found that the government has broad dis-lies—because of the inherent economics of scale—to accommodate their needs to diminished per capita payments. The strong policy of the statute in favor of preserving family units does not prevent a State from sustaining as many families as it can, and providing the largest families somewhat less than their ascertained per capita standard of need. Nor does the maximum grant system necessitate the dissolution of family bonds. For even if a parent should be inclined to increase his per capita family income by sending a child away, the federal law requires that the child, to be eligible for AFDC payments, must live with one of several enumerated relatives. The kinship tie may be attenuated, but it cannot be destroyed. . . .

Finally, Congress itself has acknowledged a full awareness of state maximum grant limitations. In the Amendments of 1967, Congress added to § 402(a) a subsection, 23 . . . [a] specific congressional recognition of the state maximum grant provisions. . . . The structure of specific maximums Congress left to the States, and the validity of any such structure must meet constitutional tests. However, the above amendment does make clear that Congress fully recognized that the Act permits maximum grant regulations.

II

Although a State may adopt a maximum grant system in allocating its funds available for AFDC payments without violating the Act, it may not, of course, impose a regime of invidious discrimination in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. . . .

In the area of economics and social welfare, a State does not violate the Equal Protection Clause merely because the classifications made by its laws are imperfect. . . .

Under this long-established meaning of the Equal Protection Clause, it is clear that the Maryland maximum grant regulation is constitutionally valid. . . . It is enough that a solid foundation for the regulation can be found in the State's legitimate interest in encouraging employment and in avoiding discrimination between welfare families and the families of the working poor. By combining a limit on the recipient's grant with permission to retain money earned, without reduction in the amount of the grant, Maryland provides an incentive to seek gainful employment. . . .

. . . [T]he intractable economic, social, and even philosophical problems presented by public welfare assistance programs are not the business of this Court. The Constitution may impose certain procedural safeguards upon systems of welfare administration. . . . But the Constitution does not empower this Court to second-guess state officials charged with the difficult responsibility of allocating limited public welfare funds among the myriad of potential recipients. . . .

The judgment is reversed.

cretion to apportion government benefits and that poverty classifications are permissible unless they are irrational.

Poverty Law Today

In the late twentieth century, the practice of poverty law changed again to move beyond litigation concerning constitutional equal protection and due process rights to innovative group litigation strategies, community-based representation, and client organizing and empowerment. At the same time, the substantive areas addressed by poverty law expand as lawyers continue to find new tools to wield on behalf of their clients.

One relatively new area of poverty law practice combines poverty law with environmental law to address environmental justice, that is, considerations of the extent to which the poor are disproportionately disadvantaged by unsafe or undesirable environmental practices. For example, environmental justice claims have been made on behalf of low-income, predominately minority communities challenging the placement of hazardous-waste dumps. Bringing these cases typically involves more than litigation but may not involve litigation at all. Identifying the impacts of the environmental issue in the community, organizing the community to raise its concerns, and working within the political process to address the issue have all been effective strategies. To the extent that litigation has resulted, the claims are rarely constitutional; instead, they involve violations of environmental or civil rights laws.

Challenges to inequities in public education funding are also representative of contemporary poverty law. Such challenges may be brought under state constitutional provisions guaranteeing education or equal protection as well as state statutory protections. Plaintiffs are typically inner-city schoolchildren, often members of a minority, who have allegedly been denied the right to an adequate education because funding formulas allow inner-city schools to languish. In bringing these cases, lawyers seek broad court-imposed remedies requiring states to redesign funding for public education to bring inner-city schools into line with suburban schools. Many of these suits have been successful, either as a result of a court order or through a settlement.

Poverty lawyers also increasingly utilize client empowerment strategies. For example, a legal group working with low-wage workers might provide literacy and job-skills classes to their clients while at the same time training them to advocate on their own behalf. If the group has identified particular legal issues—such as the failure to pay minimum wage—a range of strategies could be considered, of which litigation would only be one part. Other approaches might involve community pressure, publicity, or political tactics, perhaps in conjunction with a legal complaint to the National Labor Relations Board.

At first blush, it may appear that by emphasizing client empowerment, poverty law has come full circle, that, as in the days of legal aid societies, poverty lawyers are once again operating on a case-by-case basis to resolve the legal issues facing their clients. However, the new poverty lawyers—"rebellious lawyers," according to one commentator—are not satisfied by simply providing access to justice (Lopez 1992). Rather, they aim to transform a political system that supports class-based inequality by involving clients in problem solving and by empowering the poor beyond the specific issues at hand.

Finally, more traditional poverty law approaches utilizing class-action litigation have not been abandoned. For instance, after the enactment of welfare reform in 1996, states began reinstating restrictions on welfare recipients' travel reminiscent of those of the Elizabethan Poor Law. In particular, a number of states enacted laws to pay welfare benefits to recipients only at the level of the state from which they came, provided that level was lower. In 1999, the California version of this law was successfully challenged before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Saenz v. Roe* (526 U.S. 489). The Court found that the restrictions violated the federal constitutional right to travel. According to the Court, the ability to travel freely or to relocate across state lines is essential to the operation of our federal system.

The Future of Poverty Law

Poverty law has been controversial from the beginning, but it has been especially so since the inception of government funding. There is a long history of efforts by state and federal government to limit the scope of poverty law practice and therefore the access of poor people to lawyers, particularly because many legal grievances raised by the poor are leveled against the government. For example, in the 1960s, efforts were made to brand legal services lawyers as communists, thereby providing a basis for denying funding for their efforts. More recently, Congress imposed a number of restrictions on federally funded legal services lawyers. Among other things, they are barred from bringing class actions on behalf of clients, and they cannot engage in legislative advocacy on their clients' behalf. As in *Wyman v. James,* the rationale offered by Congress is that funding for legal services is charity and the government can therefore limit the funding as it chooses. Under this view, the government is under no obligation to fund lawyers to sue the government itself and could limit legal services lawyers to suits against private actors. Although this rationale has not been directly challenged, one of the federal restrictions—a ban on legal services' involvement in litigation challenging welfare reform—was struck down in 2001 by the U.S. Supreme Court on the ground that it violated lawyers' First Amendment rights.

Opponents of legal services for the poor have also targeted state methods of funding poverty lawyers, including the Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) programs. These programs, currently operating in every state, transfer interest accruing from pooled trust accounts into funds for legal services to the poor. Conservative legal groups have challenged IOLTA programs as unconstitutional takings, jeopardizing millions of dollars of funding for legal services nationwide.

Given the instability of government funding, poverty lawyers have long looked to other sources of support. Many foundations support poverty law initiatives. In addition, pro bono programs operated by bar associations generally focus on providing legal services for the poor in a wide range of areas. Some law schools mandate that students engage in pro bono work prior to graduation, and a few states monitor attorneys' pro bono contributions as part of their attorney licensing procedures.

These efforts certainly contribute to filling the needs of the poor for legal services in a range of areas. However, the efforts are limited. A significant environmental justice case, which may go on for years, will be beyond the scope of most pro bono efforts. Further, lawyers whose primary practice is in areas other than poverty law cannot be expected to develop an overall picture of poverty law that would enable them to operate strategically in advising clients or developing cases.

Beyond funding issues, the field of poverty law also faces substantive challenges in the twenty-first century. In particular, defining the affirmative role of government to address the needs of the poor continues to be a critical issue. In general, the federal courts have taken the position that constitutional protections constitute limits on government rather than affirmative obligations. For example, the government cannot deny welfare benefits without due process, but it is not required to provide the benefits in the first place. There are some exceptions to this doctrine—for instance, when the government has established a special relationship that creates a duty to act affirmatively. Such affirmative duties have been occasionally found in prisons or other settings where the government has undertaken to exercise exclusive control over an individual's circumstances.

Further, some state constitutions also incorporate affirmative obligations. Perhaps the signal example in the poverty law area is Article XVII of the New York State Constitution, which creates a state obligation to provide "aid and care to the needy." This provision has been interpreted to require that New York extend welfare benefits beyond the strict five-year time limits imposed on federal welfare benefits under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996. In addition, the provision has been used as a basis for expanding housing support for low-income people in the state.

Increasingly, poverty rights activists seeking to establish affirmative governmental obligations have also turned to the provisions of international treaties and conventions. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESC) provides affirmative rights to basic subsistence support, housing,

Saenz v. Roe, *526 U.S. 489 (1999)*

Justice Stevens delivered the opinion of the Court.

I

. . . In 1992, in order to make a relatively modest reduction in its vast welfare budget, the California Legislature enacted § 11450.03 of the state Welfare and Institutions Code. That section sought to change the California AFDC program by limiting new residents, for the first year they live in California, to the benefits they would have received in the State of their prior residence. . . .

. . . [In 1996] PRWORA replaced the AFDC program with TANF. The new statute expressly authorizes any State that receives a block grant under TANF to "apply to a family the rules (including benefit amounts) of the [TANF] program . . . of another State if the family has moved to the State from the other State and has resided in the State for less than 12 months." . . .

II

On April 1, 1997, the two respondents filed this action in the Eastern District of California . . . challenging the constitutionality of PRWORA's approval of the durational residency requirement. . . .

III

The word "travel" is not found in the text of the Constitution. Yet the "constitutional right to travel from one State to another" is firmly embedded in our jurisprudence. . . .

In Shapiro, we reviewed the constitutionality of three statutory provisions that denied welfare assistance to residents . . . who had resided within those respective jurisdictions less than one year immediately preceding their applications for assistance. . . . [W]e began by noting that the Court had long "recognized that the nature of our Federal Union and our constitutional concepts of personal liberty unite to require that all citizens be free to travel throughout the length and breadth of our land uninhibited by statutes, rules, or regulations which unreasonably burden or restrict this movement." We squarely held that it was "constitutionally impermissible" for a State to enact durational residency requirements for the purpose of inhibiting the migration by needy persons into the State. . . . We further held that a classification that had the effect of imposing a penalty on the exercise of the right to travel violated the Equal Protection Clause "unless shown to be necessary to promote a compelling governmental interest," and that no such showing had been made. . . .

IV

The "right to travel" discussed in our cases embraces at least three different components. It protects the right of a citizen of one State to enter and to leave another State, the right to be treated as a welcome visitor rather than an unfriendly alien when temporarily present in the second State, and, for those travelers who elect to become permanent residents, the right to be treated like other citizens of that State. . . .

. . . What is at issue in this case, then, is th[e] third aspect of the right to travel—the right of the newly arrived citizen to the same privileges and immunities enjoyed by other citizens of the same State. That right is protected not only by the new arrival's status as a state citizen, but also by her status as a citizen of the United States. . . . That additional source of protection is plainly identified in the opening words of the Fourteenth Amendment:

"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; . . ." U.S. Const., Amdt. 14, § 1. . . .

. . . [I]t has always been common ground that this Clause protects the third component of the right to travel. Writing for the majority in the Slaughter-House Cases, Justice Miller explained that one of the privileges conferred by this Clause "is that a citizen of the United States can, of his own volition, become a citizen of any State of the Union by a bona fide residence therein, with the same rights as other citizens of that State." Id., at 80. . . .

That newly arrived citizens "have two political capacities, one state and one federal," adds special force to their claim that they have the same rights as others who share their citizenship. . . . Neither mere rationality nor some intermediate standard of review should be used to judge the constitutionality of a state rule that discriminates against some of its citizens because they have been domiciled in the State for less than a year. The appropriate standard may be more categorical than that articulated in *Shapiro,* see supra, at 8–9, but it is surely no less strict.

V

. . . [S]ince the right to travel embraces the citizen's right to be treated equally in her new State of residence, the discriminatory classification is itself a penalty.

It is undisputed that respondents and the members of the class that they represent are citizens of California and that their need for welfare benefits is unrelated to the length of time that they have resided in California. . . .

The classifications challenged in this case—and there are many—are defined entirely by (a) the period of residency in California and (b) the location of the prior residences of the disfavored class members. . . .

These classifications may not be justified by a purpose to deter welfare applicants from migrating to California for three reasons. First, although it is reasonable to assume that some persons may be motivated to move for the purpose of obtaining higher benefits, the empirical evidence reviewed by the District Judge, which takes into account the high cost of living in California, indicates that the number of such persons is quite small—surely not large enough to justify a burden on those who had no such motive. . . . Second, California has represented to the Court that the legislation was not enacted for any such reason. . . . Third, even if it were, as we squarely held in *Shapiro v. Thompson,* such a purpose would be unequivocally impermissible.

. . . California has . . . advanced an entirely fiscal justification for its multitiered scheme. . . . The question is not whether such saving is a legitimate purpose but whether the State may accomplish that end by the discriminatory means it has chosen. . . . [T]he Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment expressly equates citizenship with residence. . . . It is equally clear that the Clause does not tolerate a hierarchy of 45 subclasses of similarly situated citizens based on the location of their prior residence. . . . Thus § 11450.03 is doubly vulnerable: Neither the duration of respondents' California residence, nor the identity of their prior States of residence, has any relevance to their need for benefits. Nor do those factors bear any relationship to the State's interest in making an equitable allocation of the funds to be distributed among its needy citizens. As in *Shapiro,* we reject any contributory rationale for the denial of benefits to new residents. . . .

. . . In short, the State's legitimate interest in saving money provides no justification for its decision to discriminate among equally eligible citizens.

VI

The question that remains is whether congressional approval of durational residency requirements in the 1996 amendment to the Social Security Act somehow resuscitates the constitutionality of § 11450.03. That question is readily answered, for we have consistently held that Congress may not authorize the States to violate the Fourteenth Amendment. . . . Moreover, the protection afforded to the citizen by the Citizenship Clause of that Amendment is a limitation on the powers of the National Government as well as the States. . . .

. . . Citizens of the United States, whether rich or poor, have the right to choose to be citizens "of the State wherein they reside." U.S. Const., Amdt. 14, § 1. The States, however, do not have any right to select their citizens. . . . The Fourteenth Amendment, like the Constitution itself, was, as Justice Cardozo put it, "framed upon the theory that the peoples of the several states must sink or swim together, and that in the long run prosperity and salvation are in union and not division." . . .

The judgment of the Court of Appeals is affirmed.

food, fair wages, and other necessities. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) addresses democratic processes, including affirmative rights to due process and equal protection. The United States has not signed the ICESC, but it has signed and ratified the ICCPR. As antipoverty activists make global connections with poor people's movements internationally, international legal authorities will become an increasingly important part of poverty law.

Martha F. Davis

See also: Legal Aid/Legal Services; New Property; Poor Laws; Vagrancy Laws/Settlement Laws/Residency Requirements; War on Poverty; Welfare Law Center; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Poverty Line

A poverty line is a dollar figure (or figures) below which people experience economic deprivation or do not have a socially acceptable minimum standard of living. Poverty lines have been used to assess the adequacy of wages, to identify populations for whom ameliorative social policies should be developed, and to study the effects of public policies. Although embraced as a way to define poverty as an "objective," that is, quantifiable rather than moral, condition, poverty lines are also a reflection of broader social norms and have historically emerged out of efforts for social reform and political struggle. Many unofficial poverty lines were published in the United States during the Progressive Era, often based on standard budgets developed by social workers to assess the income levels necessary for families to meet basic needs. The federal government began using what is now its official poverty line in 1965 during the War on Poverty, based on the work of Social Security Administration analyst Mollie Orshansky. Reflecting widespread dissatisfaction with the official measure, a panel of social scientists proposed a new approach for developing an official poverty measure in 1995; this proposal is still being studied.

Unofficial poverty lines and income inadequacy measures were developed in the United States as early as 1871, when the first leaders of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor became the first known Americans to associate a specific dollar figure with the word "poverty" (Fisher 1997, 10, n58; Barrington and Fisher forthcoming). Many of these early measures took the form of "standard budgets"—lists of goods and services, including their costs, that a family of specified composition would need to live at a designated level of well-being. Successive poverty lines tended to rise in real terms as the real income of the general population increased—a phenomenon termed "the income elasticity of the poverty line" (Fisher 1992, 1997; Barrington and Fisher forthcoming).

The late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century measures differed in significant ways from the current poverty measure. One of the most significant differences is the fact that the earlier measures were commonly developed by social investigators, often female, acting as advocates of the disadvantaged rather than by academic social scientists. Developed as the United States was urbanizing and industrializing, they grew out of a context of labor conflict over wages and working conditions; concern about the living conditions of the low-paid, largely immigrant, industrial workforce; and rising inequality as the extremes of wealth and poverty became increasingly visible. During the Progressive Era and into the early 1920s, a growing number of income inadequacy lines and budgets were published, mostly by social workers and other advocates of unskilled workers, many of whom wanted these workers' wages to be set on the basis of basic family needs rather than on the basis of the supply and demand for labor considered as a commodity. Labor unions also used standard budgets (usually at above-poverty levels) in efforts to win higher wages. Although such standard budgets were generally established at the city or local level, Robert Hunter's influential 1904 book *Poverty* included the first (unofficial) poverty line for the whole nation: $460 for a family of five in the industrial North and $300 for the same family in the South. He used this measure to show that poverty was not confined to the "dependent" or "pauper" class. Large numbers of employed people were living below even a minimal standard of income, and their problems could be traced to fundamental inequities in industrial capitalism that would only be resolved through political struggle and reform.

Although numerous unofficial local budgets and other measures were published, the idea of a federal, officially sanctioned poverty line was much slower in coming. Federal agencies developed several low-income lines during the Great Depression, but none were given official status. In 1937, for instance, the Works Progress Administration published two standard budgets; the lower one, the emergency budget, was conceptually equivalent to the concept of poverty held in the 1960s. In 1949, a congressional subcommittee set an unofficial family low-income line of $2,000; this became the most commonly cited poverty line during most of the 1950s, a period of expanding general prosperity when few were paying attention to the still-widespread poverty problem in the United States. By the late 1950s, this postwar complacency was starting to change as books such as economist John Kenneth Galbraith's *Affluent Society* (1958) and activist Michael Harrington's *Other America* (1962) drew attention to the glaring contradiction of "poverty amidst plenty." These analyses signaled a major break in the tradition of calculating poverty lines: Instead of deriving them from standard budgets based on some measure of itemized living costs, analysts generally simply set "bottom-line" dollar figures, with more or less extensive supporting rationales. This was the practice followed in the analysis accompanying President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of a War on Poverty in January 1964, when the Council of Economic Advisors, in its 1964 *Economic Report of the President*, set a family poverty line of $3,000. This became the federal government's first (quasi-official) poverty line (Fisher 1992, 3–4; 1997, 32–34, 41–55).

Mollie Orshansky, a civil servant in the Social Security Administration (SSA), was disturbed that the new $3,000 poverty line was not adjusted by family size. In January 1965, she published an article analyzing the poverty population using thresholds adjusted by family size. Orshansky based her thresholds on what was known as the "economy food plan": the cheapest of the four food plans developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to present nutritionally adequate diets at different cost levels. Based on an Agriculture Department survey showing that families (at all income levels) spent about one-third of their after-tax monetary income on food in 1955, Orshansky calculated poverty thresholds for different family sizes by multiplying economy food plan costs by three. In presenting these thresholds, Orshansky emphasized that they were barely enough for a family to get by, leaving very little room for more than the most minimal provisions, and suggested that they should be used as a measure of income inadequacy, not of income adequacy.

Despite the problems acknowledged by Orshansky and others—and although her original intent had not been to develop a national poverty measure—the Office of Economic Opportunity, as the lead agency in the War on Poverty, adopted her thresholds as a working or quasi-official definition of poverty in May 1965, replacing the $3,000 figure. The U.S. Census Bureau began publishing poverty statistics based on Orshansky's thresholds in 1967.

As early as November 1965, SSA policymakers and analysts had begun advocating that the poverty thresholds be adjusted to reflect increases in general living standards. In 1968, an SSA plan to raise the thresholds modestly was rejected, but an interagency committee was appointed to reevaluate the thresholds. This committee decided to adjust the thresholds only for price changes reflected in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and not for changes in general living standards. In 1969, the Bureau of the Budget designated the thresholds tied to the CPI as the federal government's official statistical definition of poverty.

Ever since the poverty thresholds and the Census Bureau income definition used with them were adopted, they have been criticized on various grounds. Critics have argued, on the one hand, that they seriously underestimate actual living costs (such as health care, housing, child care, transportation to work) and, on the other, that they do not account for noncash benefits in measuring family income (Ruggles 1990; Citro and Michael 1995). In 1992, in response to a congressional committee request, the National Research Council appointed a Panel on Poverty and Family Assistance to conduct a study to support a possible revision of the official poverty measure. In its 1995 report (Citro and Michael 1995), the panel proposed a new approach for developing an official U.S. poverty measure, although it did not propose a single set of poverty-threshold dollar figures. The panel proposed the development of a new poverty threshold for a reference family type, to be expressed as the cost of certain necessities, set within a dollar range based in part on consideration of standard budgets and relative and "subjective" poverty thresholds. The new threshold would be updated annually on a "quasi-relative" basis reflecting changes in actual expenditures for certain necessities. The panel deliberately adopted a resources (income) definition consistent with the concept underlying the poverty threshold, defining "resources" as the sum of money income from all sources plus the value of certain near-money benefits, minus taxes and certain expenses that cannot purchase goods and services included in the threshold concept.

The Census Bureau and other federal agencies are engaged in an ongoing study of experimental poverty measures based on the poverty panel's recommendations. This work, still in progress in 2004, is not expected to be completed for several years. Meanwhile, a growing number of analysts and advocates have turned once again to standard budgets and other alternative poverty measures in assessing the extent of need, the impact of social and economic policies, and the need for reform.

Gordon M. Fisher

[The views expressed in this entry are those of the author and do not represent the position of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.]

See also: *The Affluent Society; Economic Report of 1964; The Other America; Poverty;* Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Social Work; War on Poverty

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Poverty Research

Broadly defined, poverty research is a wide-ranging field of study that encompasses inquiry into the social, economic, and political processes that generate inequality as well as more narrowly focused analyses of poor people and antipoverty programs. In the prosperous United States, where studying poverty has become a sizable research enterprise, poverty research can be sorted into three major, sometimes overlapping categories, each of which draws on a distinct historical tradition of research and action.

The first and, in the United States, largest and dominant category of poverty research consists of analyses of the socioeconomic characteristics and behavioral patterns of people in poverty or on welfare, as well as evaluations of social programs aimed at the poor. Conducted with funding from government, foundations, or scientific agencies, and often under the auspices of think tanks or university-based research institutes, this type of research has gained quasi-official status in the United States since the 1960s, when federal officials purposely set out to establish a contract research industry to serve the needs of the War on Poverty. That purpose, initially geared toward eliminating poverty, was soon overshadowed by the political demands of welfare reform. Grounded in the assumptions, methods, and concepts of neoclassical economics, poverty research is often highly technical, statistical, based on individual-level analysis, and for the most part does not subject the market or other institutions and cultural norms of mainstream society to critical scrutiny.

A second category is research situated within specific places—usually low-income communities or neighborhoods—that uses some combination of quantitative and qualitative or ethnographic research to capture the day-to-day realities, or the "human face," of poverty, to explore the conditions that foster it, and otherwise to situate the occurrence of poverty within the context of its immediate social and economic environment. Used in traditions that have looked upon poor communities as "laboratories" for exploring social "disorganization" and cultural deviance, community-based research originated in reform-oriented, Progressive-Era efforts to document the ravages of unregulated capitalism and labor market exploitation on community and family life; more recently, it has become a mainstay of social action research, in which community residents participate in setting and carrying out research agendas that reflect their priorities for change.

In contrast to studies that tend to isolate poverty as a somehow separate, self-contained subject of study, a third category of poverty research consists of more theoretical or more historical inquiries into the nature and incidence of poverty in relation to mainstream political economy, culture, and social relations. Such research tends not to focus exclusively on poor people and places; instead, it favors scrutinizing the policies, institutions, social practices, and cultural norms that generate disparities in material well-being. Although often drawing on the same types of empirical evidence that inform the other literatures, these studies frame the central question of poverty's underlying "causes" more broadly, going beyond the immediate circumstances of poor households or communities to the structural divisions of class, gender, and race and the political and economic dynamics that sustain them. Poverty, in this literature, is not a social or individual "pathology" or digression from the norm so much as it is a product of the normal workings of an unequally structured political economy and society.

For all their differences, these categories of research share certain characteristic features of the field. Thus, poverty research is largely an undertaking of relatively privileged, educated, middle-class professionals—mainly social scientists with academic training in economics, sociology, anthropology, history, or related fields—although it is at times conducted by community organizers and social reform activists and, occasionally, with the active participation of poor people. It also has an "applied" mission: Poverty research—in the eyes of most of its practitioners if not always in the views of the objects of its scrutiny—will help poor people by providing the knowledge for informed social policy or political action. In the United States, this notion has historically animated the development of an elaborate array of research methodologies and conceptual frameworks and, in the latter half of the twentieth century, the emergence of a substantial government- and foundation-funded research industry devoted to the study of poverty and its "causes, consequences, and cures." Although this research industry claims to produce value-free, politically neutral social science, in reality its increasingly narrow focus on the personal "deficits" and behavioral "deviance" of poor people has played an important role in the political revival of a very old idea: that the crux of the "poverty problem" rests in the individual and that the key to resolving it rests on ending welfare "dependency." Hence, an additional, if often unacknowledged, feature of poverty research: It is far more than a mere collection of facts and empirically or theoretically derived explanations; it is as much a product of specific historical developments—of the prevailing values, political and ideological struggles, social and economic relations, and cultural expectations of a given society—as is poverty itself. Indeed, the very notion of an "objective," social scientific, research-based understanding of poverty is itself rooted in a significant historical and ideological shift, away from the idea of poverty as a moral condition in need of moral redemption and toward a notion of poverty as a social condition, amenable to social intervention and reform.

Progressive-Era Roots

Although poor people have come under the scrutiny of socially designated investigators for centuries, it was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that poverty research began to assume its modern form. Before then, investigations of poverty were largely equated with investigations of poor people, of their moral character and "deservingness" of some form of public assistance, and especially, of their propensity to "pauperism," or what is today referred to as "welfare dependency." Often conducted by members of the clergy or by the legions of (female) "friendly visitors" associated with local charities, such investigations were filtered through the biases of racial, ethnic, and class prejudice and the gender norms separating investigators from investigated, and above all through the conviction that insufficiently discriminating public assistance would promote laziness, intemperance, sexual license, and profligate childbearing among the poor. In the logic inspired by social theorist Thomas Malthus, it was feared that public assistance would protect the poor from the otherwise "natural" restraints of hunger, privation, or death. Rooted though they were in Protestant morality and an ethos of self-reliance, such prohibitions on relief also found powerful undergirding in classical liberalism, which in the United States of the industrializing Gilded Age took the form of an aggressively laissez-faire doctrine of unregulated capitalist development that relied on an abundance of low-wage labor for its wherewithal and that vehemently opposed relief.

It was against such powerful and pervasive cultural convictions that, beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing throughout what became known as the era of progressive reform, a diverse array of intellectuals, reform activists, child welfare advocates, journalists, and social documentarians set out to bring a new understanding to the problem of poverty. Inspired by the work of British merchant and amateur statistician Charles Booth—whose massive, seventeen-volume study entitled *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1889–1903) was the basis of traveling exhibits around the world—American intellectuals and reformers associated with the settlement house movement launched a series of ambitious social surveys to document work and living conditions in the heavily immigrant, working-class neighborhoods of major industrial cities. Among the most famous were the *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895), which surveyed the neighborhood surrounding Chicago's Hull House settlement, and the six volumes (1909–1914) that resulted from the Pittsburgh Survey, an immense study of working-class Pittsburgh that, with substantial funding from the newly established Russell Sage Foundation, drew on dozens of nationally known experts as well as a large staff of paid and volunteer researchers. These and other surveys became the basis of traveling exhibits in which, through written, graphic, and photographic displays, investigators tied the incidence of such problems as poverty, delinquency, crime, and disease not to the personal failings of individuals but to the great social questions of the day: rapid urbanization, large-scale immigration, and, especially, the low wages, exploitative working conditions, and vast inequities wrought by unregulated capitalist growth. This emphasis on work and working conditions was echoed in Robert Hunter's *Poverty* (1904), the first national study of the subject based on official income data, among other sources. Confirming what other surveyors had found on the city level, Hunter reported that the vast majority of people living below his bare-bones measure of poverty were poor because of the low wages they earned or because of some related "social wrong."

Studies showed that it was no coincidence that the problems of low wages and labor exploitation were especially concentrated among "new" immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. These workers were less likely to be unionized, could more easily be exploited, were not yet proficient in English, and, in the biased eyes of the native-born, middle-class investigators, were culturally inclined to passive acceptance of their lot. Women and children were especially exploited as wage earners, as numerous investigations by maternalist and feminist reformers made clear, at least in part due to the prevailing ideology of the male breadwinner that helped justify their lower wages. It was up to the African American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois, in his survey *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), to reveal the deeply ingrained racial prejudices, pseudoscientific racial ideologies, and institutionalized practices that kept so many of the residents of Philadelphia's African American Seventh Ward in poverty and racially segregated housing and that shut them out of higher-paying employment.

In offering what historian Robert Bremner (1956) dubbed a "new view" of poverty, Progressive-Era social investigators were not necessarily abandoning the moral distinctions and understandings of the past. They, too, wrote of the dangers of "pauperism," drew distinctions between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor, and at times wrote of immigrants as culturally, if not morally, deficient. But they were more significantly aiming to reframe the moral issue—from a focus on individual behaviors to one on the social and economic conditions that fostered them—and in the process to rechannel the direction of reform. And in shifting attention from the problem of "pauperism" to the much larger and underlying one of poverty, they were challenging the individualistic logic of laissez-faire. This did not make the Progressive social investigators any less committed to the rigors of "objective" social scientific research. It did, however, make them willing to subject a social order that many people treated as natural to the rigors of empirical research and to use such research as the basis of reform. In this sense, it is important to underscore the fact that the origins of poverty research can be traced to the reform movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and to the overarching movement to make liberalism an ideology not of laissez faire but of reform.

As important as the new Progressive-Era view was in laying the groundwork for social scientific poverty research, several subsequent developments served to marginalize this early reform sensibility and to set the stage for the narrower type of inquiry that has come to dominate contemporary poverty research. Especially important was the growing professionalization of social investigation around an academic ideal modeled on the natural sciences—a development that tended to undercut the authority of the female and nonwhite investigators who continued to have limited access to academic opportunities. An equally significant and related factor was a turn away from the emphasis on political economy that had marked earlier studies toward the social psychological and cultural approaches of what came, after World War II, to be known as the behavioral sciences. Thus, in the urban neighborhood studies of the interwar Chicago school of sociology, poverty was understood not as a product of low wages and labor exploitation or, as Du Bois had argued, of an institutionalized economic, residential, and psychological color line, but as the result of the cultural backwardness and internal social "disorganization" experienced by immigrants and African Americans newly arrived in the industrial city from predominantly rural backgrounds. The implications of this shift in perspective were profound: Social disorganization and cultural "lag," not industrial capitalism, were at the root of the poverty problem; cultural assimilation and individual rehabilitation were the appropriate responses. And although social scientists such as E. Wight Bakke, in his Depression-era study of unemployed workers, would use this behavioral turn to explore the deep psychological costs of unemployment and to argue for labor reforms, with the return of prosperity, poverty research turned increasingly to the supposedly distinctive culture and psychology of the poor.

Poverty Research in the Affluent Society

Postwar politics and economy further encouraged the trend toward behavioral approaches to poverty research, as the experience of mass prosperity—including by a growing proportion of the white industrial working class—sent scholars in search of explanations for the paradox of poverty amid affluence. The vast expansion of government and foundation funding made the behavioral sciences the leading edge of social research as policymakers and government officials looked for individualized and therapeutic rather than structural solutions to social problems. Equally important was the influence of Cold War politics on postwar social science, which labeled as "subversive" or "socialistic" such ideas as universal health care and public housing and analyses that questioned capitalism or prevailing class, gender, and race relations. At the same time, it was in the course of Cold War–financed studies of "underdeveloped" communities in Mexico that anthropologist Oscar Lewis initially came up with the theory of a "culture of poverty." Conceptualized as an all-encompassing set of socially backward or deviant attitudes, psychological orientations, behaviors, and moral codes, the "culture of poverty" was held to keep whole classes of poor people isolated from mainstream society and to render them incapable of functioning in modernized industrial economies that required the self-reliance, work ethic, sexual morality, and ability to defer gratification that poor people supposedly lacked.

Based on highly problematic, culturally biased assumptions as well as on methods of observation and psychological testing that were later discredited, the idea of a "culture of poverty" and its many variations nevertheless became firmly established within liberal social science during the postwar years, and they were used to justify various social service–oriented interventions designed to "break the cycle of poverty." Similarly, the notion that African American poverty was rooted in some form of social "pathology"—specifically, in the female-headed, matriarchal family structure—was widely adopted in liberal social thought, even though the notion was subjected to well-documented criticism in the wake of then assistant secretary of labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan's report on the "crisis" of the Negro family in 1965. For a brief period, the culture of poverty became part of the critical discourse of the Left. As popularized by social democrat Michael Harrington in his influential book *The Other America* (1962), the imagery of a powerless, alienated class caught up in an endless cycle served as a broader critique of the political inadequacies of liberal social provision and of the skewed priorities of affluent America. In later years, well after some of their original proponents had abandoned them, these discredited yet still-influential theories would be adopted by conservatives to argue that social interventions such as welfare were only feeding the culture of poverty and ought to be abandoned in favor of more punitive work requirements, marriage promotion, and other policies to change the behavior of the poor. Thus, when in the 1980s left-liberal sociologist William Julius Wilson wrote about the emergence of an impoverished, culturally alienated urban "underclass" as a byproduct of deindustrialization, long-term unemployment, and "social isolation," conservatives quickly embraced the notion as evidence of government-subsidized deviance on the part of the poor.

Despite the sensationalistic appeal of these cultural depictions, it was economists on the staff of President John F. Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisors in the early 1960s who emerged as the central players in developing a strategy for what later became the War on Poverty and in shaping the research it spawned. Committed to the principles of British economist John Maynard Keynes, they advocated a stronger federal role in stimulating economic growth and full employment, both of which they saw as key to understanding and fighting poverty. Confident of their ability to reduce—and ultimately to eliminate—poverty by keeping employment rates high, they minimized the problems of low wages, labor relations, discrimination, and structural transformation that had absorbed many Progressive-Era investigators (as well as their contemporaries on the liberal left) and focused instead on the "human capital" or skill deficiencies of poor people. Although defining poverty in the economic categories of employment and income and rejecting harder-to-measure psychological and cultural frames, they nevertheless shared something important with the cultural theorists: They made the study of poverty about measuring and analyzing the characteristics of poor people rather than about the social structures and processes shaping the distribution of income, opportunity, and wealth.

Nothing was more important to the course of poverty research than President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of an official War on Poverty in 1964. Adopting ideas from both the "culture of poverty" approach and the human capital approach, but also struck by the relative dearth of poverty research, officials at the newly created Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) established the funding and the institutional basis for the poverty research industry and for its enormous growth in the decades to follow. Seeking to replicate the model of, and indeed actually recruiting analysts from, the postwar defense research industry, OEO created an office of research and program evaluation. Staffed heavily with economists trained in the methods of cost-benefit analysis, the office was created to generate the knowledge necessary for identifying the target, setting the goals, and ultimately winning the War on Poverty. Favoring "hard," quantitative data and research methods that could provide measurable indicators of program success, the OEO research office generated a surge of new research while also creating the institutional apparatus—the "think tanks that think for the poor"—that would quickly come to dominate and define poverty research. This approach to poverty research soon displaced—in the competition for funding, resources, and legitimacy—an alternative, more qualitative, and ultimately political model of research associated with the controversial Community Action Program. Marginalized though they were, these research strategies continued at the community level and have more recently been reinvigorated in participatory research and action projects.

With the demise of the official War on Poverty in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the priorities and agendas of the poverty research industry became increasingly driven by the politics of welfare reform. Initially focused on such provisions as the guaranteed income envisioned in the Nixon administration's Family Assistance Plan, poverty research soon shifted as the Reagan administration made the problem of welfare "dependency"—and the research dollars to explore it—a central organizing theme. Accompanying the conservative capture of the welfare debate, an explicitly conservative network of think tanks and research institutes developed to rival the more established Great Society poverty research industry. Although often couching their books and reports in the standard language of analytic research, conservatives mounted a moral and ideological attack on welfare, welfare recipients, and the poor more generally—appropriating, ironically, ideas about a "culture of poverty" and an "underclass" that had originated in liberal research. With books such as Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* (1984) and a steady stream of research briefs from the right-wing Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, and others, the focus of poverty research shifted even further away from income and need and toward welfare dependency, out-of-wedlock childbearing, and a host of behavioral "pathologies" as the key social problems to be resolved. In a return to the Malthusian, laissez-faire, moralistic logic that Progressive-Era social investigators had sought to challenge, this politically ascendant poverty research has provided a powerful rationale for policies that—while ignoring such issues as growing wage inequality and enduring discrimination—have made ending welfare and remoralizing poor people their sole goals. And although many of the scholars associated with the more liberally rooted poverty research industry do not necessarily subscribe to these views, their own narrow focus on the individual characteristics of poor people—reinforced by the spurt of funding for research on the extent of welfare "dependency" and the impact of recent welfare reform in bringing it to an end—has effectively accommodated the repauperization of the poverty issue orchestrated by the conservative Right.

Nevertheless, today as in the past, alternative, more broadly gauged and structurally oriented lines of inquiry have challenged the dominance of the narrowly construed study of poor people and welfare that has come to be designated as "objective," "scientific" poverty research. Participatory research is an essential component of a number of community-based organizations—such as the Applied Research Center (ARC) in Oakland, California—which combine social science with organizing to document the roots of poverty in the impact of globalization, economic restructuring, structural racism, and political disenfranchisement and to frame antipoverty policy as an issue of social and economic justice rather than of individual rehabilitation. Ethnographic research in urban and rural communities has also used a more "ground-up" perspective to cut through unexamined assumptions of cultural "pathology," instead documenting the variegated economic, social, and political strategies that shape daily life in low-income communities. A well-established literature has built on the theoretical insights of Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward—as well as on the sensibilities and experiences of the civil rights, labor, and welfare rights movements—to examine the political dimensions of poverty while reconceptualizing welfare as a political right. This and other, historical, research has tied poverty to major developments in political economy as well as to the related political struggles and policy choices that have shaped and dramatically reshaped the U.S. welfare state. The influence of feminist theory has been especially notable since the 1980s, illuminating the gendered nature of social and economic inequities perpetuated in labor markets, social policy, law, and family relations.

Significantly, these and other alternative approaches are often dismissed as "ideological" or "unscientific" in mainstream poverty research circles. In reality, however, what distinguishes them from more nominally "scientific" poverty research is not that they are less committed to the norms of social scientific evidence and objectivity but that they are willing to recognize the inherently and historically political and ideological nature of poverty research.

Alice O'Connor

See also: Applied Research Center; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Malthusianism; New Right; Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Poverty Line; Social Surveys; "Underclass"; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Privatization

Privatization is the process of transferring government functions to the private sector. State and local governments are increasingly paying private entities to deliver social services and welfare-related benefits. These private providers include small, community-based nonprofit organizations; large national nonprofit organizations such as the Salvation Army; large for-profit companies; and religious organizations. Although private entities have long aided the poor, after the enactment of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), welfare privatization has expanded in three significant ways. First, large for-profit companies have entered the field, competing for lucrative government contracts. Second, governments that choose to privatize must open up the process to religious organizations such as churches, synagogues, and mosques, an initiative commonly called "charitable choice." Third, private entities are not only delivering direct services (including substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, job training, and the like) but are also taking over case-management functions, including decisions about eligibility and sanctions.

In most social welfare regimes, privatization takes one of two forms: (1) The government chooses to "contract out" services, or (2) the government gives welfare recipients vouchers that can be redeemed with private providers. Proponents of privatization generally argue that competition among providers results in cost savings as well as in increased efficiency and innovation. Alternatively, other proponents stress the value of having private community groups serve as a mediating force between government and its citizens. Opponents counter that government can best provide services in a uniform, nondiscriminatory manner and that private entities are susceptible to fraud, corruption, and conflicts of interest. Unions also point to the loss of higher-paying union jobs that result from privatization.

As described by then-president Bill Clinton, the PRWORA was designed to "end welfare as we know it." Not only did the PRWORA change the philosophy of welfare by making work a condition of benefits, but it also changed how welfare is delivered. The PRWORA pushed much of the authority over welfare administration from the federal government to the states, a process known as "devolution." The PRWORA also gave the states significant latitude to devolve their authority down to private providers. Under the PRWORA, frontline welfare workers no longer simply verify that applicants meet objective eligibility criteria and issue checks; instead, they exercise vast discretion in counseling clients to assist them in obtaining work. In privatized jurisdictions, this discretion rests in the hands of private employees. Notably, states are also privatizing other social services, particularly those related to children, such as foster care, adoption, and child support enforcement.

Historically, both government and private entities have played a role in poor relief in the United States, although their respective contributions have ebbed and flowed over the years, often in opposition to one another. There simply never was a mythic "golden age" during which private charity alone aided the poor. Until the twentieth century, most poor relief was provided at the local level by a mix of public and private efforts. The Great Depression brought the federal government into poor relief for the first time. In 1935, the Social Security Act created Aid to Dependent Children (ADC; later Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC), a federally funded, needs-based, cash-assistance program administered by the states (and replaced in 1996 by TANF).

However, federal funds did not extend to private groups until the 1960s, when President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson emphasized a service-based strategy to help the poor obtain work through a vast network of private community action agencies. This initiative was short-lived, but it created an interdependent relationship between government and local providers that continues to this day. Currently, private providers deliver the bulk of government social services and, in turn, many receive the greatest share of their income from governments (Salamon 1995, 15).

The available evidence strongly suggests that privatization works best for straightforward municipal services such as trash collection and road paving and less well for complex social services (Donahue 1989, 217). In the latter type of programs, it is difficult to foster meaningful competition and to define measurable objectives. There are no large-scale studies comparing the results of private and government welfare programs, and such a study might be impossible given the largely decentralized nature of the current welfare system. As of 2002, most of the documented deficiencies in privatized welfare programs involved those run by for-profit companies, which have incentives to increase profits by pushing welfare beneficiaries out of programs and reducing service levels.

The legal consequences of privatization make it difficult for welfare beneficiaries and their advocates to remedy such problems. Unlike private entities, government agencies that deliver welfare benefits are subject to a wide variety of constraints on their discretion. For instance, government agencies must provide fair procedures before depriving persons of benefits. In addition, government records are subject to public review. Further, the government cannot violate the constitutional rights of social service beneficiaries, including their free speech rights, their rights against unlawful search and seizure, and their due process rights. Yet these principles of public law generally do not apply in privatized regimes (Gilman 2001, 641).

Although beneficiaries may have rights that arise from the contracts between the government and private providers, they have no right to be involved during the procurement process, when contracts are solicited, awarded, and negotiated. Given the lack of political and social capital in poor communities, these contracts rarely grant welfare recipients enforceable rights. Moreover, from a contract-management perspective, most local governments lack the expertise to draft contracts that define clear objectives and effectively measure outcomes. In jurisdictions that utilize vouchers, recipients may have even fewer enforceable rights, other than the "right" to go to another provider. Thus, in privatized jurisdictions, welfare recipients interact with employees of private companies who are insulated from public accountability and who exercise vast discretion. At the same time, recipients have fewer enforceable protections than they do in government-run jurisdictions.

Michele Estrin Gilman

See also: Charitable Choice; Community-Based Organizations; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntarism; War on Poverty; Welfare Administration; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Progress and Poverty, *Henry George*

Like many Americans living in the depression-ravaged 1870s, Henry George (1839–1897) worried about the deleterious effects of industrial capitalism on American democracy. Why, he wondered, were the many indisputable benefits of industrial progress accompanied by an increase in the number of people living in poverty? Could the defining features of the nation's republican ideals and institutions—liberty, equality, and opportunity—endure in a society increasingly dominated by large corporations and powerful millionaires like Jay Gould and William K. Vanderbilt? Tormented by these questions and committed to answering them, in 1877 he began writing a book he titled *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth*. Published in 1879, it became the best-selling book on political economy in the nineteenth century.

George, a reform-minded newspaper editor living in California, had only a sixth-grade education. Nonetheless, he read widely, especially the classics of political economy, in preparation for writing his book. He was also an evangelical Christian who viewed his reform effort in almost messianic terms and laced much of *Progress and Poverty* with biblical references.

Developed over ten chapters and 534 pages, George's argument was that a major portion of the wealth created by society was being siphoned off by real estate speculators and land monopolists. They grew rich on these unearned profits while society's producers toiled in poverty with little opportunity for advancement. The solution, asserted George, was for the government to appropriate these profits through a uniform land-value tax, or what his supporters eventually took to calling the "single tax." With the rewards of speculation eliminated, undeveloped land and resources held by speculators would be sold to those seeking to develop it. Poverty would decline, and economic opportunity would once again flourish. Society would also benefit from increased tax revenues that would pay for parks, schools, libraries, and other public institutions.

Progress and Poverty attracted a wide readership among intellectuals, middle-class reformers, and wage earners in America and Great Britain. The latter were drawn more to George's vivid description of the ills plaguing Gilded Age society and his apocalyptic warnings against inaction than to his single-tax solution. In 1886, workers in New York City nominated George as the United Labor Party candidate for mayor; he nearly won. George's public career faded after that, but his middle-class followers formed Single Tax Clubs all across the country to promote his plan, a movement that eventually spread to Great Britain, Canada, Ireland, Australia, Denmark, and Hungary. The influence of *Progress and Poverty* also outlasted its author, shaping the consciousness of many prominent late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century reformers, including Jacob A. Riis, Ignatius Donnelly, Father John A. Ryan, and Robert La Follette.

Progress and Poverty remains in print today, and Henry George schools and Single Tax organizations operate in at least twenty-two countries.

Edward T. O'Donnell

See also: Capitalism; Debt; Economic Depression; Nineteenth Century; Property; Wealth

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Property

Property can most simply be defined as enforceable claims to the uses and benefits of particular resources. Property has been implicated in the history of poverty and social welfare in several important ways. First, inequality in the distribution of property—and the benefits that accompany property ownership—is itself a major dimension of broader social and economic inequality in the United States. Second, despite various policies and institutions aimed at "democratizing" property in the form of home ownership, property ownership has historically been concentrated in the hands of wealthy individual and corporate owners and has become more so in recent decades. Third, large individual and corporate property owners have historically wielded considerable political power and influence, especially over policies (such as environmental regulation and tax policy) that may threaten their interests. Fourth, laws governing landownership and land use, enforcement of private restrictive covenants, and banking policies have historically excluded people on the basis of race and national origins from access to property. Such exclusions have had far-reaching repercussions, since property ownership and place of residence have served as gateways to such fundamental benefits of social citizenship as education. Finally, a substantial proportion of property ownership in colonial and pre–Civil War America was in the form of human bondage, or chattel slavery, with enormous and lasting consequences for African Americans' struggle for economic as well as political and social equality, consequences that are still being played out in contemporary social policy debates.

"Real property" refers to land and other natural resources; "personalty" or "personal property" refers to movable goods or claims to revenue from such "intangible" instruments as stocks, bonds, and commercial notes. "Private property" is the right of individuals or organizations to exclusive uses and benefits of resources. "Public property" is the rights held by government officials on behalf of a larger citizenry. "Common property" is the right of members of a community not to be excluded from the uses and benefits of resources. What constitutes legitimate enforceable claims to resources is a political question and has been subject to repeated contests in the United States. With the shift from an agrarian republic that mixed independent proprietorship and slavery to a corporate economy dominated by industrial and then financial capital, land gave way to revenues as the dominant form of property.

American rules governing property rights derive from English common law, although eight states, originally settled by French or Spanish colonists, adopted features of Continental civil law, including community property in marriage. Private property rights have never been absolute; they are subject to obligations (for example, a proprietor's duty not to use property in such a way as to injure the interests of a neighbor) and to government powers of taxation and regulation. Through most of the nineteenth century, southerners exercised common property rights for fishing, hunting, and grazing cattle, but fence laws ended these claims in the 1880s. Few common property rights survive today; communal irrigation systems in some villages in New Mexico are one exception. Public property is held at all levels of government; in 2000, the federal government owned 262 million acres, one-eighth of all American land (U.S. Bureau of Land Management 2003). Property has stood at the center of American political ideology from the outset. In the seventeenth century, English political theorist John Locke justified private property by arguing that since every man was endowed with property in his own labor, mixing this labor with unappropriated land entitled men to claim ownership. (Women were assumed to be dependent members of households headed by men; under the common law principle of coverture, a wife's property belonged to her husband, a rule that state legislatures ended in the mid-nineteenth century.) American Indians generally held common rights in land, which they used for both agriculture and hunting. English settlers, however, saw their own improvement of land as justifying its appropriation as private property once Indian lands had been taken by war or treaty. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution recognized the primacy of private property rights by stating that property could not be taken by government without due process or just compensation; the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) extended this prohibition to state governments. For two centuries, Americans have debated what kinds of regulations are legitimate exercises of government's "police powers" on behalf of public safety and welfare and what regulations are "takings" that require due process and compensation.

In the early republic, property qualifications for voting were thought to confirm a man's capacity for political independence. In the 1820s and 1830s, state legislatures adopted universal white manhood suffrage while maintaining property qualifications for free Black men. The free labor ideology of antebellum farmers and artisans gained salience in direct contrast to the practice of chattel slavery in the South, where the plantation system relied on enslaved labor to produce cash crops of cotton, sugar, rice, and tobacco. By 1860, with ownership of slaves and land becoming highly concentrated, property in slaves represented nearly 60 percent of the wealth in the South (Wright 1978, 19). With the Civil War and the Thirteenth

Amendment (1865), 4 million people gained their freedom; in the absence of confiscation and redistribution of slave owners' land, however, the vast majority of freed people became agricultural wage workers (sharecroppers) or tenants, who had little bargaining power with white landowners and storekeepers.

The Republican Party courted the votes of northern farmers and artisans with the 1862 Homestead Act, which permitted settlers who improved land to claim 160 acres from the public domain in the trans-Mississippi West. At the same time, the Republican Congress joined state governments in granting land to railroads in order to subsidize construction of a transcontinental transportation system. In the late nineteenth century, farmers challenged corporate speculation and especially railroads' unilateral power over shipping rates, which were said to come at the expense of farmers' livelihood and the public good. In his 1879 *Progress and Poverty,* Henry George denounced the "unearned increment" collected by absentee land monopolists when values increased due to social development rather than owners' improvements.

Whatever the ideological appeal of independent proprietorship, nineteenth-century judges and lawyers also adopted utilitarian or instrumental conceptions of property in order to promote industrial development. English economist Jeremy Bentham had attacked the aura and power of the landed aristocracy by arguing that property rights were the product of policies rather than of natural law. Pragmatic American judges modified common law rules governing property rights—for example, principles of "first come, first serve" or prior appropriation—in order to encourage new industries, and western states also established new doctrines to govern rights to underground minerals or scarce water. Recognizing that multiple, overlapping claims often adhered in the same land or water, legal realists in the 1920s adopted the metaphor of property as a "bundle" of rights or claims that had to be sorted and weighed against one another.

Even after the proprietary agrarian economy had given way to a corporate industrial order, its legacy could be found in working-class families' self-built housing and in federal and state subsidies for home ownership. State legislatures passed laws exempting homesteads from seizure for debt, and in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration began insuring home mortgages to make housing more affordable. Federal income tax laws also permitted home owners to deduct the interest on mortgages. Such policies helped the United States achieve one of the highest rates of home ownership—two-thirds of all households in 2000—among industrial nations (U.S. Census Bureau 2003). In 1948, the Supreme Court ruled state enforcement of private restrictive racial covenants unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Federal Housing Administration and private lenders, however, continued to restrict access to home ownership for African Americans by "redlining," that is, denying mortgages to potential home buyers in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Black households. In 1968, the Fair Housing Act banned discrimination in the housing market.

Although many Americans continue to identify property with land, late-nineteenth-century industrialization turned personalty—especially claims on revenues—into the dominant form of property. Industrialists owned factories and tools as the means of production, and far from entitling a worker to ownership, labor could claim its value only through money wages or salaries. Business partnerships and especially incorporation allowed proprietors to pool capital and expand their enterprises. Railroads, extractive industries, and manufacturers that incorporated issued stock (shares of ownership) to investors, who were entitled to a share of the profits (dividends) and any increase in value of their stock upon sale (capital gains). Stockholders were also protected from liability for company debts beyond the value of their shares. Corporations also took loans from and paid interest to bondholders. Banks paid depositors interest for the use of capital held in savings accounts, and both private and institutional trustees managed investments for testamentary estates, one origin of mutual funds. Between 1880 and 1930, other forms of intangible property proliferated, especially insurance policies and pension plans. Although most working-class Americans had little savings, thousands of families contributed dues to fraternal associations (and by the 1910s were making weekly dime payments for industrial insurance policies) in order to secure burial and some assistance in the event of a wage earner's death.

Before the New Deal, government-distributed revenues were limited to pensions for veterans of the Union Army, mothers' pensions in some states, and unemployment insurance. Although private charities distributed relief, clients had no enforceable claims to these benefits. The 1935 Social Security Act expanded claims on government-managed property by setting up old-age insurance, assistance to people with disabilities, and aid to families, generally widows, with dependent children. Veterans' benefits were another form of federal "transfer payments," as these claims were called.

Legal theorists have designated claims to revenues, especially revenues channeled through government, the "new property." The constitutional status of rights in government transfer payments was established in 1970 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that welfare benefits could not be terminated (taken) without due process, that is, without hearings to determine the reason. Some theorists identified the "new property" with claims to job security (as enforced in suits against wrongful termination) as well as to job benefits. But in the 1980s and 1990s, revision of federal welfare policies, the decline of the labor movement, and management's emphasis on flexibility and turnover in employment eroded many claims to "new property." Still, to be propertyless in the contemporary United States is not only to lack income or assets but to lack access to benefits, whether secure employment, home finance, health insurance, government assistance, or retirement funds.

The corporate order, which separated a company's owners (stockholders) from its salaried managers, also distinguished property rights to a share of profits from powers of direct control. New devices—for example, stock options—were intended to realign corporate executives' and stockholders' mutual interest in profits. In the 1980s and 1990s, economic growth, and particularly the growth of revenues in any one company, was as often achieved through mergers and acquisitions as through more efficient production and distribution of goods. Some stockholders went to court to enforce their claims to the highest return, even if short-term profits came at the expense of a company's long-term growth.

Through its intangible forms and institutional management, property has become increasingly concentrated. By the mid-1990s, institutional investors (pension funds, insurance companies, mutual funds) controlled half the stock traded on the New York Stock Exchange (Seligman 1995, 485). Congress also promoted ordinary Americans' stake in institutional investments by granting tax benefits for Individual Retirement Accounts in 1974 and for employee contribution to 401(k) pension funds in 1981.

Other instruments reinforced the ascendancy of financial over real property. In 1960, Congress authorized real estate investment trusts (REITs), which allowed individuals to buy and sell publicly traded shares in land and buildings. The federally sponsored Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae) created a national mortgage market by selling shares in pooled home mortgages; and in the 1990s, commercial mortgage backed securities (CMBS) extended this practice to commercial real estate. These financial instruments increased the liquidity of real estate. Home owners, moreover, became adept at using real property to generate revenues by refinancing mortgages when interest rates dropped. With remarkable creativity, Americans also invented new properties that seem to mix the real and the intangible. Thus, in New York City, space over low-rise buildings was commodified as air or development rights that could be purchased by developers wanting to exceed zoning limits on building height. Companies whose emissions meet federal clean-air standards can sell "pollution rights" to companies whose emissions exceed those standards.

The environmental movement also placed new limits on how real property could be used in the late twentieth century. To counter environmental legislation of the 1970s, business groups supported a self-designated "property rights movement," which challenges government regulations by drawing on classical liberal rhetoric to identify private property with stewardship over natural resources. Although this movement itself demonstrates that property rights rest on conflicting political claims, it has avoided discussing the concentration of property in corporate institutions, on the one hand, or the diffusion of "stewardship" that comes with the intangible property, on the other. With the "democratization" of absentee ownership through financial instruments, millions of Americans claim the benefits of property with no knowledge of the specific sources of their income and little understanding of the consequences of its concentration. Meanwhile, some neoclassical theorists have suggested that the contemporary U.S. economy's emphasis on liquidity and transaction costs has so diminished traditional concepts of property rights that they can no longer be distinguished from rights to arrange economic claims and obligations through contracts. Nonetheless, however ambiguous its meanings or attenuated its forms, property remains central to American political ideology, and many Americans think of it as the foundation of political and personal freedom.

Elizabeth Blackmar

See also: Capitalism; Housing Policy; Income and Wage Inequality; Liberalism; New Property; *Progress and Poverty;* Slavery; Wealth; Wealth, Distribution/Concentration

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Protestant Denominations

Half of all Americans are Protestant, so it is difficult to generalize about American Protestant attitudes toward poverty or social policy (Layman and Pew Forum 2002). American religious freedom exacerbated the Protestant tendency for sects to multiply, creating a bewildering array of denominations sorted by class, race, region, and ethnic origin. Although individual Protestant denominations used to have distinct identities, the key distinction that emerged in the twentieth century is between conservative and liberal Protestants. Most theologically conservative Protestants are politically conservative. For them, poverty, like salvation, is individual, so conservative Protestants often frown on government social welfare programs. They prefer private charity, a traditional mission of the church. Liberal Protestants tend to see poverty as a social rather than just an individual problem and to support strong government social welfare programs.

Conservative Protestants

Conservatives include most *evangelicals*, those who had a "born-again" conversion experience and profess a personal relationship with Jesus, and *fundamentalists*, who claim that the Bible is the literal word of God. The two overlap, and both emphasize individual salvation through Jesus Christ.

Conservative Protestants organized in reaction to the liberal consensus that emerged in the twentieth century among the historic, or "mainline," Protestant denominations. Conservative Protestants' public advocacy typically focuses on sexual and moral issues such as pornography, homosexuality, premarital sex, and abortion. In the 1980s, organizations like the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition forged an alliance with the Republican Party. Conservative Christians increasingly linked economic libertarianism—distrust of the federal government, opposition to taxes, and hostility to a social welfare state—with social conservatism. No matter how they feel about politics, however, conservative Protestants generally consider service to the poor to be a direct expression of Christian faith. One consortium, which does not nearly represent all conservative Protestant churches, is the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). The NAE includes 43,000 congregations from fifty member denominations and other churches and organizations. Conservative denominations include the Southern Baptist Convention, the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, the Church of the Nazarene, and scores of others, as well as thousands of nondenominational Protestant churches, organizations, and campus ministries.

Liberal Protestants

The largest mainline liberal Protestant denominations are the United Methodist Church (8.5 million members), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA, 5.2 million), the Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA, 2.6 million), the Episcopal Church (2.5 million), the American Baptist Churches in the USA (1.5 million), and the United Church of Christ (UCC, 1.5 million) (Wuthnow and Evans 2002, 4). Mainline Protestants' absolute numbers are about the same as in the 1940s, while evangelical Protestants' proportion of American Christians has rapidly grown.

Although mainline Protestants are theologically and economically diverse, they are better educated than the American average; 35 percent have a college or graduate degree, compared to 24 percent of the general population; 49 percent of those employed are professionals, managers, or business owners, compared to 26 percent of the labor force as a whole. Although individual views toward poverty vary, their denominations see poverty as a social-structural problem and support national social programs to address it. A key word for liberal Protestant responses to poverty is "justice": "Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute" (Ps. 82:3). Conservative Christians rarely use the term "justice" in speaking of poverty, for it suggests that current social arrangements might be systemically unjust. Liberal Protestants also advocate through affiliated groups, especially women's organizations. The largest is the United Methodist Women (UMW), whose priority is women's and children's issues, especially poverty. The liberal Protestant denominations have national public policy offices in Washington and staff appointed to lobby federal government officials on social welfare and other issues.

The mainline liberal Protestant denominations are united in the National Council of Churches (NCC), which includes thirty-six denominations and 140,000 congregations. Among its domestic priorities in 2000–2003 were universal health care, "environmental justice," "racial justice," "peace with justice," "justice for women," and a living wage. In 2000, the NCC launched a ten-year "mobilization to overcome poverty." Its president, Andrew Young, said, "The continued existence of poverty in the 21st century is the moral equivalent of slavery in the 19th century" (NCC 2000).

Since the 1980s, liberal Protestants seem to have less public visibility than do conservative Protestants on public policy issues, for multiple reasons. Although Christian conservatives were organized through the Republican Party, no elite has similarly organized liberal Protestants from above. Mainline denominations' Washington lobbying offices are chronically underfunded. Without powerful political mobilization, the most natural form of social action is local, and the most familiar and least controversial form of social action is charity rather than policy advocacy. Many mainline churches are part of faith-based community organizations affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation, the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) Network, the Gamaliel Foundation, or another organizing network. They organize and advocate on poor and working-class issues, but mostly at the local level. Liberal denominations' great challenge is to link local congregations to national policy advocacy.

History of Protestant Social Policy

Martin Luther's key theological claim was that salvation was gained by faith in God's grace rather than by "law" (the laws of the Hebrew Bible) or by "works" (virtuous actions or some other form of earning, as in the Catholic sale of indulgences). The emphasis on biblical rather than priestly authority led reformers to emphasize Christ's commandment to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39). The basis of reformers' social ethic was Christian "brotherly love." Taken to its revolutionary egalitarian extreme, this ideal helped justify the Peasants' War of 1525, in which peasants and artisans applied it to relations between noble and peasant. Some Protestant communities with a strong communal identity and sense of mutual obligation, such as sixteenth-century Zurich or the seventeenth-century Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony, cared for their own poor (Wandel 1996).

The Radical Reformation saw the first of many Protestant utopian experiments whose social policy, among other things, was communistic. In 1534, in Münster, Germany, Anabaptists overturned the city government and property was shared. Subsequent egalitarian utopian attempts by Shakers, Mormons, Mennonites, and others flourished in the nineteenth-century United States (producing the Amana Church Society, the Harmony Society, the Oneida Community, and others).

Reformer John Calvin's views shaped American culture through the Puritan mission to create a "city on a hill." Based on a covenant with God, it would shine like a beacon to the world. Protestant revivalism, a distinctively American phenomenon, is characterized by traveling preachers who give religious services designed to renew religious fervor. The greatest periods of revivalism were the First and Second Great Awakenings (1720–1750 and 1780–1830, respectively).

American Protestantism is characterized by ironies. Protestant revivalism that, as did Luther himself, sought a private renewal of personal piety produced enthusiastic social reform movements. The Wesleyan idea that human will could influence salvation radically reversed the strict Puritan Calvinist belief in absolute pre-destination by God. This philosophy was more consistent with Americans' experience of their own agency in taming a continent. An optimistic culture of striving individualism could not resist this doctrine of *perfectionism*—improvement of self and society—that became a motor driving Protestant social reform and efforts to alleviate poverty. The belief that Christ would return after a millennium of social purification—*postmillennialism*—also inspired fervent movements to purify society. Protestants created the American voluntary association as we know it, beginning with the Connecticut Society for the Reformation of Morals (1813), which was swiftly followed by a host of temperance, abolition, and other reform societies.

As Protestant reformers sought to combat alcohol, they discovered its link to poverty. In 1850, the pioneering female Holiness preacher Phoebe Palmer founded the Five Points Mission in a New York City slum (Wandel 1996). Accelerating industrialization in the 1870s gave rise to the Social Gospel. Liberal Protestants responded to waves of poor immigrants and the widening gap between capitalists and laborers by seeking to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth through egalitarian social reform (Schmidt 1988).

Heidi J. Swarts

See also: Catholic Church; Charitable Choice; Charity Organization Societies; Christian Fundamentalism; Community Organizing; Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); Liberalism; Quakers; Salvation Army; Social Gospel; Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

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Public Opinion

Public attitudes toward social policy in the United States can be viewed as a product of three underlying factors: (1) conflicts among widely held cultural values, (2) popular beliefs about government policies and social groups, and (3) the ways mass media and political elites frame policy-relevant information. Support for the modern welfare state runs weaker in the United States than in most Western democracies. Nevertheless, majorities consistently endorse government efforts to promote economic security and opportunity. The level of support for welfare provision varies considerably across social groups as well as across government programs. Most Americans, however, are not well informed about poverty and tend to approach social policy with a conflicted mixture of commitments to individualist, egalitarian, and humanitarian values. As a result, public opinion functions as both a cause and an effect of poverty politics. Mass preferences are often stable enough to impose constraints on policymakers, but these preferences can and do change in response to economic conditions and political campaigns.

Americans do not exhibit a principled opposition to government assistance. Public hostility toward "welfare handouts" may be highly visible, but it is an exception to the general rule (Gilens 1999). Americans favor maintaining or enhancing the vast majority of U.S. social programs. Most believe that government has a basic responsibility to shield individuals from destitution and to enlarge the scope of economic opportunity (Bobo and Smith 1994). Arrayed against these sentiments, however, is a powerful cultural belief system that affirms the widespread existence of opportunity, emphasizes the individual basis of achievement, and is relatively tolerant of economic inequalities (Kluegel and Smith 1986). The result is a complex political culture that offers resources to welfare advocates but, relative to western Europe, provides a comparatively weak context for demands for social rights.

Most Americans are poorly informed about poverty and social policy. In 1996, for example, polls reported that majorities supported welfare reform. On further questioning, however, half of those polled said they did not know what "reform" actually meant (Weaver 2000). In this instance and in others, public opinion is hampered not only by a lack of relevant facts but also by a surplus of inaccurate facts. Most Americans overestimate the percentage of the poor who are Black (Gilens 1999). They similarly overestimate the number of families on welfare, the size of cash benefits, the percentage of the budget spent on welfare, and the percentage of recipients who receive aid for an extended period of time (Kuklinski and Quirk 2000).

On the general question of what causes poverty, Americans are evenly divided. Approximately half believe that individuals are to blame for their own poverty, while the remainder emphasize forces beyond the individual's control (Demos 2002). In practice, though, beliefs about the origins of poverty tend to shift depending on a number of factors. One such factor is the "type" of poor person under consideration. When asked about a homeless person, for example, Americans tend to cite circumstances that the individual cannot control, such as mental illness; when asked about a welfare recipient, their explanations turn to immoral behavior, lack of hard work, and drug use (Bobo and Smith 1994). Societal conditions also exert an influence. During economic downturns, Americans become less likely to blame individuals for being poor (Gilens 1999). Finally, mass media stories also affect the public's assignment of blame. Stories that focus on specific low-income people are more likely to encourage personal attributions of blame than are news stories that focus on societal conditions (Iyengar 1990).

Support for social programs varies across subgroups of the U.S. population (Cook and Barrett 1992). Women and younger Americans are slightly more likely than men and older Americans to express support for the welfare state (Hasenfeld and Rafferty 1989). These gaps tend to be small, however, compared to those associated with race and socioeconomic status. Relative to other Americans, people of color and people with lower incomes are especially supportive of welfare programs (Hasenfeld and Rafferty 1989). These and other group-based differences may suggest to some that welfare opinions are rooted in self-interest. Direct evidence for this interpretation, however, has been scarce. Most analysts see self-interest as playing less of a role in forming welfare opinions than do life experiences and core values (Gilens 1999).

Social policy attitudes in the United States depend most directly on the interplay of two sets of core values. The first set fuels opposition to welfare programs. It includes individualist beliefs that each person should be responsible for his or her own economic status, antistatist beliefs that government cannot be trusted and should not grow too large, and commitments to the work ethic and "traditional" moral values. The second set consists of more supportive values such as egalitarianism (a normative commitment to equalities of opportunity, treatment, and status) and humanitarianism (the belief that each person has an ethical responsibility to assist those in need). Each value provides a somewhat distinctive basis for welfare opinion. Egalitarianism and humanitarianism, for instance, both promote a desire to assist the poor, but humanitarian values are less likely to foster support for income redistribution as an explicit governmental goal (Feldman and Steenbergen 2001).

Because these values tend to be deeply held, any one of them has the potential to serve as a stable anchor for policy preferences. In combination, however, they provide a dynamic basis for policy attitudes. Most Americans hold an ambivalent mixture of partially conflicting values—a desire to help the poor, for example, combined with a feeling that individuals should be responsible for their own well-being. The result is that public responses to poverty usually hinge on the specific ways Americans perceive government policies and their target groups. Such perceptions, of course, depend not only on the actual characteristics of policies and groups but also on the ways mass media and political advocates portray these characteristics.

The interplay of disparate values can easily be seen in the varying levels of public support for particular social programs. Americans are most likely to support programs they believe assist deserving beneficiaries, preserve personal responsibility and morality, protect or expand societal opportunities, and promote or reward hard work. Large majorities favor maintaining or increasing spending for programs such as Social Security, medical care, and education (Gilens 1999). There is somewhat less support for housing and employment programs, and support is lowest for programs that are linked to the goal of income redistribution or the label "welfare" (Hasenfeld and Rafferty 1989).

Public support runs strongest for programs perceived to offer universal benefits; more-targeted benefits, however, can elicit majority support when they are viewed as promoting opportunity or rewarding hard work and moral behavior (Gilens 1999). These same values help explain the public's relatively strong support for in-kind benefits such as food stamps and medical care. In-kind benefits are perceived as being more difficult to use for illicit or immoral activities than is cash income. In addition, in-kind benefits may be used to actively encourage preferred behaviors. A desire to promote employment, for example, has produced a strong public preference for making benefits such as child care, transportation allowances, and job training a central part of welfare reform (Gilens 1999). Income-maintenance programs that offer cash benefits to the poor tend to receive the least public support. In recent years, a majority of the public has supported making such benefits contingent on value-enforcing rules such as time limits, family caps, work requirements, and prohibitions on substance abuse (Gilens 1999).

The value basis of attitudes in this policy area can also be seen in the ways Americans distinguish among more and less "deserving" subgroups of the poor. Perceptions of group deservingness are arguably the strongest predictor of public support for welfare spending (Gilens 1999). Groups perceived as deserving assistance tend to be those who fulfill (or are exempted from) work expectations and who are not closely associated with racial or ethnic minorities. Contemporary Americans tend to place the elderly and people with disabilities in this category and hence support aid to these groups with little concern for questions of individual morality. By contrast, groups perceived as undeserving tend to include able-bodied individuals without jobs, single women perceived as violating sexual or reproductive norms, and racial minorities, whose poverty is viewed by many as a result of laziness and immoral behavior. Programs that disproportionately serve these groups tend to be less generous, more punitive, and more degrading—all of which serves to reinforce public scorn for their recipients and for the policies that aid them (Schram 1995).

In this regard, the impact of race merits special mention. Since the 1960s, the term "welfare" has come to function as a kind of code word for "undeserving Blacks." White Americans tend to believe that Black people make up the majority of poor families and welfare recipients. As a result, talk of "welfare" tends to evoke thoughts of African Americans, and beliefs about Black people shape images of welfare recipients. The old stereotype of Black laziness (a violation of individualism and the work ethic) is, today, the strongest predictor of whether a white person will view welfare recipients as undeserving, oppose welfare spending, and favor tough behavioral rules for program participants (Gilens 1999).

In all the preceding ways, contemporary public attitudes toward social policy are firmly rooted in values that are widely held in the United States. Conflict among these values, however, means that public attitudes depend greatly on how poverty and welfare issues get framed by political elites, mass media, and political activists. Political communications direct public attention toward particular groups of poor people, dimensions of poverty, and aspects of government policy. In doing so, they influence the specific beliefs people hold about the poor, and they affect the mix of values people bring to bear on questions of social provision (Iyengar 1990). Since the 1980s, political terms such as "the underclass" and "welfare dependency" have served as potent symbols making it easier to conceive, articulate, and accept opposition to assistance for the poor (Schram 1995). As historical and international comparisons demonstrate, however, opposing frames are available and can be quite effective at mobilizing public support.

In sum, public responses to poverty and social policy in the United States exhibit significant differences across groups and for specific policy designs. These responses reflect a stable and widely held set of values, but the interplay of these values allows for flexibility and—depending on how issues are framed—substantial shifts in public support over time and across programs. Accordingly, public opinion on social policy must be understood as both a source and an outcome of poverty politics in the United States.

Erin O'Brien and Joe Soss

See also: Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Racism; "Underclass"; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Public Relief and Private Charity, *Josephine Shaw Lowell*

In the 1880s and 1890s, as president of the New York Charity Organisation Society (COS), Josephine Shaw Lowell sought to end public "outdoor" poor relief, or state-funded payments to needy families. Her influential role in the COS reflected the growing prominence of women in social welfare organizations in the late nineteenth century. Lowell, like other members of charity organization societies throughout the country, viewed poverty as primarily a moral rather than a material problem. Influenced by religious ideas of human corruptibility, Lowell believed that outdoor relief did little to cure poverty and instead encouraged idleness. She favored almshouses or workhouses that would "cure the individual, whether of sickness, insanity, intemperance, or simply of the tendency to be shiftless and lazy" (76). These institutions were to be sufficiently harsh to discourage all but the most needy. For those she believed could legitimately claim inability to work—such as the elderly without family or widows with young children—Lowell proposed private charitable donations coupled with supervisory visits intended to ensure that the character of recipients would be improved rather than further corrupted by such gifts. Lowell's view that government aid worsens rather than relieves poverty has been echoed by many antiwelfare critics in the twentieth century.

In the excerpts that follow, Lowell lays out her basic philosophy and "rules" for public and private charitable provision.

Sarah Case

See also: Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Relief

We have, already, accepted in this paper the postulate that the community should save every one of its members from starvation, no matter how low or depraved such member may be, but we contend that the necessary relief should be surrounded by circumstances that shall not only repel every one, not in extremity, from accepting it, but which shall also insure a distinct moral and physical improvement on the part of all those who are forced to have recourse to it—that is, discipline and education should be inseparably associated with any system of poor relief.

. . . [O]ut-door relief is proved to be not only useless, as a means of relieving actual, existing suffering, but as active means of increasing present and future want and vice . . . [only] an institution . . . will be found to render possible the attainment of all the objects which should be aimed at by public relief.

. . . [I]nmates [of public institutions] shall have the necessaries of life, and besides being fed and clothed, they can be subjected to the best sanitary regulations, they can be kept clean and be required to live regularly, to work, to exercise, to sleep, as much or as little as is good for them, and this brings us to the second object, for in an institution the inmates besides being prevented from receiving moral harm, can be brought under such physical, moral, mental and industrial training as will eventually make them self-supporting. (67–69)

. . . [C]harity must tend to develop the moral nature of those it helps, and must not tend to injure others; . . .

. . . [T]he best way to help people is to help them to help themselves. . . . the main instrument to be depended on to raise the standard of decency, cleanliness, providence and morality among them must be personal influence, which means that . . . the educated and happy and good are to give some of their time regularly and as a duty, year in and year out, to the ignorant, the miserable and the vicious. (110–111)

Source: Josephine Shaw Lowell, *Public Relief and Private Charity* (New York: Arno Press, 1971; originally published New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1884).

Public Works Administration

The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works—commonly referred to as the Public Works Administration (PWA)—was the New Deal's first substantial effort to address the crisis of the Great Depression through the construction of public works projects. Created by Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), the PWA attempted to increase productivity and employment in construction-related industries, a key economic sector. The stimulus provided by public works construction was originally intended to work in concert with the industrial codes enacted under the act's Title I, which tried to raise prices and wages by regulating competition. Although the PWA proved effective in generating infrastructure, critics of the agency charged that it was too slow and ineffective in reducing unemployment. In response to this criticism, President Franklin D. Roosevelt turned to parallel jobs and public works measures, including the short-lived Civil Works Administration (CWA) and, subsequently, the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

The PWA was based on the notion that government-funded public works projects could be deployed to counter drastic swings in the business cycle, an idea that was rooted in Progressive-Era ideas about the economy and the role of government in maintaining growth and stability. For example, the American Association for Labor Legislation, a prominent reform organization founded in 1906, had long advocated the maintenance of a "shelf" of plans and blueprints for public works projects, ready to be drawn upon in the event of an economic downturn. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation's division of self-liquidating public works, created under President Herbert Hoover in the early 1930s, operated in this spirit, funding projects such as bridges, dams, and toll roads that could generate revenue to pay for their construction. Upon its creation, the PWA incorporated many of the plans and personnel of this division into its own organization.

Under the direction of Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, the PWA built 34,508 projects costing over $6 billion, covering all but three counties of the United States. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith estimated that the PWA employed an average of 1,177,000 men each year between 1934 and 1938, after taking into account employment generated beyond the immediate construction site. Although the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided immediate relief and short-term work to the unemployed, the PWA operated by carefully reviewing plans submitted by states and localities and then commissioning selected projects to be constructed by private contractors. The PWA relied not on social welfare professionals but, rather, on people with a background in civil engineering and construction, drawing for its personnel on the Army Corps of Engineers, private engineers, and municipal officials with experience in public works construction. The PWA's Special Board for Public Works, which included such officials as Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, was supervised by Ickes himself. Ickes and the Special Board evaluated proposed projects, and Ickes took the final decisions to regular meetings with President Roosevelt for his review.

Through a combination of direct appropriations and loans, the PWA funded 17,831 projects, costing $1.9 billion, built by federal agencies, and 16,677 projects, costing $4.2 billion, sponsored by nonfederal bodies. The construction of public buildings such as courthouses, post offices, auditoriums, armories, city halls, prisons, community centers, and government office buildings was a favored use of PWA funds. The PWA also sponsored the construction of streets, highways, and bridges. By July 1936, at least one PWA school project had been built in nearly half the nation's counties. Between 1933 and 1940, the PWA made possible about 80 percent of all sewer construction in the nation, allotting funds for more than 1,500 projects costing nearly half a billion dollars. The PWA also directed monies toward public housing projects, flood control and reclamation projects, a modernization program for the nation's railroads, and the construction of several vessels for the navy. Notable projects funded by the PWA include the overseas highway connecting Key West to mainland Florida, the Grand Coulee Dam in eastern Washington, the Triborough Bridge in New York City, and the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge.

The PWA played a pioneering role in funding both nonfederal and federal hydroelectric projects. These nonfederal projects included California's Hetch Hetchy and Imperial hydroelectric projects, South Carolina's Santee-Cooper project, the Grand River Dam in Oklahoma, and the sprawling Lower Colorado River Authority as well as projects in Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. Federal projects included California's huge Shasta Dam, Montana's Fort Peck Dam, the Bonneville Dam project (covering Washington and Oregon), and the Tennessee Valley Authority, among others.

In addition to providing employment, the PWA's projects generated over $2.1 billion in orders for construction materials between 1933 and 1939. Items made from iron and steel, such as nails, rails, pipes, and structural steel, accounted for about one-third of these orders. Stone, clay, and glass products such as brick, cement, concrete, marble, and tile made up the same proportion of materials ordered, with the remainder of materials consisting of heavy machinery, wiring, lumber, and other products.

Concerned about the potential for public works to lead to waste and graft, Ickes was cautious about allotting federal monies, leading to much criticism that the PWA was simply moving too slowly to meet the crisis of the Depression. Responding to this criticism and to the harsh winter of 1933–1934, FDR gave more responsibility for fighting the Depression to Works Progress Administration head Harry Hopkins. Despite falling out of favor with President Roosevelt, Ickes remained in charge of the PWA through 1939, when the agency was placed under the auspices of the Federal Works Administration and its new head, former Rural Electrification administrator John Carmody.

Jason Scott Smith

See also: American Association for Labor Legislation; Capitalism; Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC); Employment Policy; Great Depression and New Deal; Housing Policy; Liberalism; Tennessee Valley Authority; Works Progress Administration (WPA)

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Puerto Rican Migration

Puerto Ricans constitute the second largest Latino population in the United States and have historically experienced poverty rates among the nation's highest. The 2000 census showed nearly 3.5 million Puerto Ricans residing in the continental United States, up from 2.7 million in 1990 (a 24.9 percent increase). This is 9.6 percent of the Hispanic and 1.2 percent of the total U.S. population. Another 3.8 million live on the island of Puerto Rico. This geographic distribution between the Island and the mainland reflects the results of decades of shifting migration patterns—themselves influenced by the political and economic status of Puerto Rico vis-à-vis the United States—which have brought Island-born Puerto Ricans to major northeastern cities in response to the promise of better jobs and opportunities for themselves and their families. Although many migrants, especially in earlier generations, did experience better economic prospects and living standards, Puerto Ricans have also suffered the impact of economic restructuring, wage declines, and diminishing blue-collar and unionized job opportunities in their destination cities. Thus, migration has played an essential, if complicated, role in the social and economic fortunes of Puerto Ricans: An avenue to upward mobility as well as to economic hardship, the post–World War II migration made poverty among Puerto Ricans increasingly visible to Americans who knew little else about the Island or its culture.

The Puerto Rican population in the United States traces its origins back to Spanish colonial rule. The Island became a U.S. territory in 1898, as a result of the American invasion during the Spanish-American War. Puerto Ricans were granted U.S. citizenship in 1917. It was only in 1952 that the Island's official status changed from territory to "commonwealth." Although Puerto Rico is free to govern its internal affairs, the U.S. president and Congress retained veto power over all legislation and any amendments to the Puerto Rican Constitution.

Without visa or employment impediments, Puerto Ricans began migrating in small but steadily increasing numbers, especially after 1917. In part, they were responding to the increased demand for a domestic source of low-wage labor in the wake of World War I, more restrictive U.S. immigration laws, and the decline of European immigration. The migratory movement slackened somewhat during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when there was actually an interval of reverse migration from the mainland United States back to Puerto Rico.

By the end of World War II, however, the flow of migrants out of Puerto Rico had turned into a mass migration, establishing a pattern for a large segment of the Island's population. The postwar economic boom in the United States was a powerful draw for Puerto Ricans who, owing to rapid, federally sponsored urbanization and industrialization on the Island, were already being displaced from agricultural employment at a faster rate than the new economy could absorb. The stagnant agricultural sector set off major migrations, first to urban areas in Puerto Rico and then abroad. The process was accelerated by labor-recruitment strategies of U.S. firms on the Island and by systematic government-led dissemination of information about prospective jobs and higher wages.

The economic shifts that drove the postwar mass migration had some effect on the migrant population as well. The first major study of the Puerto Rican population in the United States in the postwar years dates from 1947. The 1950 survey carried out by C. Wright Mills, Clarence Senior, and Rose Goldsen of 5,000 New York Puerto Ricans revealed a largely urban skilled and semiskilled population, with previous work experience in manufacturing. These early migrants had educational and employment qualifications that exceeded those of the average Puerto Rican on the Island at that time.

By the late 1950s, however, relatively fewer migrants came from the Island's largest cities and most skilled groups, and a greater proportion were agricultural workers who had been displaced before World War II and who had little experience in manufacturing and less formal education than their predecessors. Although these migrants were readily absorbed as long as the demand for industrial workers kept growing, they were especially vulnerable to the downturns that were becoming increasingly evident in the domestic manufacturing sector by the 1970s.

In 1960, when close to two-thirds of the Puerto Rican population in the United States lived in New York City, one in two Puerto Rican men and three out of four Puerto Rican women working in the city worked in manufacturing. During the 1960s, and especially by the 1970s, however, the heavily urbanized Puerto Rican migrants were feeling the impact of displacement

Puerto Rican migrant workers harvest tomatoes at Russel Marino Farm. (James Leynse/Corbis)

from goods-producing jobs and of declining employment opportunities as industries relocated. The long-term effects for Puerto Rican migrants—who had left the Island in search of improved opportunities—were devastating: increases in unemployment and joblessness, declines in earnings, and soaring poverty rates. With below-average schooling and less-than-fluent English, the primarily Island-born population could not easily move into new jobs in other expanding sectors of the economy (DeFreitas 1991). Throughout the 1970s, many returned to the Island. It was not until the 1980s, when unemployment (over 23 percent) and poverty (58 percent) shot up on the Island, that net out-migration resumed.

The 1980s presented a mixed picture for Puerto Rican migrants. On the one hand, the decade saw income growth, gains in earnings, increased female labor force participation, and improvements in educational attainment. On the other hand, the progress was not evenly shared. Those without a high school degree and with limited skills, many of them first-generation migrants from Puerto Rico, and those relocating in distressed postindustrial cities in the Northeast lost ground in terms of earnings, employment, and income during the decade. Thus, the good news was tempered by the reality of a growing polarization of socioeconomic outcomes—mirroring trends in the United States overall (Rivera-Batiz and Santiago 1995).

Studies of Puerto Rican migration patterns have consistently confirmed the centrality of labor market and other economic conditions in stimulating migrant flows and shaping migrants' economic prospects once relocated. Nevertheless, some observers have continued to invoke a series of pernicious ideas—beginning with anthropologist Oscar Lewis's widely discredited "culture of poverty"—to explain the persistence of high poverty rates among Puerto Ricans. Thus, the 1980s brought not only a resumption of migration but a renewal of extensive heated debate about the causes of persistent poverty among Puerto Ricans, who, like African Americans, were highly concentrated in racially segregated urban neighborhoods. Some argued that high rates of single-female family headship and increasing participation in government support programs for the poor, along with easy transit between the United States and the Island, prevented Puerto Ricans from developing a stronger attachment to the labor force and moving up the socioeconomic ladder. Others argued that certain locations, like New York, selectively attracted and retained those with poorer socioeconomic outcomes, which effectively slashed the chances of economic progress for the group and placed them along the ranks of an urban "underclass." But the preponderance of evidence suggests that increases in poverty for Puerto Ricans were more related to increases in unemployment and decreases in earning levels than to any such sociodemographic variables or cultural traits.

Empirical studies of the determinants of migration from the post–World War II era until the 1970s find that differences in employment and wages between the United States and Puerto Rico explain the migratory behavior of Puerto Ricans. Subsequent work, using census and passenger data, confirms the role of economic motives for migration during the more recent period, when unemployment on the Island reached double digits (over 23 percent in the early 1980s) and the poverty rate reached 58 percent.

Some analysts have argued that the failure of recent immigrants to quickly assimilate into U.S. culture and labor markets reflects a declining "quality" of immigrants. Others argue that there is no conclusive evidence that migration has become less selective over time. Nor is there evidence of a "brain drain" of professionals from the Island.

Moreover, studies have shown no significant differences in the characteristics of migrants (compared to nonmigrants) from 1955 to 1980, other than a relative increase in educational attainment level, reflecting the Island's improvements in education (Ortiz 1986).

Similarly, studies of the post-1980 wave of migrants indicate that the two most important factors contributing to the observed distribution of skills among migrants appear to be job offers and unemployment levels in Puerto Rico. Using 1982–1988 survey data from the Puerto Rican Planning Board, Edwin Meléndez (1994) found that the occupational distribution of emigrants and returnees mirrored the occupational distribution in Puerto Rico.

Separate analysis of the circulation behavior of Puerto Rican women—who represent at least half of all migrants from the Island—also refuted the perception that circular migration explains Puerto Ricans' disadvantaged economic position in the United States. Vilma Ortiz (1992) found limited support for the proposition that large numbers of Puerto Rican women are migrating back and forth between Puerto Rico and the United States. Not only had a majority of Puerto Rican women not migrated from Puerto Rico in the early 1980s, but also, among migrants, only a minority (6 percent) had had more than one migration experience.

Even if we look only at the U.S.-born children of Puerto Rican migrants, the economic gap between them and their non-Hispanic white counterparts remains substantial. Some authors have shown that a large share of the observed gap between average Puerto Rican and non-Hispanic white earnings can be accounted for by differences in education, work experience, and English-language ability. Undoubtedly, low educational attainment levels and English-language difficulties can have a strong negative effect, particularly for the Island-born. But not all of the economic gap between Puerto Ricans and non-Hispanic whites can be explained by traditional productivity differences. Other factors, such as discrimination, continue to play a role (see, for example, Darity, Guilkey, and Winfrey 1996; Meléndez, Carré, and Holvino 1995).

What would Puerto Rican and non-Hispanic white differences be if both groups had the same average characteristics? Using 1976 Survey of Income and Education data, Cordelia Reimers (1985) found that discrimination may account for as much as 18 percent of the wage gap between non-Hispanic white and Puerto Rican males; the difference was not significant for females. Nonetheless, standard economic criteria for measuring discrimination does not account for the role of other forms of (premarket) discrimination. For example, discrimination continues to limit housing options and residential choices of Puerto Ricans in the United States, as well as the quality of their education in urban public schools. Evidence of employment and wage discrimination also derives from employment testing or job audits that suggest that Latino job seekers experience widespread discrimination based on their ethnicity (Cross et al. 1990).

Although most Puerto Ricans in the United States continue to live in the Northeast, the 1990 and 2000 censuses provide evidence that a growing number of this population is moving away from large urban centers in traditional areas of settlement. At the same time, Puerto Ricans have both increased their presence in new areas and moved into smaller cities within the more traditional destinations. In the years ahead, it will be possible to assess whether changed patterns of migration, geographic dispersion, and occupational changes translate into more widely shared improvements in Puerto Ricans' economic well-being.

Aixa Cintron

See also: African American Migration; Immigrants and Immigration; Latino/as; "Underclass"; Urban Poverty

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Puritans and Puritanism

The term "Puritan" identifies a member of a group of English Calvinists originating in the sixteenth century who sought to purge the Church of England of residual Catholic hierarchies. The word "Puritanism" refers to the generalized nexus of movements and theologies affiliated with Puritan religious dissent. Although the religion of the Puritans had virtually disappeared by the mid-nineteenth century, the ideologies propagated by the variant descendants of Puritanism endure into the contemporary era and continue to affect ideas about poverty and social obligations to the poor. Although the label "puritanical" is commonly associated with rigid, disciplinarian norms regarding sexuality, behavior, and work, Puritanism also embraced an ethic of moral stewardship that emphasized communal responsibility for the well-being of the poor. And while Puritans did not shy away from material wealth, they disapproved of the pursuit of wealth for its own sake and of its ostentatious manifestations, and they preached about the importance of personal humility and austerity.

"Puritan" was first used in the 1560s to describe those disappointed by the compromised Church of England established by Elizabeth I. During the reign of Elizabeth's successor, James I, the Puritans acquired an increasingly notorious profile following their intense lobby for ecclesiastical reform at the 1604 Hampton Court Conference. The Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud (1573–1645) attempted to quell growing Puritan enthusiasm through a systematic repression of their activities. Yet the archbishop's efforts were rebuffed by the brief Puritan dominance following the English Civil War (1642–1651)—also known as the Puritan Revolution—led by Oliver Cromwell. Internal strife led to a collapse of Cromwell's government, and after the Restoration (1660), many Puritans were forced to leave the Church of England.

This brief outline of British Puritan history fails to address the full complexity of the manifold Puritan positions. From the outset, Puritans disagreed about the amount of reform necessary to "purify" the Church of England. Some, known as "Presbyterians," merely sought to remove the hierarchy of bishops (the episcopacy). Others, like the Separatists and Congregationalists, also rejected certain rituals and membership allowances that they perceived as "human" constructs of the Catholic Church. For these critics, church was understood as a divine manifestation, *not* a human invention. The Separatist and Congregationalist Puritans held that church communities ought only to include the participation of those divinely called to join the congregation and should eliminate all decorative excesses representative of human involvement. Simplicity of worship and material austerity were signifying attributes of these Puritans.

The Separatists and Congregationalists constituted the majority of those who migrated to America during the early seventeenth century. Archbishop Laud's persecutions motivated many to seek a new context for their reformations. Thus, in 1628 a group of Congregationalists invested in a trading company, and by 1630 over 1,000 Puritan immigrants were able to settle in Massachusetts Bay Colony. Between 1630 and 1640, approximately 20,000 Puritans migrated to New England, making Puritanism the dominant religion in four American colonies (Plymouth, Massachusetts, New Haven, and Connecticut).

Although there were divergences among the Puritans, some general comments can be made about the theological and social facets of Puritanism. Puritanism was an intellectual descendent of Calvinism, a theological movement that emphasized the total depravity of man and the sainthood of all believers. Like Calvinism, Puritanism adhered to the belief that humans are sinners who cannot be saved unless God initiates the process of salvation. Yet Puritans were encouraged to ceaselessly emulate their own sainthood, even though only God could ordain their salvation. As historian Edmund S. Morgan explains, "Puritanism required that a man devote his life to seeking salvation but told him he was helpless to do anything but evil" (Morgan 1958, 7). Tireless labor and personal self-defamation were perceived as signs of Puritan sainthood. This display of saintliness is what has led many to caricature Puritans as cold and morally unbending. Although Puritans did advocate moral righteousness and personal discipline, they only did so because of a passionate devotion to their own perfection in the face of man's inherent sinfulness.

The defining social features of Puritanism were the focus on the local congregation, the centrality of a vernacular Bible, and the reifying maintenance of the biweekly sermons. Thus, the minister was in many ways the center of Puritan life, since it was he who directed the worship community, interpreted the scripture, and provided the sermons that explicated Puritan existence. The most famous statement of Puritan leadership was made even before the first immigrant disembarked. In the middle of the original oceanic crossing, John Winthrop (1588–1649) offered "A Model of Christian Charity" on the deck of the *Arabella*. Supervisor of the colonization effort, Winthrop used the format of the sermon to motivate endurance and moral excellence among the nascent Americans. "We must not content ourselves with usual ordinary means," Winthrop preached. "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us" (in Miller 1956, 83). In order to attain this model, Winthrop advocated a blueprint for a godly society premised on individual virtue and communal covenant.

Winthrop's dream of a "city upon a hill" established the primary metaphor for Anglo-American Puritan social life. Puritans' faith in the omnipresence of God's divine will, as well as their investment in God's manifold covenants among men and nations, served as motivation for their efforts to model reformed societies in New England that reflected the glory of God. The effort to form these cities led to the construction of New World governments more theocratic than democratic. Puritans believed in a society driven simultaneously by God's continuing providence and by his direct acts of creation. For Puritans, then, there was no separation between church and state, individual and the public; there was only the world made by God, righteous in its creation, denigrated and divided by the sinful hands of man. In "A Model of Christian Charity," Winthrop hoped that "every man might have need of each other" in the effort to resist residing in sin and that "hence they might be all knit more nearly together in the bond of brotherly affection" (in Miller 1956, 80). Man unified into congregation in an act of virtuous resistance against the selfish tyranny of individualism.

The idea of covenant was central to the maintenance of this stoic congregationalism. Puritans believed that God worked with people through covenants, or solemn agreements. Congregationalist Puritans, for example, argued that local churches are maintained when individuals concede to serving God's will through a communal covenant. Individual men were bound to God through a "covenant of grace" whereby God offers the salvation of Christ to those who exercise faith in Christ. Moreover, most Puritans also held that God formed covenants with nations. Although nations could possess divine blessing through the successful fulfillment of their covenant, individual countries would also suffer the wrath of God should they violate their national covenant. The covenant between God and nation was a tenuous one, dependent on the saintly fervor of citizens and rigorous adherence of congregations. "Downy beds make drowsy persons, but hard lodging keeps the eyes open," wrote Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet. "A prosperous state makes a secure Christian, but adversity makes him consider" (in Miller 1956, 277).

The adversity experienced by seventeenth-century Puritan settlers in the New World surely made them consider. The first generations of Puritans struggled with disease, war against the native inhabitants, and theological discord among the faithful. This turmoil only galvanized the colonies in their reformations, as if through their difficulties their saintliness was affirmed and their cause justified. Early American Puritans elaborated the terms of church membership, mandating a public confession of faith that became the prerequisite for church membership as well as for a voting role in the colony's government. Secular leaders were selected by virtue of their commitment to the scriptures, and their merit as leaders was ultimately interpreted in terms of their fulfillment of God's covenants. Thus, New England was not precisely a theocracy, for church and state authorities functioned through different institutional channels. However, the charismatic importance of the minister in both secular and ecclesiastical systems led to a blurring of governmental boundaries.

After 1650, Puritan church membership began to decline, and dissenting groups—like the Quakers and the Baptists—began to gain popularity. In 1684, the Massachusetts Bay Colony lost its charter, and the blended church-state authority that had ruled New England for nearly fifty years began to splinter. Historian Richard L. Bushman (1967) suggests that by 1690, there were no Puritans left in the New World; thereafter, there were only Yankees. Despite the denominational fragmentation and statistical decline of the Puritan religion, Puritanism as an ethical code and national metaphor has endured. Countless politicians evoke Puritan theology when they speak of America as a "city on a hill" or of the need for a "new covenant" between citizens and government. The Puritan emphasis on literacy and intellectual rationalism grounded American educational systems long before the Revolution, and their faith in a cooperative social covenant initiated a distinct self-understanding. Although many have stereotyped the Puritans as somber moralists, the theological complexity and historical significance of their reform movement cannot be denied.

Kathryn Lofton

See also: Colonial Period through the Early Republic; Protestant Denominations; Republicanism

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Q

Quakers (The Religious Society of Friends)

The Quakers, a group of radical Protestants also known as the Religious Society of Friends, descended from the seventeenth-century Puritan reformations in Great Britain. Following their migration to America, the Quakers briefly flourished in the Pennsylvania Colony. Although their numbers hover just over 100,000 members, Quakers exert a disproportionate moral influence in the United States as leading voices of pacifism and humanitarianism.

Quakers trace their origins to Pendle Hill in northeast England. At that spot, George Fox (1624–1691) received a vision from God in 1652. According to Fox's account, God told him, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." This message inspired Fox's advocacy of the doctrine of inner light. According to this theology, religious experience is an individual experience. Individuals can access religious truth and wisdom through the inner light of Christ present in the human soul. Christ "speaks" to man when his "light" enters human consciousness. This focus on the "inward light" of divine guidance would become the center of the Quaker religion.

For Fox and his followers, emphasis on the inner light was merely an extension of other Puritan reforms that attempted to cleanse the Church of England of all external doctrine and ritual and to refocus religious experience on the individual believer. However, church authorities—both Anglican and orthodox Puritan—perceived something far more subversive in the Religious Society of Friends. Quakers were expected to act in complete obedience to the inward light and to eschew any other doctrines, church structures, or ministerial recommendations. Moreover, Fox taught that Quakers should refuse to participate in any hierarchical etiquette (for example, kneeling before a king), since the inner light leveled men to equal status. The divine spirit could be anywhere, irrespective of class, gender, or race. This irreverence toward social status and institutionalized Christianity troubled secular and ecclesiastical leaders in England. From the outset, Quakers were persecuted for their beliefs, and early in the church's existence, many began to consider emigration to America.

However, even in the New World, Quakers faced intolerance. The very first Quakers to emigrate, Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, only remained in Massachusetts long enough to be charged with witchcraft and banned from the colonies. Puritan resistance to Quakers led to colonization of Rhode Island, which was for many years a safe haven for such religious outsiders as the Baptists and the Quakers. In 1681, William Penn (1644–1718), a wealthy British Quaker, received a charter from Charles II to repay a debt to the Penn family. This charter became the Pennsylvania Colony, known as the "Holy Experiment" in Quaker colonialism. By the late seventeenth century, Penn was already a well-known promoter of Quaker theology, having written the spiritual classic *No Cross, No Crown* (1669). With the Pennsylvania Colony, he attempted to enact the ideals he preached. Pennsylvania offered religious toleration to everyone and extended Quaker egalitarianism to include Native Americans, with whom Penn established fair trading relations.

Although Pennsylvania was a sanctuary open to all, it was primarily a Quaker colony, established to relieve the Quakers' oppression and sustain their style of life. In their effort to excise spiritual and material excess, Quakers adopted a simple style of dress and speech and modeled their communities using the principles of efficiency and austerity as their guides. Though spiritually motivated, this organizational tactic was monetarily beneficial. Pennsylvania, and in particular its capital, Philadelphia, was phenomenally prosperous. As one Quaker historian explained, factories and houses were built as "temples of holiness and righteousness, which God may delight in" (quoted in Tolles 1948, 63). Thus, Quakers constructed a successful capitalism based on theological devotion. In time, as historian Frederick B. Tolles noted, the "counting house became more important than the meeting house" (1948, 241–243) and the theological impetus for material success became more and more diluted. By the late nineteenth century, the obvious Quaker presence in Pennsylvania had disappeared.

Although their cultural dominance was in decline, Quakers maintained a strong social role in the United States. Quakers always exerted a moral influence disproportionate to their statistical numbers, for their theological disposition propelled them to social activism. Beginning in the seventeenth century, Quakers argued for the critical link between personal piety and social responsibility. Directed by their belief in the universal inner light, Quakers have persistently argued for the deconstruction of inequalities and social oppression. Quakers were central to the abolition of slavery; indeed, the Monthly Meeting of Friends in Germantown, Pennsylvania, published the first written public protest against slavery in 1688. For members of the Religious Society of Friends, the inviolability of an individual's conscience made slaveholding a clear sin. Quakers banned slaveholding among their members and were active managers of the Underground Railroad.

Aside from their prominence in abolition, Quakers were also active in movements for temperance, prison reform, and the abolition of poverty. Quakers were also heavily involved in the suffragette movement, with major leaders in the movement, including Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott, claiming Quaker membership. As Quakers maintain no bounded church structure, social reform for them functions as a form of worship. In the twentieth century, members of the Religious Society of Friends focused their activist labors toward the end of war. Although Quakers were always pacifists, the horrors of modern warfare rejuvenated their quest to end organized violence between men. In 1917, Quakers founded the American Friends Service Committee to support Quakers and others in the maintenance of their witness for peace. The Friends Committee for National Legislation was formed as a lobbying organization based in Washington, D.C. Finally, throughout the Vietnam War, Quakers ran Civilian Public Service work camps to provide sites of alternative service for those claiming conscientious objector status.

Today, three groups of Quakers maintain organized membership rolls: the Friends United Meeting, which models its worship after mainline Protestant denominations, including liturgy and regular sermons; the Friends General Conference, a group that rejects all liturgy and maintains silence during worship services; and the

Evangelical Friends Alliance, which borrowed religious methods from revivalist tradition, including the practice of missions. Although diverse in worship patterns, these Quaker groups share a cultural life committed to social action and a ceaseless devotion to religious reform.

Kathryn Lofton

See also: Antihunger Coalitions

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R

Racial Segregation

Racial segregation, whether it is de jure or de facto, is intended to order racial groups hierarchically through physical isolation or through the regulation of social interactions. It entails subordinating one racial group to another in a relationship of inferiority and superiority. In the United States, racial segregation has been used to establish white supremacy and to maintain white privilege by stigmatizing African Americans and other racial groups and by institutionalizing unequal access to social and economic resources. Today, residential segregation, or urban apartheid, has replaced legal segregation as one of the mainstays of racial inequality.

Legal, or de jure, segregation was characteristic mainly of the South, though many border states and some northern states had laws requiring segregated schools and prohibiting miscegenation. Southern laws mandating segregation date from the Black codes that were passed in many southern states after the Civil War but that only proliferated beginning in the 1880s. State legislatures passed segregation laws in order to minimize social and physical contact between Blacks and whites. These laws regulated contact in all public spaces: parks, libraries, hospitals, asylums, post offices, schools, public offices such as courthouses, and transportation, including all common carriers. Jim Crow laws were pervasive, extending to all realms of life: Georgia segregated prisoners, Louisiana required separate saloons for Blacks and whites, and even cemeteries were segregated.

Jim Crow laws underpinned political disenfranchisement and economic exploitation of Black workers. These laws stemmed partly from widespread fears of social equality among white southerners as a new Black middle class emerged after Reconstruction. It was no accident that Jim Crow first took hold in transportation. Railroads were the chief means of transportation in the South, and the one place where Blacks and whites, especially Black men and white women, would come together. Whites resented sitting in the same car with Blacks. Segregation was clearly connected to gender. Male preserves such as bars or racetracks were less likely to be segregated than were places where white women and Blacks could meet.

School segregation predated the proliferation of Jim Crow laws in the 1890s; southern laws mandating segregated schools go back to Reconstruction. Seventeen states had constitutional provisions requiring segregated schools; in addition, a handful of northern states permitted segregated schools. Schooling was separate and unequal. White southerners were callously indifferent to the plight of Black schoolchildren. Average per pupil expenditures for Black schools in the south were just 34 percent of expenditures for white schools, a ratio that did not appreciably change until the 1940s (Margo 1990). Black schoolchildren made do with fewer books, blackboards, and other equipment, and their schools were housed in dilapidated buildings.

The Supreme Court upheld Jim Crow laws in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537 [1896]), ruling that such laws did not violate either the Thirteenth or the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The majority held that segregation was a reasonable exercise of the police powers delegated to states. Ignoring the fact that segregation was intended to isolate and subordinate African Americans and that it was separate and unequal, the majority ruled that Jim Crow laws were not discriminatory. "Laws permitting, and even requiring, their separation," the majority wrote, "in places where they are liable to be brought into contact, do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other." Until Plessy was overruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]), segregation was not understood to be an act of discrimination.

Yet the Supreme Court did not uphold all segregation laws. After the turn of the twentieth century, many southern cities passed laws requiring segregated housing, only to have the Supreme Court rule in *Buchanan v. Warley* (245 U.S. 60 [1917]) that such laws were in violation of the 1866 Civil Rights Act, which gave Blacks the right to "inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property." In fact, levels of residential segregation in the South were much lower than in the North until the 1950s. In most southern cities, small concentrations of Blacks lived amid whites rather than in geographically isolated areas, as happened in the North. A unique settlement pattern in southern cities—whites living on avenues, Blacks in the alleys—and the pervasiveness of Jim Crow laws were the main reasons residential segregation in the South did not duplicate the northern pattern.

De facto segregation in the North was in many ways just as rigid and just as pervasive. Unlike southern segregation, northern segregation was based on isolation and confinement. Beginning in the 1920s, northern whites segregated residential neighborhoods by resisting the settlement of migrating Blacks in white areas through violent reprisals and racial covenants. The latter were private agreements used by real estate brokers and home-owner associations to maintain whites-only neighborhoods. Covenants required home buyers to agree that if they sold their homes, they would sell only to whites. Real estate agents used racial covenants as a marketing tool, selling the idea of white enclaves outside cities. After the Supreme Court upheld racial covenants in a 1926 opinion, *Corrigan v. Buckley* (271 U.S. 323), they became the mainstay of northern apartheid until they were overturned in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (334 U.S. 1 [1948]).

Before racial covenants were introduced and widely used, most African Americans in the North lived in neighborhoods that were predominantly white. By 1930, northern cities were segregated, although the average northern Black resident lived in a neighborhood that was still (barely) majority white. A few cities were already highly segregated by this time; in Chicago, for example, the average Black family lived in a neighborhood that was more than two-thirds Black. By 1970, this was true of all northern cities.

Industrial labor markets in both the North and the South were also sharply segregated for much of the twentieth century, but in very different ways. Southern industry was horizontally segregated; Blacks and whites worked in different industries—textile mills were lily white, whereas the lumber industry was completely Black. The northern pattern was based on exclusion and vertical segregation within industries. Migrating Blacks were typically denied access to industrial jobs until immigration was curtailed in the 1920s, and even then Black workers experienced higher unemployment rates than whites. Until the formation of the Congress of Industrial

Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s, Black workers were also denied access to unions or confined to segregated locals. And when Blacks did get jobs in northern factories, those jobs were typically the dirtiest and lowest paying.

Racial exclusion in manufacturing broke down during the World War II economic boom. Blacks made enormous strides in acquiring manufacturing jobs, yet most factories remained vertically segregated. In both regions, Blacks were concentrated in unskilled jobs because they were denied access to either skilled blue-collar jobs or white-collar jobs. Southern factories maintained segregated seniority lists that prevented Blacks from moving up the occupational hierarchy. Northern factories were less blatant about subordinating Black workers, but the segregation was no less effective. Indeed, northern urban labor markets were sharply segregated. Passage of the Civil Rights Act in the 1960s and the use of affirmative action to break down racially discriminatory job classifications and pay scales began to erode occupational segregation in both the North and the South.

The federal government used its authority as an instrument of segregation throughout much of the twentieth century. From President Woodrow Wilson's election in 1912 until the 1960s, most federal offices and jobs were rigidly segregated. However, the most important use of federal authority to entrench and expand segregation occurred after the 1940s when southerners used federal social policies to build a segregated welfare state in the South and whites in both regions used federal housing policies to consolidate racial apartheid in big cities.

Federal grants-in-aid subsidized Jim Crow beginning in the New Deal and continuing until passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Especially egregious was the use of the 1946 Hill-Burton Act, which provided federal funds to build hospitals and other medical facilities after the war, to build segregated hospitals in the South. The law prohibited racial discrimination but permitted "separate but equal" facilities. Between 1946 and 1963, the federal government distributed $37 million to eighty-nine segregated medical facilities. Southerners also used veterans' programs and numerous other federal subsidies to gild a Jim Crow welfare state. They were stopped only by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discriminatory allocation of federal funds. Henceforth, southern jurisdictions had to demonstrate that federal dollars were not being used to segregate African Americans. This law also enabled federal officials to begin dismantling segregated schools in the South twelve years after *Brown* by threatening to withhold grants-in-aid if school districts did not integrate schools.

Federal policies were crucial to the expansion of segregated housing in metropolitan areas throughout the country. In the thirty years after the Great Depression, a rigid pattern of residential segregation became a permanent feature of all big cities in both the North and the South. By 1970, 82 percent of Blacks in the thirty largest U.S. cities would have had to move to achieve a residential pattern that was considered "even" or integrated, that is, one in which all neighborhoods reflected the racial composition of a city (Massey and Denton 1993, 77). More than three-quarters of all African Americans in these cities lived in mostly Black neighborhoods, and one-third of all African Americans in the United States lived under conditions of hypersegregation, in geographically isolated, racially clustered neighborhoods.

Discrimination by real estate agents in local housing markets, aided by mortgage lenders' refusal to make loans in Black neighborhoods and by federal housing and urban renewal policies, produced a deeply embedded pattern of segregation within cities and between cities and suburbs. Federally insured home mortgages permitted whites to flee cities for entirely white suburbs, and they did so in large numbers. The Federal Housing Administration's underwriting policies steered mortgages to white suburbs and away from inner-city communities, fearing

Picket line in front of F.W. Woolworth store in New York City, April 14, 1960, in protest of the store's lunch counter segregation at southern branches in its chain. The picketers, a majority of whom were ministers, were sponsored by a church committee on Woolworth's policies in cooperation with the Congress of Racial Equality. (Library of Congress)

that anything less than rigid segregation would undermine property values. The FHA's guidelines for mortgage lenders invoked explicit racial criteria and "could well have been culled from the Nuremberg laws," wrote Charles Abrams, a housing expert (Abrams 1955, 385).

At the same time, public officials used federally subsidized public housing and urban renewal programs to build rigidly contained racial ghettos in big cities. Downtown business interests and local politicians used public housing to remove Blacks from choice downtown properties slated for redevelopment. New public housing could not be dispersed because whites violently resisted residential integration, and local housing officials responded by building government-subsidized housing in Black neighborhoods, usually on sites abandoned by industry or white home owners. In some cases—Philadelphia, for example—city officials created racially segregated neighborhoods from scratch. Southerners used urban renewal and public housing to build barriers between Black and white neighborhoods. After 1950, the southern pattern of residential segregation resembled that in the North. Residential segregation has persisted despite passage of laws that make discrimination in housing markets illegal. The segregation index, the proportion of Blacks who would have to move to achieve integration, hardly changed between 1950 and 1990.

Entrenched residential segregation perpetuates racial inequality in three ways. First, outside the South, most schools remain highly segregated because of de facto segregation between northern cities and their suburbs. In *Milliken v. Bradley* (418 U.S. 717 [1974]), the Supreme Court rejected interjurisdictional remedies for metropolitan school segregation, such as busing, on the grounds that there was no evidence implicating suburban districts in de jure segregation. As the dissenters pointed out, this decision ignored the government policies that aided and abetted residential segregation. Today, Blacks and Latinos make up 85 percent of the enrollment in big-city school districts, and whites are the only group who attend schools in which the vast majority of students are of their own race.

Second, residential segregation is one of the main props of wealth inequality between Blacks and whites. Median Black net worth is a fraction of white net worth, and one of the main reasons is that white-owned housing is more valuable than Black-owned housing. The greater value of white-owned housing relative to Black-owned housing is due to white flight and segregation, which contributes to lower housing values and disinvestment in Black neighborhoods.

Finally, racially segregated cities intensify poverty. Jobs and economic investment have moved from central cities to the suburbs in the last half of the twentieth century, leaving African Americans locked into economically deteriorating, segregated neighborhoods. This spatial mismatch between jobs and residences is one of the key causes of persistently high African American poverty rates. Big-city racial ghettos also concentrate poverty geographically: The higher the level of segregation, the more likely poor Blacks are to live in neighborhoods that are disproportionately poor; poor whites, by contrast, are more likely to live in economically diverse areas. Racial segregation intensifies the effects of such economic and social changes as disinvestment; such effects are not apparent in integrated neighborhoods. One consequence is that Black and Latino students are far more likely to attend segregated schools in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.

Racial segregation remains deeply entrenched in American society more than thirty-five years after the civil rights revolution. Jim Crow has been replaced by big-city ghettos as the most important contemporary form of racial separation and domination.

Michael K. Brown

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Racism; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal

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Racism

Poverty in the United States, and the welfare policy response to it, cannot be fully understood without examining the role played by racism. Racism refers to beliefs and practices through which a dominant group systematically maintains privileges and advantages over other groups believed to be "racially" inferior. The latter are often identified by physical features such as skin color. In recent years, beliefs in biological racial inferiority have largely been replaced by beliefs in the cultural inferiority of such "minority" groups. Although evolutionary biologists hold that distinct races really do not exist and that there are no socially meaningful "racial" differences, racism rests upon these assumptions. Whites' racist beliefs and practices have primarily focused on people of African, Latin American, Asian, and Native American ancestry. Historically, women in these groups have faced "double jeopardy," being forced to deal simultaneously with both racism and sexism (Amott and Matthaei 1996). Although struggles against racism have met with notable successes in terms of achieving civil rights for many people of color, these struggles have failed to make similar inroads against their economic deprivation. In the period 1998–2000, non-Hispanic whites had an average poverty rate of 7.8 percent, in comparison to 23.9 percent for African Americans, 23.1 percent for Hispanics, and 25.9 percent for Native Americans. The rate for Asian Americans was 11.3 percent, close to but above the average poverty rate for whites (U.S. Census Bureau 2001, 7).

Racism is a major factor in the perpetuation of high rates of poverty among people of color, and it is expressed through a wide range of social institutions and personal interactions (Feagin 2001). Racial discrimination in housing markets segregates many people of color into locales in which few whites live. The local school systems on which many families of color depend are frequently poorly funded and substandard, and dropout rates are higher than in primarily white school districts. People of color must also contend with racial discrimination by employers. Residential isolation, poor schooling, and employer discrimination restrict many workers of color to unskilled, low-wage, service-sector jobs that usually carry few benefits and are often unstable or temporary. Even in prosperous times, unemployment rates are much higher for workers of color than for whites. Following economic slowdowns, workers of color have more difficulty becoming reemployed than do white workers.

The resulting chronic and harsh conditions of impoverishment among people of color pose difficult obstacles to forming permanent adult partnerships and thus undermine family and marital stability. People of color are seriously overrepresented not only in the U.S. poverty population but also among those in "extreme poverty" (that is, in households with incomes below 50 percent of the federally defined poverty line). Most impoverished families of color are headed by women. At best, U.S. welfare policy allows for very meager income assistance for such families and offers little help in escaping poverty, in part due to racism.

Racist beliefs and practices have long accompanied government programs that provide means-tested public assistance to poor families (Neubeck and Cazenave 2001). Racism in the realm of welfare has rested heavily upon stereotypes about the supposed laziness, immorality, and irresponsibility of people of color, particularly African American women. As a consequence, mothers of color have long been considered prime examples of the "undeserving poor" and held personally responsible for their own poverty.

The Social Security Act of 1935 established the first jointly funded federal-state welfare program for poor families. Yet for years, poor families of color in many locales were treated as undeserving and were either not given assistance for which they were eligible under the law or were given cash assistance in amounts lower than those being received by whites. White caseworkers denied aid to households of color if, in their opinion, mothers failed to provide a "suitable home" for their children or if they suspected that mothers were seeing (and thus allegedly receiving cash assistance from) a male. Families of color frequently had their welfare eligibility abruptly canceled when local farms or other employers wanted labor, regardless of the fact that the wages they paid and on which the families would be forced to depend were inadequate.

Many racially discriminatory policies and practices were altered in response to struggles by the civil rights and welfare rights movements of the 1960s. As a result, increasing numbers of impoverished families of color were able to get welfare assistance. Changes in legal standards and rules regarding nondiscrimination did not put an end to racism in welfare politics, however. Many politicians still employ subtle racist stereotypes of laziness and immorality among African Americans in condemning the alleged "welfare dependency" of recipients, stereotypes that the mass media have helped reinforce. It is telling that presidential candidate Ross Perot caused little political or public reaction when, in an appearance on a 1996 national television talk show, he stereotyped the typical young Black male as "a breeder who gets the woman pregnant and then she gets welfare" (quoted in Neubeck and Cazenave 2001, 156–157). Researchers have found that the mass media tend to use visual images of mothers of color with stories reporting negatively on welfare and its recipients but are more likely to use images of whites when poor people are being depicted positively (Gilens 1999).

Although whites and African Americans made up similar percentages of the nation's welfare rolls from the 1970s to the mid-1990s, political elites have successfully framed welfare as a "Black problem." It is true that people of color are disproportionately represented on the welfare rolls, but this is in large part due to the high rates of poverty and extreme poverty mentioned earlier. Yet a significant minority of whites believe that most or all welfare recipients are Black, including whites residing in states in which very few African Americans live (Gilens 1999). National survey data collected by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) show that the majority of whites believe that African Americans are less likely to prefer to be self-supporting than are people who are racially like themselves (based on NORC data from the Roper Center, University of Connecticut).

Racist stereotypes have helped frame welfare reform discourse, leading to policy changes that deny impoverished families any entitlement to public assistance and place strict time limits on its receipt. Such stereotypes have also been used to justify ever more stringent work requirements for welfare recipients and efforts to promote marriage and discourage both abortion and out-of-wedlock births. Those states with the largest African American and Latino/a populations have the strictest welfare eligibility policies and the harshest penalties for violating welfare rules (Schram, Soss, and Fording 2003). Impoverished whites forced to rely on public assistance are also, along with poor people of color, negatively affected by the racism that restricts eligibility and holds down benefits.

Kenneth J. Neubeck

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Racial Segregation; Sexism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Refugee Policy

U.S. refugee policy consists of a set of programs designed to protect and to meet the immediate needs of groups designated as "refugees." According to the definition adopted from the 1951 U.N. Refugee Convention, refugees are persons with a well-founded fear of persecution. Resettlement programs are designed to incorporate refugee groups into the social and economic fabric of the receiving community. Because some refugees continue to be poor and to combine public assistance with work activities to survive, the refugee resettlement program has been criticized for creating a new "underclass" of welfare dependents. Such cultural-behavioral explanations of poverty, however, fail to consider the disparities in the way refugee programs have been applied for different groups and the consequences of deindustrialization and a receding welfare state on the poor communities where most refugees resettle. Although it is the historic policy of the United States to admit persons of special humanitarian and foreign policy concern, once here, refugees experience the vagaries of the welfare system and the race, class, and gender hierarchies that produce social inequality.

After World War II, the international outrage at the lack of response to Nazi atrocities resulted in the admission to the United States of thousands of displaced Europeans. The first refugee legislation, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, allowed legal resettlement beyond the restrictive immigration quotas, which since the early twentieth century had become increasingly more explicitly restrictive and biased against nonwhites and people of non-Anglo-Saxon national origin. However, it was the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian rebels in 1956 that led to what was to become the blueprint for future refugee resettlement policy, introducing a bias in favor of groups opposed to communist regimes—in particular those who could serve American strategic aims in the Cold War—while aiming to promote economic self-sufficiency among resettled refugees. To ensure the success of the Hungarian refugees, the federal government funded a network of voluntary and public organizations to provide cash assistance, social services, and job placement.

The refugee resettlement program was expanded in response to major events of the Cold War against communism, including the Cuban revolutionary reforms under Fidel Castro beginning in 1959 and the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam with the fall of Saigon in 1975, both of which contributed to increased flows of refugees from communist regimes. These refugees benefited from the continuing Cold War; from the expansion of antipoverty, civil rights, and social welfare policies during the 1960s and 1970s; and from the Immigration Reform Act of 1965, which lifted racially motivated national origins quotas. The Cuban Refugee Act (1966) and the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act (1975) gave Cubans and Southeast Asians legal claims to refugee status and therefore entitled them to cash and medical assistance and social services to hasten adjustment to a new country. These refugee programs also emphasized job training and placement services. Most of those in the first waves of Cubans in the 1960s and of the Vietnamese in the 1970s were from the middle and professional classes and were familiar with U.S. institutions. In addition, many Cubans already had established family ties in the United States, which helped with adjustment. Some families prospered by utilizing capital they had escaped with and by taking advantage of the availability of federal business loans. Even with the advantages of their social and educational backgrounds and government support, many Cubans and Vietnamese experienced downward job mobility, and families required multiple wage earners to survive (Haines 1985, 18–22).

By the 1980s, the Cold War was waning, and social welfare policy was turning toward regulating poor people's behavior and preventing welfare dependency rather than improving structural conditions and opportunities. The passage of the Refugee Act of 1980 reflected these broader developments. The act was meant to standardize procedures for the regular flow of refugees and for emergency admission to the United States for any persons facing persecution. The act streamlined resettlement services through a newly formed Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). In the interest of reducing the possibility of welfare dependency, it limited refugee cash and medical assistance to the first thirty-six months of resettlement and limited reimbursements to states for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income to thirty-six months if these services were required after the expiration of refugee assistance. These measures brought an end to the federal government's previous practices of funding resettlement programs without any time limits and of reimbursing states for refugees on public assistance. Resettlement programs remained vulnerable to the domestic politics of welfare retrenchment and congressional budget cuts even after the passage of these restrictive measures. Since 1981, refugee cash and medical assistance has continued to be reduced; it currently allows eight months of assistance with no reimbursement to states. Thus, the Refugee Act of 1980—legislation meant to increase humanitarian involvement worldwide—has become another example of the effects of devolution and a retreat from social justice.

As changes in refugee and domestic policy unfolded, worldwide economic and political crises created significant refugee flows from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Central America, Cuba, and the Caribbean, a situation that demanded humanitarian and diplomatic attention. However, each group experienced a different reception. The Mariel boat lift from Cuba in 1980 reveals the racial and class politics of refugee policy. Several interlocking factors contributed to the massive exodus of Cubans to the United States, including desires for family reunion, the economic crisis in Cuba in the 1970s, and the perception that opportunities were available in the United States. The Mariel Cubans included young, single men and women socialized during Castro's regime and a number of Black Cubans and former criminals and mental patients. Rather than granting the Mariel Cubans refugee status, President Jimmy Carter's administration created a special category of "entrant-status pending" to reduce the cost of resettlement and to quell criticism of the Cuban program. Although the Mariel Cubans lacked full refugee status, they fared better than do the Haitians, Dominicans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans who are also seeking to escape political and economic oppression but who, because they are fleeing noncommunist governments, are considered "economic" migrants. The second, post-1980 wave of Southeast Asian refugees, on the other hand, benefited from the image of Asian immigrant success and the collective remorse for the Vietnam War.

Nevertheless, the second wave of Southeast Asian refugees experienced considerable hardship in the United States. This group consisted of diverse groups of Vietnamese boat people, Cambodian war victims of the Khmer Rouge, and the Hmong and Laotian operatives recruited by the United States to fight the Vietcong. Many Southeast Asians were young adults and children who had lived in refugee camps and had suffered traumas prior to their arrival. Even if the working-age adults possessed the skills or language capabilities to enter gainful employment immediately, they arrived as U.S. cities were experiencing the effects of economic recession and deindustrialization, and they faced greatly diminished availability of the jobs that had traditionally provided opportunities for immigrants and native-born populations to rise out of poverty. As a result, many Southeast Asian families combine welfare with low-wage and informal work to survive.

The poverty and perceived welfare dependency of refugees helped fuel the anti-immigrant elements of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. Even as legal immigrants, refugees and their children are subject to harsh new restrictions on eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, the program that replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children), food stamps, and Supplemental Security Income for the disabled. Those who do qualify for TANF are subject to TANF work requirements, which are especially burdensome to poor women with limited English proficiency.

Karen Quintiliani

See also: Asian Americans; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Latino/as; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Regulating the Poor, *Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward*

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward's first book, *Regulating the Poor,* published in 1971, has remained in print for over thirty years and was reissued in 1992 in an updated edition. This book originally won the C. Wright Mills Award from the Society for the Study of Social Problems and over time has come to be considered a classic in the field of social theory.

In *Regulating the Poor,* Piven and Cloward most forcefully articulated a distinctive understanding of the political and economic role of welfare in capitalist society in general and in the United States in particular. For Piven and Cloward, welfare is a secondary institution calibrated to respond not to the needs of the poor but to the contradictory needs of the primary institutions of the capitalist political economy: on the one hand, to maintain a ready supply of people willing to take low-wage jobs by keeping welfare benefits low; on the other, to maintain political stability by placating poor people with more generous welfare benefits in times of social unrest. As such, welfare is itself wrapped in contradictions. Over time, the system would change not so much to get better as to swing, pendulum-like, to serve alternating political and economic objectives as conditions dictated. Thus, welfare could be used at some points in time to co-opt the poor and keep them from becoming radicalized and at others to push more people into the low-wage labor force.

Drawing on their earlier writings and building from this theoretical insight, Piven and Cloward emphasized that the possibilities for progressive change under these conditions were small, and that such change was only likely to occur to the extent that agitation from below could force more substantial concessions than policymakers would normally make. Piven and Cloward were in this sense neo-Marxists—dialectical thinkers who recognized the contradictory character of social formations such as welfare—and structuralists who recognized that the relationship of structure to agency did indeed constrain what was politically possible at any given point in time, but they were also perhaps more open to the capacity of actors to push for change than Marx himself had allowed.

When it was introduced, Piven and Cloward's perspective was a startling theoretical development in the historiography of social welfare. It single-handedly forced a reconsideration of the received wisdom in the field that the development of social welfare was a linear, cumulative developmental process that would lead to progress and greater inclusiveness over time. Instead, the tensions between what we can distinguish as "social assistance" and "social control" continued to move social welfare policy in a more cyclical fashion. Admittedly, with each swing of the pendulum from generosity back to retrenchment the method of social control could change. Medicalization in the 1990s, criminalization in the 1950s, demonization a century before: Each represents a different form for a different time in which the pendulum swung toward social control. Still, the old wine of social control was in new bottles of social construction.

Piven and Cloward's clear-eyed, realistic analysis in *Regulating the Poor* stripped away the sentimentality associated with social welfare as a kindly service toward the poor. Piven and Cloward demonstrated that social welfare, especially in the highly capitalistic United States, tended to be very much designed to ensure that people were offered only the limited assistance that was consistent with the needs of a hypercapitalist political economy. Their historical analysis showed that welfare tended to give more emphasis to political co-optation during times of political instability, such as during the Great Depression and the 1960s, and to place more emphasis on enforcing work norms during times of stability. Moreover, periods of liberalization are bound to be followed by retrenchment, in turn creating the conditions for opposition from those most adversely affected and leading to new periods of liberalization. Liberalization is not inevitable, however, and Piven and Cloward emphasized that important progressive social changes will only come about when those oppressed by these forms of power and control resist. Their moral for this saga is as pertinent now in a new era of welfare retrenchment as it was when they first began to develop their thesis in the 1960s.

Sanford F. Schram

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Poor Laws; Relief; Speenhamland; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement; Welfare State

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Relief

Aid or assistance to the poor has been termed "poor relief," or, more disparagingly, "the dole." The term "welfare" has largely supplanted "relief" since the mid-twentieth century. Throughout most of American history, relief has been provided in two main forms. *Indoor relief* was assistance to the poor offered through an institutional residence: an almshouse, poorhouse, workhouse, orphanage, asylum, or homeless shelter. *Outdoor relief* or *out-relief* was the provision to poor people of aid that did not require their institutionalization. Although some outdoor relief has been provided in cash, much has been in-kind relief—aid in the form of goods or services (food, clothing, or fuel) or scrip or vouchers redeemable for select goods (in the late twentieth century through programs such as food stamps and housing assistance). *Work relief* has been another prominent form of relief, first widely used during the depression of 1893 in many large cities and later a prominent feature of the New Deal's emergency relief provisions. Private charity provided most poor relief until late in the 1800s, although it typically did so with public funds. Although indoor relief has historically been more expensive than outdoor relief, outdoor relief has been more contested and controversial.

After decades of modest change, public relief expenditures (especially for outdoor relief) increased dramatically during and immediately after the Civil War as industrialization and urbanization increased the number of people unable to provide for themselves and their families. Nationwide, from 1850 to 1860, relief rolls rose 76 percent (Kiesling and Margo 1997). Many cities increased their poor-relief expenditures again in response to the deep depression of 1873–1878. Complaints abounded about the "indiscriminate charity," public and private both, that this depression called forth. With the late-century anti-relief charity organization societies often leading the charge, most of the largest American cities and many smaller ones abolished or substantially reduced their poor-relief programs. The late nineteenth century marks the first widespread and successful American assault on relief, with public outdoor relief the primary target. But this effort to eliminate or reform outdoor relief in cities was short-lived, for the next deep depression, in 1893, further expanded the ranks of the poor and unemployed and caused many cities to reinstate their outdoor relief programs and create innovative new programs to care for and placate the poor.

During the nineteenth century, state governments had assumed responsibility for the care of those poor without legal settlement, established asylums and other institutions, and created state boards of charity to coordinate the public and private relief programs within their jurisdictions, but the Progressive Era marked the real entrance of state governments into the arena of relief provision. New forms of categorical and means-tested relief programs were established to meet new needs and to care for those poor deemed most deserving. Between 1917 and 1920 alone, states enacted some 400 new relief provisions, and by 1931, all states but two had enacted mothers' or widows' pension programs. By 1928, public relief expenditures were three times the amount of private expenditures (Katz [1986] 1996, 215–216).

The Great Depression and the New Deal marked the entrance of the federal government into relief. The federal role had largely been limited to land grants to the states for indoor relief institutions and to pensions for veterans of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The response of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration to the Great Depression included a massive and unprecedented expansion of American relief, first as cash relief and then as work relief. By 1934, one-sixth of the American population was "on the dole," and by 1935, some 30 percent of the African American population was (Piven and Cloward [1971] 1993, 75–76). So great was this expansion of government provision of relief that by 1938, American relief as a percentage of gross domestic product exceeded that offered by Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, and others (Amenta 1998, 5). Nonetheless, relief still remained hotly contested, and even FDR voiced concern about the dangers of cash relief and the ways in which it "induces a spiritual and moral disintegration." Thus, he promised in 1935 in the State of the Union Address that "the federal government must and shall quit the business of relief." Though relief would never return to its prior local form, and despite the institutionalized insurance-style programs of the Social Security Act of 1935 (SSA), America did not retain its leadership in relief or welfare spending.

Using mothers' pensions as a policy model, Title IV-A of the SSA created Aid to Dependent Children (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC]). This twentieth-century joint federal-state program offered cash relief primarily to women with children. After decades of consistent but relatively modest growth in this program, the 1960s saw a great expansion. Relief rolls grew 17 percent in the 1950s, but 107 percent from 1960 to 1969 (Piven and Cloward [1971] 1993, 183). State-run general assistance programs, which offered aid to men and women ineligible for AFDC, also grew, though more modestly. This relief expansion, however, marked the second great American assault on poor relief, one that had something in common with the nineteenth-century campaigns against the supposed expense, fraud, and "perverse incentives" of outdoor relief. Indeed, by the 1980s, many prominent politicians and policy intellectuals urged a return to the local, minimal, private charity of the nineteenth century. This second anti-relief campaign culminated in the "welfare reforms" of 1996. Once again, outdoor relief was the focal point for assaults upon public assistance to the poor.

Stephen Pimpare

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; General Assistance; Great Depression and New Deal; Maternalist Policy; Means Testing and Universalism; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Progressive Era and 1920s; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Religion

See Black Churches; Buddhism; Catholic Church; Charitable Choice; Christian Fundamentalism; Islam; Judaism; Missionaries; Protestant Denominations; Puritans and Puritanism; Quakers; Salvation Army; Social Gospel

Report on Economic Conditions of the South, *National Emergency Council*

In 1938, the U.S. National Emergency Council published the *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*. The *Report* sketched a devastating picture of southern poverty, asserting, in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's words, that "the South presents right now the nation's No. 1 economic problem—the nation's problem, not merely the South's" (Roosevelt 1938). The *Report* portrayed the South as a drag on the rest of the nation—a brake on efforts to relieve the Great Depression and develop American industry—and it offered a blueprint for national policy to develop the laggard region and uplift its people.

The *Report* condensed the condition of the South into fifteen brutally descriptive sections on topics from soil depletion to unsanitary housing, from deficient health care to meager sources of credit, each section delineating the region's backwardness and misery. In 1937, per capita income had reached barely half the standard for the rest of the nation. The South registered the nation's lowest industrial wages, farm income, and tangible assets. Those statistics translated into genuine suffering.

But the *Report* was never the straightforward presentation of facts it purported to be. It crystallized a new view of southern poverty, one that attributed the region's woes to paltry public services and an overreliance on agriculture and low-wage industry. This Depression-era conception barely considered the region's history of racial conflict, seeing economic uplift as the remedy not only for southern poverty but also for racial injustice and reactionary politics.

The *Report* signaled a shift in the direction of federal policy toward the South. The federal government embarked on the long-term sponsorship of southern economic growth, pursuing development along the lines favored by Roosevelt and southern New Dealers: the elimination of low-wage employment through a federal minimum-wage law, nationally financed improvements in education and public services, and encouragement for southern industrialization and economic modernization.

As part of FDR's program to liberalize the Democratic Party, the *Report* also marked an important watershed in national politics. FDR's so-called purge, an unsuccessful effort to unseat congressional opponents of the New Deal in the 1938 midterm elections, concentrated on defeating the recalcitrant conservative southerners in the president's own party. The president campaigned vigorously through the South, repeatedly citing the *Report*'s findings from the stump.

Hostility to the president's interference in the southern primaries intensified southern criticism of the *Report* and further cemented a political alliance between Republican opponents of the New Deal and conservative southern Democrats. While the *Report* encapsulated the prevailing view of regional poverty and of its causes, consequences, and cures, the ensuing controversy raised formidable obstacles to achieving the policy goals it envisioned.

Bruce J. Schulman

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); New Deal Farm Policy; Rural Poverty; Tennessee Valley Authority

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In the South, as elsewhere, the two most important economic endowments are its people and its physical resources. . . . In spite of the wealth of population and natural resource, the South is poor in the machinery for converting this wealth to the uses of its people. With 28 percent of the Nation's population, it has only 16 percent of the tangible assets, including factories, machines, and the tools with which people make their living. With more than half the country's farmers, the South has less than a fifth of the farm implements. Despite its coal, oil, gas, and water power, the region uses only 15 percent of the Nation's factory horsepower. Its potentialities have been neglected and its opportunities unrealized.

The paradox of the South is that while it is blessed by Nature with immense wealth, its people as a whole are the poorest in the country. Lacking industries of its own, the South has been forced to trade the richness of its soil, its minerals and forests, and the labor of its people for goods manufactured elsewhere. If the South received such goods in sufficient quantity to meet its needs, it might consider itself adequately paid.

Source: David L. Carlton and Peter A. Coclanis, *Confronting Southern Poverty in the Great Depression: The Report on Economic Conditions of the South with Related Documents* (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 1996), 42–43, 45–47.

Transformation of the South, 1938–1980. New York: Oxford University Press.

Reproductive Rights

"Reproductive rights" are a concept and a claim that feminists crafted to describe their political struggle for the legalization of abortion in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since the mid-nineteenth century, when abortion was criminalized state by state, millions of women had secretly sought and obtained criminal abortions—if they could afford to, and if they knew where to go for help. Millions of others, often girls and women who were poor, had attempted self-abortion, frequently with disastrous results. By the middle to late 1960s, in the context of numerous human rights movements inspired by the civil rights movement for basic and full citizenship rights for African Americans in the United States, feminists began to speak out, arguing that without the right to control their own bodies and fertility, including by means of abortion, women in the United States could not be full citizens.

Many of the most highly visible of these feminists were white women, spokespersons of emergent national "reproductive rights" organizations such as the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), or organizers of local, abortion-rights speak-outs. In the same era, feminist women of color (who, in the wake of the civil rights movement, could, for the first time, command some serious media attention for their politics) redefined the meaning of "reproductive rights" in ways that acknowledged how race and class created profoundly different reproductive experiences for different groups of women in the United States. Women of color, through such organizations as the National Black Women's Health Project, made the case that for "reproductive rights" to have real meaning for all women, including poor women, the concept had to encompass the right to reproductive health care. A right to reproductive health care would include access, without coercion, to contraception and to general reproductive medical services; the right and access to abortion services for women unable or unwilling to manage a pregnancy; and (most radically) the right and resources to enable a woman to carry a pregnancy to term and to be a mother, even if she lacked the resources enjoyed by middle-class women.

This last component of comprehensive "reproductive rights" aimed to redress local and national public policy initiatives mandating various punishments for poor mothers who received welfare benefits, such as compulsory birth control or sterilization, or loss of welfare benefits. These initiatives, which had been introduced in state legislatures in every region of the country, were predicated on the idea that poor women and maternity were incompatible.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, mainstream U.S. political culture reinforced this idea. After a series of Supreme Court decisions legalized general access to birth control and decriminalized abortion, many middle-class Americans came to believe more strongly than ever that a woman who became pregnant or stayed pregnant when she was poor was an illegitimate mother. Against this dominant view, many low-income women, women of color, and allies worked to expand the "reproductive rights" agenda beyond the right to legal abortion to include the claim that poor women have the right to be mothers, if and when they choose.

Paradoxically, at the same time that policymakers and politicians were pressuring poor women, often women of color, to suppress their fertility, the same public officials and a majority in the U.S. Supreme Court agreed that the right to abortion, guaranteed by *Roe v. Wade* (410 U.S. 113 [1973]), constituted a real right only for women who could pay for abortion services. The Hyde Amendment, adopted by Congress just three years after *Roe*, affirmed that the federal government, guarantor of abortion rights,

Katie Relf et al. v. Caspar W. Weinberger et al.

National Welfare Rights Organization v. Caspar W. Weinberger et al.

United States District Court for the District of Columbia
372 F. Supp. 1196
1974
Gesell, District Judge.

These two related cases, which have been consolidated with the consent of all parties, challenge the statutory authorization and constitutionality of regulations of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) governing human sterilizations under programs and projects funded by the Department's Public Health Service and its Social and Rehabilitation Service. 39 Fed. Reg. 4730–34 (1974). Plaintiffs are the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), suing on behalf of its 125,000 members, and five individual women, proceeding by class action on behalf of all poor persons subject to involuntary sterilization under the challenged regulations. Defendants are the Secretary of HEW, under whose authority the regulations were issued, 42 U.S.C. § 216, and two high-level HEW officials charged with the administration of federal family planning funds.

. . . Congress has authorized the funding of a full range of family planning services under two basic procedures. The Public Health Service administers federal grants to state health agencies and to public and private projects for the provision of family planning services to the poor, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300 et seq., 708(a), and the Social and Rehabilitation Service provides funds for such services under the Medicaid and Aid to Families of Dependent Children programs, 42 U.S.C. §§ 601 et seq., 1396 et seq.

Although there is no specific reference to sterilization in any of the family planning statutes nor in the legislative history surrounding their passage, the Secretary has considered sterilization to fall within the general statutory scheme and Congress has been made aware of this position. But until recently, there were no particular rules or regulations governing the circumstances under which sterilizations could be funded under these statutes.

Sterilization of females or males is irreversible. The total number of these sterilizations is clearly of national significance. . . . Over the last few years, an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 low-income persons have been sterilized annually under federally funded programs. . . .

Although Congress has been insistent that all family planning programs function on a purely voluntary basis, there is uncontroverted evidence in the record that minors and other incompetents have been sterilized with federal funds and that an indefinite number of poor people have been improperly coerced into accepting a sterilization operation under the threat that various federally supported welfare benefits would be withdrawn unless they submitted to irreversible sterilization. Patients receiving Medicaid assistance at childbirth are evidently the most frequent targets of this pressure. . . .

When such deplorable incidents began to receive nationwide public attention due to the experience of the Relf sisters in Alabama, the Secretary took steps to restrict the circumstances under which recipients of federal family planning funds could conduct sterilization operations. . . .

These regulations provide that projects and programs receiving PHS or SRS funds, whether for family planning or purely medical services, shall neither perform nor arrange for the performance of a nontherapeutic sterilization unless certain procedures are carried out. These vary depending upon whether the patient is, under state law, a legally competent adult, a legally competent person under the age of 18, a legally incompetent minor, or a mental incompetent. . . .

(continues)

Relf *and* National Welfare Rights Organization v. Caspar W. Weinberger et al. (continued)

Plaintiffs do not oppose the voluntary sterilization of poor persons under federally funded programs. However, they contend that these regulations are both illegal and arbitrary because they authorize involuntary sterilizations, without statutory or constitutional justification. They argue forcefully that sterilization of minors or mental incompetents is necessarily involuntary in the nature of things. Further, they claim that sterilization of competent adults under these regulations can be undertaken without ensuring that the request for sterilization is in actuality voluntary. The Secretary defends the regulations and insists that only "voluntary" sterilization is permitted under their terms. . . .

. . . The Supreme Court has repeatedly stated that the right of privacy entails the right of the individual "to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to bear or beget a child." . . . Involuntary sterilizations directly threaten that right . . . and plaintiffs correctly contend that the challenged regulations authorize such sterilizations. . . .

The Court must therefore proceed to the merits. While plaintiffs invoke both statutory and constitutional principles . . . the issues tendered may be readily resolved simply by resort to the underlying statutes. Accordingly, no occasion exists to consider the related constitutional claims.

. . . [T]he Court finds that . . . the challenged regulations are arbitrary and unreasonable in that they fail to implement the congressional command that federal family planning funds not be used to coerce indigent patients into submitting to sterilization. . . .

. . . Although the term "voluntary" is nowhere defined in the statutes under consideration, it is frequently encountered in the law. Even its dictionary definition assumes an exercise of free will and clearly precludes the existence of coercion or force. . . . And its use in the statutory and decisional law, at least when important human rights are at stake, entails a requirement that the individual have at his disposal the information necessary to make his decision and the mental competence to appreciate the significance of that information. . . .

No person who is mentally incompetent can meet these standards, nor can the consent of a representative, however sufficient under state law, impute voluntariness to the individual actually undergoing irreversible sterilization.

Minors would also appear to lack the knowledge, maturity and judgment to satisfy these standards with regard to such an important issue, what-

had no obligation to help a poor woman overcome the obstacle of poverty—her lack of money to pay for an abortion—that prevented her from exercising her newly won constitutional right. By the 1980s, abortion services, contraception, and access to new reproductive technologies and even to motherhood itself constituted the "reproductive rights" of middle-class women, while poor women often did not have access to the first three and were reviled if they achieved the last.

Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, middle-class women spearheaded efforts to save *Roe* in an era of growing anti-abortion-rights politics. In these same decades, poor women and their allies responded to ever more complex and vibrant political assaults on the reproductive behavior of women who lacked economic resources. In the name of "reproductive rights," including the right to be a mother, welfare rights activists and others opposed abortion-funding restrictions, family cap legislation (which denied public assistance to children born to women already receiving welfare benefits and thus ever may be their competence to rely on devices or medication that temporarily frustrates procreation. This is the reasoning that provides the basis for the nearly universal common law and statutory rule that minors and mental incompetents cannot consent to medical operations. . . .

The statutory references to minors and mental incompetents do not contradict this conclusion, for they appear only in the context of family planning services in general. Minors, for example, are not legally incompetent for all purposes, and many girls of child-bearing age are undoubtedly sufficiently aware of the relevant considerations to use temporary contraceptives that intrude far less on fundamental rights. However, the Secretary has not demonstrated and the Court cannot find that Congress deemed such children capable of voluntarily consenting to an irreversible operation involving the basic human right to procreate. Nor can the Court find, in the face of repeated warnings concerning voluntariness, that Congress authorized the imposition of such a serious deprivation upon mental incompetents at the will of an unspecified "representative."

The regulations also fail to provide the procedural safeguards necessary to ensure that even competent adults voluntarily request sterilization. . . . Even a fully informed individual cannot make a "voluntary" decision concerning sterilization if he has been subjected to coercion from doctors or project officers. Despite specific statutory language forbidding the recipients of federal family planning funds to threaten a cutoff of program benefits unless the individual submits to sterilization and despite clear evidence that such coercion is actually being applied, the challenged regulations contain no clear safeguard against this abuse.

In order to prevent express or implied threats, which would obviate the Secretary's entire framework of procedural safeguards, and to ensure compliance with the statutory language, the Court concludes that the regulations must also be amended to require that individuals seeking sterilization be orally informed at the very outset that no federal benefits can be withdrawn because of a failure to accept sterilization. . . .

. . . The dividing line between family planning and eugenics is murky. . . . Whatever might be the merits of limiting irresponsible reproduction, which each year places increasing numbers of unwanted or mentally defective children into tax-supported institutions, it is for Congress and not individual social workers and physicians to determine the manner in which federal funds should be used to support such a program. We should not drift into a policy which has unfathomed implications and which permanently deprives unwilling or immature citizens of their ability to procreate without adequate legal safeguards and a legislative determination of the appropriate standards in light of the general welfare and of individual rights.

increased the likelihood that poor pregnant women on welfare would seek abortions), and other attempts to constrain the childbearing of poor women.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, middle-class America cast poor women as potent symbols of misbehaving women, and many politicians built careers on the claim that such women, even in the era of "reproductive rights," did not qualify for these rights or for motherhood. A group of aggressively conservative Republicans spoke frequently in Congress and elsewhere in the 1990s about their solution to rampant illegitimate motherhood in America: Remove the children from their poor, single mothers' care and place them in orphanages or in the families of properly married, middle-class heterosexual couples, via adoption. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 ("welfare reform") encoded this proposition: Motherhood in the United States is now officially recognized as an economic status and a class privilege. Those who do not have enough money to pay for all the expenses associated

Harris, Secretary of Health and Human Services, v. McRae et al., *448 U.S. 297 (1980)*

This case presents statutory and constitutional questions concerning the public funding of abortions under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, commonly known as the "Medicaid" Act, and recent annual Appropriations Acts containing the so-called "Hyde Amendment." The statutory question is whether Title XIX requires a State that participates in the Medicaid program to fund the cost of medically necessary abortions for which federal reimbursement is unavailable under the Hyde Amendment. The constitutional question, which arises only if Title XIX imposes no such requirement, is whether the Hyde Amendment, by denying public funding for certain medically necessary abortions, contravenes the liberty or equal protection guarantees of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment, or either of the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment. . . .

Since the Congress that enacted Title XIX did not intend a participating State to assume a unilateral funding obligation for any health service in an approved Medicaid plan, it follows that Title XIX does not require a participating State to include in its plan any services for which a subsequent Congress has withheld federal funding. . . .

Having determined that Title XIX does not obligate a participating State to pay for those medically necessary abortions for which Congress has withheld federal funding, we must consider the constitutional validity of the Hyde Amendment. . . . We address first the appellees' argument that the Hyde Amendment, by restricting the availability of certain medically necessary abortions under Medicaid, impinges on the "liberty" protected by the Due Process Clause as recognized in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113, and its progeny. . . .

The Hyde Amendment . . . places no governmental obstacle in the path of a woman who chooses to terminate her pregnancy, but rather, by means of unequal subsidization of abortion and other medical services, encourages alternative activity deemed in the public interest. . . .

. . . [I]t simply does not follow that a woman's freedom of choice carries with it a constitutional entitlement to the financial resources to avail herself of the full range of protected choices. . . . [A]lthough government may not place obstacles in the path of a woman's exercise of her freedom of choice, it need not remove those not of its own creation. Indigency falls in the latter category. The fi-

with having and raising a child should not become mothers.

The era of "reproductive rights" has facilitated reproductive dignity for many women in the United States. Still, the slimmer a woman's economic resources, the slimmer her access to "reproductive rights": comprehensive reproductive health care, access to abortion services, and socially approved motherhood.

Rickie Solinger

See also: Adolescent Pregnancy; Adoption; Birth Control; Eugenics; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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nancial constraints that restrict an indigent woman's ability to enjoy the full range of constitutionally protected freedom of choice are the product not of governmental restrictions on access to abortions, but rather of her indigency. Although Congress has opted to subsidize medically necessary services generally, but not certain medically necessary abortions, the fact remains that the Hyde Amendment leaves an indigent woman with at least the same range of choice in deciding whether to obtain a medically necessary abortion as she would have had if Congress had chosen to subsidize no health care costs at all. We are thus not persuaded that the Hyde Amendment impinges on the constitutionally protected freedom of choice recognized in *Wade*. . . . Although the liberty protected by the Due Process Clause affords protection against unwarranted government interference with freedom of choice in the context of certain personal decisions, it does not confer an entitlement to such funds as may be necessary to realize all the advantages of that freedom. . . .

It remains to be determined whether the Hyde Amendment violates the equal protection component of the Fifth Amendment. This challenge is premised on the fact that, although federal reimbursement is available under Medicaid for medically necessary services generally, the Hyde Amendment does not permit federal reimbursement of all medically necessary abortions. The District Court held, and the appellees argue here, that this selective subsidization violates the constitutional guarantee of equal protection. The guarantee of equal protection under the Fifth Amendment is not a source of substantive rights or liberties . . . but rather a right to be free from invidious discrimination in statutory classifications and other governmental activity. . . .

. . . [W]e have already concluded that the Hyde Amendment violates no constitutionally protected substantive rights. We now conclude as well that it is not predicated on a constitutionally suspect classification. . . . [T]he principal impact of the Hyde Amendment falls on the indigent. But that fact does not itself render the funding restriction constitutionally invalid, for this Court has held repeatedly that poverty, standing alone, is not a suspect classification. See, e.g., *James v. Valtierra,* 402 U.S. 137. . . .

The remaining question then is whether the Hyde Amendment is rationally related to a legitimate governmental objective. . . . [T]he Hyde Amendment, by encouraging childbirth except in the most urgent circumstances, is rationally related to the legitimate governmental objective of protecting potential life. . . .

Republicanism

The term "republicanism" has two different but interrelated meanings, one institutional, one conceptual. Both meanings can be traced to the ancient Roman Republic and its privileging of *res publica*, "public things." Republicanism is an institutional ideal about how the political order should be structured, about who should rule and who should govern. Republicanism is also a conceptual or ethical ideal that insists that when self-interested and public-oriented values clash, as they always do in politics, the latter should triumph.

As an institutional idea, republicanism's irreducible core is its literal rejection of monarchy, the rule of one. Rulership is a public rather than a private thing, to be publicly shared by more than one solitary individual. How many more is not self-evident. The continuum runs from the oligarchic or aristocratic few to the democratic many. What is constant is that ruling is shared. This institutional republicanism has a lineage as old as the ancient Greek city-state; it stretches

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through the Roman Republic, medieval city-states like Venice, and the seventeenth-century English commonwealth; then moves across the Atlantic to the American founding.

Conceptually, republicanism is the conviction that concern for the community, for public things, is morally superior to concern for self, for self-interest. In this sense, republicanism is the general privileging of community over the individual. Aristotle and Cicero articulated the doctrine, and in their wake came the otherwise utterly incompatible collection of Thomas Aquinas, Niccolò Machiavelli, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and finally today's communitarians, with their criticisms of a liberalism that privileges the individual and self-interest.

From its core normative assumptions, a kind of republican economics has evolved, an economic tradition that is less competitive, more cooperative, and more communal and that sees economic life as serving moral public ends rather than amoral personal or individual ends. This "moral economy" tradition within republicanism has its roots in Aristotle and Aquinas and sees wages and prices not as market or profit driven but as "just" or "unjust." It sees subsistence economies as natural and growth economies as artificial. It validates private property but requires that such property serve communal needs. It insists that the poor be provided for and that no one starve; it values the care of and sharing with communal others more than the aggrandizement of self.

For Aquinas, it was moral for a man to violate the sanctity of private property, even to steal, if he needed to feed his starving family. John Winthrop, fleeing the British monarchy to settle in Massachusetts, told his fellow Puritans that "wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertain each other in brotherly affection. Wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our super fluities, for the supply of others necessities" (Winthrop 1838, 47).

These "republican economics" and the broader republican normative commitment to public responsibility and civic duty are a fundamental nonsocialist building block of the modern state's social welfare obligations. Since the eighteenth century in the Anglo-American world, they have had to confront the "liberal" economics of Adam Smith, which posit an amoral market economy in which self-interested "butchers, bakers, and brewers" (Smith 1887, 140) seek personal profit. Still, the revival of interest in republicanism in recent decades, especially among students of American political thought and among activist communitarians and other reformers, has made it an important alternative to liberal individualism as an ideological grounding of modern public welfare policy.

Isaac Kramnick

See also: End Poverty in California (EPIC); Liberalism; Nineteenth Century; Socialist Party

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Resettlement Administration

See New Deal Farm Policy

Riis, Jacob

See How the Other Half Lives; Picturing Poverty (I)

Rural Poverty

Until the 1970s, rural poverty in the United States was associated with the struggle of rural families to eke a living out of the land, epitomized by James Agee and Walker Evans's classic account of Depression-era suffering, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. These images of the rural poor lingered long after the Depression and influenced popular ideas about poverty. In fact, rural poverty persisted at rates higher than those found in urban centers until the end of the 1970s, when central-city poverty overtook rural poverty for the first time. This precipitated a decline in interest in rural poverty within academic and policy circles, and today there remains little specific policy to address the unique problems of rural poverty or its links to urban conditions. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the third millennium, rural poverty in the United States remains widespread and severe. In some regions and communities, the rates once again match or exceed those found in certain parts of central cities.

Background

The current obscurity of rural poverty reflects the greater visibility of urban problems and the common belief that rural poverty is a passing vestige of an old, resource-based economy that is less malignant and threatening to core societal values than is urban poverty. In part, popular attachment to mythical agrarian values, rooted in a distorted historical narrative, has idealized rural landscapes, social forms, and demographic characteristics. The images of the hardscrabble but self-reliant yeoman farmer or the small-town shopkeeper whose communities are characterized by mutual assistance have held sway in popular imagination despite their limited historical accuracy. The result is a nostalgic view of rural life that literally whitewashes rural poverty, presenting rural populations as white, working-class families, who are seen as less threatening to dominant values and elites.

There is an element of truth to these stereotypes. In the absence of other support systems, the rural poor tend to rely on family and extended kin when times are hard, and they are more likely to be white, working, and married than are the urban poor. Rural poverty, however, like rural society, is more complex and diverse, both socially and spatially, than is often acknowledged. Women, single-headed households, and children are increasingly overrepresented among the rural poor, resulting in a convergence between rural and urban poverty profiles. Racial and ethnic minorities are also among the most disadvantaged of the rural poor and have higher percentages living in poverty than their urban counterparts. This racial dimension to rural poverty manifests itself geographically; poverty has historically been concentrated in regions that suffer long-standing conditions of chronic economic underdevelopment and exploitation, often linked with racial and ethnic discrimination. Prominent examples include the plantation South, the Appalachian and Ozark highlands, Indian reservations, and the *colonias* of the Southwest (Billings and Blee 2000; Lyson and Falk 1993; Pickering 2000). Although the specific development patterns, political and economic histories, and population groups of these "forgotten places" have differed, all share the deprivations associated with impoverished places and class polarization.

For example, in rural Texas, where the dominant economy of the nineteenth century was built around cattle ranches, wealthy ranchers and merchants exploited Mexican laborers to ensure their own political and economic power. Over time, this evolved into a dominant urban merchant class and a political patronage system that kept the poor in their place while blaming them for their own condition (Maril 1989). In the postbellum plantation South, elite white planters opposed industrial and economic development in order to increase their political and

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economic control over the large but weak Black laboring class. The large number of laborers whose survival depended on plantation work kept wages down and landowners' profits up and contributed to the creation of a permanent stratified social system (Hyland and Timberlake 1993). In twentieth-century Appalachia, the mining industry assumed the role that agriculture had in the South, exploiting the region's resources while exerting absolute control over workers in mining camps (Eller 1982). Persistent poverty in these places is the legacy of white elite domination of a larger class, often made up of people of color.

In addition, the history of rural America has been the history of the adverse effects of economic restructuring both in persistently poor regions, with their unique development trajectories, and in the broader rural economy. For example, since the turn of the twentieth century, rural communities have been depopulated by the technological transformation of agricultural methods and the steady growth of corporate agriculture. Chronic crises of overproduction and deflation of land prices, such as the farm crisis of the 1980s, further impoverished the remaining agrarian sector. Even where demand for agricultural labor remains high, the result is to increase the ranks of the working poor. In the migrant farm labor sector, for example, wages are low, conditions are poor, and jobs are unstable, and rampant exploitation takes advantage of a vulnerable labor force composed of poorly educated and largely undocumented immigrants. Similarly, the dispersal of food-processing plants to rural areas—where they have relocated in search of lower-wage labor, as did textile factories before them—has contributed to the changing face of rural poverty by attracting a largely Hispanic immigrant workforce to predominantly white rural areas. Although most immigrants in search of jobs gravitate to the central cities, certain rural locales have become destination points for immigrants, particularly those of Hispanic origin, and those immigrants too often find themselves living in poverty.

Other rural sectors also have suffered severe economic reverses. Increasingly capital-intensive methods of resource extraction have reduced employment in coal and timber production. Resource depletion and environmental regulation threaten economies based on natural resources, such as coastal fisheries and northwest lumber. Rural manufacturing grew during the 1960s and 1970s as a result of rural industrial incentive policies that lured firms from the cities with the promise of cheap land and labor. But the areas that attracted such industries have since declined as firms have moved to offshore locations with even cheaper and more plentiful labor. These industries join the long exodus of textile mills and similar old-line manufacturing industries that have relocated their operations.

Such economic shifts also link rural and urban poverty. Rural people who found themselves unable to make a living off the land began migrating to the cities in the middle of the eighteenth century. Nineteenth-century urban industrialization offered job opportunities to new waves of rural migrants. In the twentieth century, particularly in the post–World War II era, the cataclysmic restructuring within agriculture—favoring large, high-yield producers and introducing labor-saving technology to the fields—resulted in the mass migration of rural southern Blacks to northern and midwestern cities. Drawn by the promise of industrial jobs yet facing discrimination and residential segregation once they got there, many migrants got caught in the rising poverty, joblessness, and ghettoization that came to characterize postwar cities and that were intensified by subsequent rounds of urban deindustrialization.

Explanations for Rural Poverty

Despite clear evidence documenting the impact of structural economic changes on high and persistent rates of rural poverty, explanations

Poor white children in the Ozark Mountains, near Bella Vista, Arkansas. Undated photo. (Bettmann/ Corbis)

for the sources of rural poverty vary widely, ranging from the inadequacies of individuals to the inadequacies of local organizations to the failures and tyrannies of the world economy. There is an element of truth to all of these explanations, and efforts to polarize them as either/or theories, while often politically successful in driving policy, have had little explanatory value. The disadvantages that mark rural persons and places are real. Many rural peoples start life with few resources and with individual deficits, both cause and consequence of the failure of institutions and the operations of local and global structures that ignore or exploit these deficits.

The confusion of proximate causes with underlying explanations is expressed in the conflation of different ways of conceptualizing poverty, as either a social or a spatial phenomenon. A social conceptualization of poverty is concerned with poor people and their characteristics; a spatial conceptualization, with poor places and their attributes. The former approach focuses on the correlates of poverty for individuals: low levels of education, high rates of marital instability and nonmarital childbearing and child rearing, and weak labor force attachment. The latter approach examines patterns of spatial inequality and the characteristics of the economy in places with high rates of persistent poverty: low levels of human and social capital, inadequate social services, corrupt and paternalistic political institutions, and lack of good jobs, infrastructure, and investment. Although these characteristics are also present in poor urban places, they are arguably more encompassing in poor rural regions.

The factors that describe the conditions of poor persons and places, that restrict opportunity, and that perpetuate these conditions are outcomes of poverty. Their origins are found in the

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historical development of social and spatial relations. Thus "the road to poverty" (Billings and Blee 2000)—whether in rural Appalachia, Indian country, or anywhere in between—must be mapped using historical accounts that analyze the cumulative effects of culture, economy, and government policy. Each place has a unique development trajectory and a particular mix of external and internal exploitation of land and labor in collusion with local political repression and corruption, rigid class barriers, and livelihood practices that may enable survival but not mobility. Poverty persists in these places because the power structures that perpetuate these conditions remain unchallenged and unopposed and because the organizations and institutions designed to alleviate deprivation or to create mobility are missing or ineffective. Although the contemporary manifestations may appear to be a culture of poverty, or alternatively, an internal colony, invariably they are highly complex products of all these factors.

Current Developments in Rural Policy

Debates about the causes of poverty have important implications for where to apply leverage to effect change. Is it at the level of individual behavior? Or in community and regional economic development policies? Or in some combination of individual incentives and penalties to change behavior plus macroeconomic programs to create opportunity? Although all these different approaches can be found in past and present policies targeted at the rural poor, the United States has generally opted for efforts to change individual behavior rather than to change the structures that create and sustain poverty. As a result, it has missed opportunities to address unique place-specific problems.

There is virtually no policy that systematically addresses rural poverty or economic development in the United States. The two policies that have most affected rural poverty have been (1) social welfare policy in the form of national safety net programs and their local applications, and (2) the patchwork of industrial and agricultural policies that indirectly shape rural livelihoods. Neither of these policies or programs, however, has made a substantial difference in combating rural poverty. The former has had different impacts and meanings for rural places and peoples than for the urban poor, while the latter has benefited wealthy individual and corporate interests rather than the economic health of entire rural communities.

U.S. social welfare policy as it unfolded during the twentieth century created a highly gendered, raced, and geographically skewed safety net. For example, Social Security, the premier safety net program enacted during the New Deal, failed to cover farm labor, despite the very high rates of poverty in this sector at the time and in subsequent decades. Like similar exclusions from unemployment insurance, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and other labor-protective legislation of the 1930s, these provisions were made in an explicitly racial bargain with conservative southern Democrats, who were determined to maintain control over their heavily African American agricultural labor force. Also excluded from Social Security benefits were many rural women, who historically worked in unpaid reproductive, family, and informal labor.

Both the rules and the administration of safety net programs such as welfare have limited their effectiveness in rural areas. Although eligibility rules were nationally determined, benefit levels were set by the states and were administered locally. Not surprisingly, many of the places with the greatest levels of persistent rural poverty are in states with the least generous and most repressive welfare programs. Weak or corrupt program administration and the lack of information, transportation, and privacy that characterizes many small communities often result in services that are scarce, inconvenient, inaccessible, or stigmatized, decreasing the use of safety net programs by the rural poor.

In the case of the welfare reform legislation of 1996, the stated intent to move welfare recipients into paid employment is more problematic in rural places, where jobs are limited and those paying a living wage even scarcer, where transportation and child care are lacking, and where the personal resources that potential workers bring to jobs are few. Moving rural residents into permanent employment presented challenges even during the long economic boom of the 1990s. What happens during a downturn is just beginning to emerge, and the history of welfare reform for rural poverty remains to be lived and chronicled.

Industrial and agricultural policies have also been ineffective at combating rural poverty, and systematic and comprehensive policies aimed at the structural problems of rural areas do not exist. Efforts to intervene in the farm economy, beginning in the Depression era, came under immediate assault and had little impact on the poorest rural residents. Later attempts during the War on Poverty to enact more comprehensive policy for poor rural farmers and their families was scaled back to a form that was far less reform minded than what had been initially sought (O'Connor 1992). As a result, the major form of rural economic policy has been commodity programs: crop subsidies and price supports. These programs primarily affect large-scale corporate agribusiness, typically making rich farmers richer while further disadvantaging small family farmers. Although these are in contention as globalization unfolds, to date there is little else on the horizon.

There have also been sporadic efforts to create economic development in some of the most persistently poor regions. Two mechanisms for doing this have been infrastructure investments—such as the Appalachian Regional Commission (established in 1965) and the more recent Delta Regional Commission—and the empowerment and enterprise zone programs of the 1990s. None of these, however, has focused effectively on problems of rural poverty, and in the wake of these programs, there has been little in the way of systematic policy or follow-up to determine their impact. As a result, a comprehensive place-based rural policy—as opposed to sectoral programs and interventions—remains controversial and without widespread support. It remains to be seen whether the twenty-first century will witness policy that makes inroads in tackling poverty in the most persistently poor rural places in the United States.

Ann R. Tickamyer, Cynthia M. Duncan, and Kara Heffernan

See also: African American Migration; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Income and Wage Inequality; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Sharecropping; Slavery; Urban Poverty; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Salvation Army

"Soup, soap and salvation," an early motto of the Salvation Army, captures the denomination's mission to succor bodies while saving souls. The Salvation Army began in London in 1865 as the Christian Mission, a religious outreach run by William Booth, an independent evangelist determined to convert the unchurched masses. Booth, whose theology was fundamentalist, did not intend to start a new Protestant denomination, but because he sought down-and-outers whom the churches ignored, his mission became a movement. In 1878, when Booth changed the group's name to the Salvation Army, he was already called "the General," and his new "army" rapidly adopted a military look and language. Its newspaper was the *War Cry,* its ministers were "officers," and its members were "soldiers."

According to Salvationist lore, the Army's social outreach began when Booth saw homeless men sleeping beneath London Bridge. Appalled by this stark evidence of poverty's toll, Booth ordered his son Bramwell to "do something." Though the tale is apocryphal, it illustrates Booth's commitment to "practical religion," a Christian response to human need. Booth first experimented with practical religion in the early 1870s, opening a string of inexpensive food shops throughout London. (The enterprise was too costly and he closed them after a few years.) In the 1880s, when the Army set up its first training college, Booth's daughter Emma took female "cadets" to work in the London slums. Rather than aggressively proselytizing the residents, the young women lived among them, seeking to win their trust through acts of service and compassion.

The Army, which came to New York in 1880, initially responded to indigence in an ad hoc manner. Within a decade of its arrival, it began a slum mission and a "rescue home" for "fallen women." But by 1890, William Booth decided a more systematic approach was needed. The result was *In Darkest England and the Way Out,* which sold 115,000 copies in its first year of publication. *In Darkest England* proposed the establishment of urban "salvage stations" to teach employment skills to the poor. Once prepared for work, clients would, hopefully, be "saved" and shipped to farm colonies in England and overseas. The plan was never put into practice (though there were three short-lived farm colonies in the United States), but the Army did develop myriad social services. During the dark days of the 1893 depression, the Army opened a woman's shelter in New York City that welcomed anyone who needed a bed. A few months later, a men's shelter was set up nearby, and Salvationist leaders announced plans for housing the needy nationwide. The Army required a minimal fee or a few hours' work from those who had no money, and they encouraged "guests" to

Portrait of the Salvation Army by W. P. Snyder (Library of Congress)

attend the nightly worship service. The Army's "handouts" were opposed by proponents of scientific philanthropy, a school of thought that believed in investigating all hardship cases and separating the "deserving" from the "undeserving" poor. From their perspective, the Army's activities reflected the worst kind of religious sentimentality. But Salvationists believed their methods allowed the poor to retain their dignity and improved chances for their redemption. Many of the early Social Gospel writers applauded the Army's efforts as a model for Christian philanthropy.

The Army continued expanding its social services network during the first two decades of the twentieth century. As a result of its humanitarian work during World War I, the public perception of the group shifted from that of an evangelical movement engaged in relief work to a religiously based philanthropic organization. Salvationists said their philanthropy was "nonsectarian," offered regardless of race, religion, or nationality. By the time of the Great Depression, the Army—one of the few service providers operating on a national scale—was in a key position to offer assistance. By early 1933, Salvationists were giving New York City's needy 100,000 meals and 25,000 lodgings free of charge each week. When the city ran out of beds, it asked the Army to provide more, and when coffee stations were needed around town, municipal leaders turned to the Army for assistance. The Army helped millions while maintaining its core beliefs. For example, judging that the dole undermined an individual's self-respect, Salvationists often asked recipients to work for their bed and bread. They tried to treat clients with dignity and to keep families intact. When the federal government began providing relief, it frequently partnered with the Army (which cared for 20 percent of the homeless and transient population nationwide). Still, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Army funds came overwhelmingly from private sources.

During the post–World War II boom, private donors—grateful for the Army's help in the Depression and its work with the United Service Organization (USO)—gave generously. The increase in funds, combined with the professionalization of social work, had a profound impact on the organization. As programs expanded, so did the numbers of lay staff; between 1951 and 1961, the number of non-Salvationist clerical and social workers doubled. Since the Army was a movement based on the belief that service springs from religious conviction, this new development troubled some Salvationists. Likewise, some Salvationists saw as problematic the expansion of government funds for social service delivery, a trend that started in the 1960s and ballooned in the 1970s.

But the desire to help outweighed concerns about secularizing influences. With government assistance, the Army either began or expanded its work in probation supervision, low-cost housing, nutritional services, day care, and drug rehabilitation. On the one hand, the Army appeared to accept government regulations mandating strict separation between church and state. On the other hand, the Army regularly affirmed—in statements to donors as well as to its membership—its evangelical mission. Reading between the lines suggests that the Army tried to find a balance between its faith commitments and government requirements. Historically, the Army had accepted funds from anyone; William Booth believed that tainted money was washed clean in God's service. Yet accepting public money entailed special liabilities: Government agencies wanted to control the programs they financed, whereas Salvationists were accustomed to overseeing their own mix of religion and social service. Regulators asked the Army to separate the religious from the social aspects of their programs, calculating how much office space, utilities, and manpower went into each—a tedious task that also undermined the integrity of Salvationist theology. The passage of charitable choice legislation in 1996 improved the situation, permitting faith-based providers to maintain a religious environment in the context of service delivery. For its part, the Army decided to minimize its reliance on government funds by keeping those contracts to 15 percent of its budget.

In 2001, donors contributed $1.39 billion to the Army's $2.31 billion budget, which, in turn, subsidized such programs as residential alcoholic rehabilitation centers, shelters for transients, halfway houses for ex-convicts and ex–drug addicts, medical facilities, group homes, family programs, outreach programs to battered women and families with AIDS, thrift stores, employment bureaus, day care centers, prison work, and emergency relief. The Salvation Army in the United States is known for its abundant resources and diverse programs, despite its modest size of 581,000 members. There are about 3 million Salvationists worldwide.

Diane Winston

See also: Charitable Choice; Charity; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Food Banks; Homelessness; Hunger; Missionaries; Nonprofit Sector; Philanthropy; Protestant Denominations; Social Gospel; Urban Poverty

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Scientific Charity

See Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Philanthropy; *Public Relief and Private Charity;* Society for the Prevention of Pauperism

Self-Reliance

The term "self-reliance" is used to describe (1) the material fact of self-support and (2) an attitude of willingness to be self-supporting. Self-reliance is framed as both an objective reality and a subjective state of mind. It is important to note these two ways of using the term because, in the postindustrial economy, very few individuals are objectively self-reliant throughout their lives. Instead, most individuals are economically entwined with the state in one form or another; for example, through subsidized property loans, educational grants, or Social Security payments. Very few individuals achieve the objective condition of permanent self-reliance. There does seem to be, however, a tacit or de facto sense of whether a given individual is "sufficiently self-reliant." Being "sufficiently self-reliant" is the unspoken standard to which the poor today are held. Yet given the difficulty of explicitly identifying what counts as "sufficiently self-reliant," self-reliance is best understood as a norm rather than an objective condition.

Despite the rarity of full material self-reliance in the postindustrial age, self-reliance as an ideal or norm dominates the contemporary American imagination. Self-reliance frames the relationship between the individual and the collective. As a norm, self-reliance suggests that the aim of the responsible citizen is to be as materially self-supporting as possible. In this context, self-reliance is the ethical injunction to refrain from relying excessively on one's community, to work as hard as one can, and to avoid being a burden. In this scenario, one must take as little as possible from the common stock. There are two justifications for this ethical stance: (1) If everyone adopts the attitude of minimizing one's use of relief, no one will be unduly impinged on by shirking or undeserving neighbors, and (2) if the provision of and reliance on common stock can be minimized, everyone's entanglement with public agencies will be minimized, and thus everyone's individual freedom will be maximized. These two assertions will be discussed in turn.

In contemporary social welfare debates, self-reliance is equated with paid employment. Wage work has become the marker of the will to self-reliance. Yet in the postindustrial capitalist context, not all workers are equally well positioned to move toward self-reliance via wage work. Barriers to self-reliance in the wage economy range from unpaid labor responsibilities—the necessity to care for young children or for disabled or elderly family members—to low skill levels, to transportation problems, to substance abuse problems, to bias in hiring practices. The ethic of self-reliance ought to be contextualized to take into account individual circumstances, particularly the circumstances of those who are engaged in the unpaid caregiving labor traditionally done by women. Those who devote time to unpaid caregiving labor have less capacity to achieve self-reliance via wage work, yet they are nevertheless engaged in social labor that is valuable to the community. And the ethic of self-reliance ought to take into account the structural constraints of the labor market, its failure to absorb all potential workers as wage earners, and the reality that a segment of the population will be unemployed at any given time.

Insofar as the norm of self-reliance aims to minimize engagement with public agencies, it is compelling to contemporary Americans in part because of a romanticized past that sentimentalizes the autonomous individual. In this vision, those who are most autonomous from government are most free, and those who are able to avoid interdependence are able to preserve their freedom. Those who idealize autonomy are skeptical about becoming overly involved in the dependency needs of their fellow citizens. This political fantasy of near-perfect autonomy is closely related to the myth of the idealized breadwinner, which combines the ideal of the maximally free male with the traditional division of labor between the sexes, so that women and children remain dependent on a "free" male citizen who supports them. This vision of self-reliance coupled with traditional gender roles is becoming increasingly remote as we see changes in the wage structure (there are fewer male-breadwinner jobs available that allow men to support a family on one paycheck) and changes in traditional family structure (there are fewer two-parent families).

Romantic ideals of autonomy have an important place in American political thought and underscore the link between limited government and individual freedom, but they may also cause one to lose sight of the legitimate needs of citizens who fail to manifest self-reliance. For instance, the self-reliance narratives associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson and American Transcendentalism prize autonomous thinking, individual inquiry, and a skepticism toward entanglements with traditional institutions. This frame can be important in the context of fostering freethinking democratic citizens. Yet Transcendentalist anxiety about interdependence can also engender an irrational fear of those in need and of the government institutions that support them and a phobia of other citizens' leeching or impinging on the self-reliant. The fear of excessively dependent subjects, the "undeserving poor," who are a burden to the collective is evidenced in critiques of welfare provision.

Those who are anxious about the dependency needs of their fellow citizens frequently believe that engendering greater material self-support begins with the cultivation of an attitude of self-reliance among the poor. This is personalized behavior modification as a hedge against poverty, and the core message to those in need is "try harder." This strategy is visible in several post-1996 welfare programs that require individual personal responsibility plans and that try to inculcate diligence, punctuality, reliability, and conformity to employer demands. The aim of this component of welfare reform is to reduce welfare dependence and to increase employment, clearly stated in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program's goal to "end the dependence of needy parents on government by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage" (Public Law 104-193, Title I, Part A, Sec. 401 [a][2]).

The ethic of self-reliance is also visible in the 1996 welfare reform legislation's elimination of aid to legal immigrants. Here we see a redeployment of the ideal of the self-sufficient citizen and, more importantly, the assertion that recent immigrants have a special responsibility to manifest self-reliance. The law states, "Self-sufficiency has been a basic principle of United States immigration law since this country's earliest immigration statutes" (Public Law 104-193, Title IV, Sec. 400 [1]). Legislators are clearly anxious to emphasize that resident aliens have a special responsibility to uphold the norm of self-reliance.

Anne M. Manuel

See also: Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Family Structure; Family Wage; Immigrants and Immigration; Liberalism; Republicanism; Unemployment; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Service and Domestic Workers, Labor Organizing

In the wake of the decline in manufacturing in the United States from the 1970s through the turn of the twenty-first century, millions of jobs have been lost to low-cost foreign producers. Industrial job loss has devastated working-class communities throughout the United States as manufacturing jobs paying living wages have moved to lower-cost locations in Latin America and East Asia. Since the mid-1970s, basic manufacturing industries have been replaced by lower-paying health care, social services, domestic, food services, building maintenance, and other service-sector industries as the fastest-growing source of employment in the U.S. economy.

Within the burgeoning service sector, expanding demand for health and social services has played an especially significant role. With the growth of the health care industry and government support programs, service and domestic work has become a large and growing component of the service sector that now comprises more than two-thirds of all jobs in the United States. This shift has in turn had major implications for the labor movement, which in recent decades has come up against the limitations of traditional collective bargaining practices while seeing its most significant innovations in service-sector organizing.

The Rise of Services and Public-Sector Unions

Historically, public-sector service jobs have paid workers significantly higher wages than comparable private-sector jobs, primarily due to worker efforts to form public employee unions that create wage and benefit standards for low-skilled workers employed in public hospitals, municipal buildings, and public welfare offices. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), chartered by the American Federation of Labor in Wisconsin in 1936, grew to become the nation's largest public-employee union by the early 1980s, largely due to the expansion of government social services. Nationwide, the union represents 1.3 million members employed in secretarial and clerical work, social work, maintenance, hospital and health care work, domestic work, food services, and corrections. By contrast, service workers in the private sector, now a growing segment of service work in the United States, have been typically unorganized due to greater resistance to unionization among private employers than among government managers.

The public sector, dominated by service workers, was the primary source of trade union growth from the 1950s to the 1970s. Even as union density in the private sector declined, public-sector union growth continued unabated into the early 1980s. The promise of greatly improved working conditions and higher wages and benefits through unionization encouraged vast numbers of workers to join public-sector unions during this period. In just over fifteen years, public-sector trade union membership in the United States swelled from slightly over 1 million in 1960 to over 3 million in 1976, accounting for over 80 percent of all trade union growth in the nation during the 1960s and 1970s.

Among fiscal conservatives, a strong backlash emerged against the rapid ascendancy of public-employee service unions as a social and political force in urban politics in the 1970s. They were disturbed by what they saw as the undue influence of public-employee unions on public policy. Collective bargaining by public-sector service unions, critics argued, imposed unfair costs on citizens by raising taxes to finance wage increases. Fiscal conservatives saw the influence of public-employee unions in the service sector as raising taxes on citizens and imposing high costs on local government budgets. In response to growing pressure for austerity budgets created by a series of urban fiscal crises, rising deficits, antigovernment ideology, and taxpayer revolts, the capacity of public-employee unions to negotiate from a position of strength declined considerably beginning in the mid-1970s. The worker activism of the 1960s and 1970s was followed by a period of labor conciliation, particularly in the aftermath of the municipal government fiscal crises in the mid-1970s and President Ronald Reagan's summary dismissal of striking air traffic controllers in 1981.

The growth of labor bureaucracies and their coalescence with management after the formation of public-employee unions further moderated labor demands and undercut wages, working conditions, and job security. After their unions were officially recognized by government authorities, many union leaders—once enthusiastic about mobilizing workers' demonstrations, petition drives, and strikes—tended to become moderate and accommodating in the face of employers' demands for concessions. In New York and other major cities, some leaders of public-employee unions offered little opposition to budget cuts that weakened their members' wages and job security.

Since the 1980s, public-sector union leaders have had great difficulty combating public authorities' efforts to restrain wages through budget cuts, privatization, mass layoffs, and programs of permanent job attrition. Even though studies have found that cities with public-sector service unions have no higher municipal budget costs than do cities without such unions, the right-wing drive to undermine labor standards and service workers' wages increased precipitously after 1980. Consequently, states and municipalities have continued to subcontract public health and social services to private and nonprofit employers paying substantially lower wages than those received by workers in public-employee unions.

The Working Poor

The growth of service work has contributed significantly to the expansion of the numbers of the working poor—full-time laborers earning too little to provide for such essentials as food, shelter, clothing, and health care. A key factor in the growth of low-wage services is privatization and the deterioration of the unionized public-sector jobs that have provided a large proportion of service employment since the 1960s. The growth in the private segment of service employment is relatively new, overturning decades of public-sector workers' efforts to improve their status through organizing into unions. Moreover, due to the rapid growth of private service work since the 1980s and the propensity for high turnover in this sector, continuity in the industry is limited, complicating efforts to organize workers into unions that may be able to provide higher-wage jobs.

Rising poverty among service workers also reflects the decline in government safeguards moderating the instabilities of the private labor market, including unemployment insurance and welfare benefits. The new welfare law established by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 has swelled the numbers of the working poor by forcing those on public assistance into workfare programs, that is, programs requiring work in exchange for public assistance. Although workfare ostensibly trains workers for eventual entry into the labor market, a majority of workers are pushed into low-wage service jobs as housekeepers, domestics, food service workers, and other service-sector workers, in jobs that do not provide living wages or health benefits. The growth of workfare in turn has significantly undermined the ability of labor unions representing service workers to maintain industrial standards in the public and private sectors. Privatization and outsourcing to low-wage employers paying workers much less than they would earn in public-sector jobs complicate service workers' efforts to maintain wage and work standards through their unions. Public-sector service jobs are frequently outsourced to private vendors, who are not accountable to prevailing collective bargaining agreements with government authorities.

Combating Service Cuts through Coalition Building

Amid the backlash against public-sector workers in the 1980s and 1990s, some union leaders have sought to cultivate potential allies among community members who are the recipients of the essential health care, education, and social services they provide. The primary objective is to form and join community-based coalitions around the complementary goals of improved working conditions and improved social and health care services for clients. Labor activist and scholar Paul Johnston (1994) argues that because service workers in the public sector are frequently legally constrained from striking and protesting in ways that private-sector workers are not, they must mobilize to defend and augment their power through building coalitions and movements beneficial to their members' interests.

Through the formation of labor-community alliances, service employee unions seek to influence state budgeting policies by pressing government officials to support services—such as improved health care and affordable housing—beneficial to union members and key community groups. This involves persuading the public and government officials of the significant work their members perform, even as they engage in more militant strategies against government cutbacks through public demonstrations along with community allies. Such strategies are designed to counter divisive management tactics that seek to pit the interests of unions and their members against the broader public interest. The labor-community organizing strategy is thus posed as an alternative to the management-labor cooperation promoted by union leaders and public officials in previous decades. By organizing members and the public around joint causes, the labor-community strategy encourages public-employee unions to politicize the collective bargaining process and wield the strike threat more effectively in bargaining with management.

Resisting Privatization and Organizing Outsourced Labor

The two leading contemporary service unions, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and AFSCME, have embraced the strategy of engaging labor-community alliances and membership mobilization. Ironically, though SEIU primarily represents private-sector workers and AFSCME represents public-sector unions, both labor organizations are appealing to federal, state, and local public officials to advance the interests of members and their clients. Since the late 1990s, SEIU—operating in the private and nonprofit sectors—has provided the most notable national example of a union advancing its members' interests through building community alliances. The union's New York State affiliate—SEIU Local 1199—has mobilized home-care workers and their clients since the late 1980s to improve wages and appalling working conditions through public demonstrations and by pressing government to provide higher subsidies. Nor has the decline of public-sector service jobs and the growth of private-sector jobs diminished worker interest in organizing and joining unions. Indeed, service-sector workers form the backbone of SEIU, a union that represents workers in two key sectors: building services and health care. The national union's leadership has devoted significant resources to unionization efforts in these two sectors and has gained the capacity to organize in major urban regions. Through the organization of 500,000 health care workers, SEIU membership has grown to 1.2 million. Much of the union's new growth is occurring among home-care, institutional health care, and domestic workers employed by private and nonprofit agencies, some subsidized by the federal and state governments, that provide care to the young and elderly. The union's Justice for Janitors campaign scored a major success in Los Angeles in 1989 through a dramatic mobilization of labor and community supporters, leading to subsequent organizing efforts throughout the nation.

The growth in the number of immigrant workers remains a major component of new organizing efforts in the service sector, especially the organization of domestic workers who care for the young and the old and who clean private homes and buildings. A large proportion of domestic workers are immigrant women of color who are not protected by federal and state labor laws and who are subject to racial and sex discrimination. Thus, unions must contend with the problem of organizing isolated workers in private homes who are struggling for the enforcement of standard legal protections provided to all other workers by federal and state law. A growing number are joining workers' centers that provide them with English-language education, labor law classes, and assistance with wage and discrimination claims against employers.

AFSCME too is mobilizing members to support increased funding for public institutions where its members are employed and to combat privatization efforts on municipal and state levels. The union is constrained by persistent efforts by fiscal conservatives to punish members through privatization and wage cuts. In the late 1990s, shocked by the scale of privatization and consequent harm to its members, the national union emerged from an era of relative passivity to more forcefully safeguard members' wages and job security in regions throughout the country. Moreover, AFSCME is reaching out to organize service workers now in the private sector and is now actively engaged in new organizing campaigns throughout the country.

Since the late 1990s, the march toward privatization has escalated turf battles among unions organizing low-wage service workers in the pub-

"Organizing Domestic Workers in Atlanta, Georgia," Dorothy Bolden, 1970

I started organizing the maids in 1968. . . . The salary of the maids was very low. They were working in model homes, beautiful homes, and they had a great deal of responsibility. . . . I would go around in the bus and ask the maids how they would feel about joining if we would organize, and they would say, "Oh, I'm for that." One day I took three ladies, and made a radio announcement. Told how we was getting together in the National Domestic Workers Union of America. I picked up many members that time, which was beautiful.

I had to meet with the maids every week to keep them encouraged, to keep the strength up. I was talking, and they was responding to my talk. . . .

You can't negotiate with private employers, private homes. You have to teach each maid how to negotiate. And this is the most important thing—communicating. I would tell them it was up to them to communicate. If I wanted a raise from you I wouldn't come in and hit you over your head and demand a raise—I would set out and talk to you and let you know how the living costs have gone up. . . . When the employers heard that we was unionizing, the wages went up to $12. . . . A lot of the maids got raises. They didn't get fired. Some of them quit because the lady wouldn't give them the money. When you unionize like this, on a private basis, and you're self-employed, your risk is that the one that doesn't join your union, she gets a good increase in salary. And this is the hardest part. And I told them we weren't going to be able to get in all the maids in Atlanta, but we could improve.

Source: Dorothy Bolden, taped interview with Gerda Lerner, 1970, in *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History,* ed. Gerda Lerner (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 26–37.

lic sector. As AFSCME vocally opposes privatization of social services, SEIU supports living-wage campaigns targeting private and nonprofit workers. The two unions are operating on two fronts: AFSCME opposes privatization as an antiworker measure that targets the women and people of color who predominate in service-sector jobs. Although the union still seeks to represent private-sector workers, it sees privatization as eroding the quality of public-sector jobs and service delivery to clients.

SEIU puts its emphasis on creating municipal living-wage laws for public services already contracted out to private providers. Living-wage laws seek to ensure that services contracted out by government to the private sector provide workers with decent wages and benefits. The living-wage movement emerged in earnest during the mid-1990s and has grown slowly through the early 2000s. Fewer than 100,000 workers were covered by living-wage laws by 2002, but the strategy has gained strength as a larger number of municipalities have passed local ordinances. It remains to be seen whether the antiprivatization movement and living-wage movement will protect larger segments of service workers.

Immanuel Ness

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Domestic Work; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Living-Wage Campaigns; Trade/Industrial Unions; Wagner Act; Workfare; "Working Poor"

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Settlement Houses

Settlement houses are community institutions that house facilities and staff for recreational, arts, youth, social welfare, and community-enrichment activities. Now often called "neighborhood centers," there are probably 900 in the United States today and as many as 4,500 worldwide. The settlement house movement originated in Great Britain and the United States in the late 1880s as one expression of a new philosophy informing middle-class participation in voluntary social service to new and generally poor population clusters in industrial cities. Departing from a more punitive approach to providing goods and services to the poor, the settlement house founders held that middle- and upper-class volunteers would trade in the currency of character and would receive as well as give by serving these fellow citizens. By World War I, there were about 400 settlement houses across the United States, primarily in northeastern and midwestern cities.

Complicated ironies characterized British welfare thought in the imperial and capitalist mid-nineteenth century. In London, charity reform initially took the form of *charity organization*, pioneered by Octavia Hill, a disciple of John Ruskin, and W. H. Fremantle, an Anglican rector. Distressed by what she perceived as the moral vacuity and deleterious effects of unsystematic almsgiving, Hill experimented with reformed housing for the poor: rentals benevolently overseen by genteel volunteers who would help teach the tenants cleanliness and respon-

King Philip Settlement House, Fall River, Massachusetts. ***Photo by Lewis W. Hine. (Library of Congress)***

sibility. The Charity Organisation Society (1869), inspired by Hill's work, offered benign supervision and systematic assessment of the needs of poor families. Charity initiatives cast a steely eye on the individual poor person, insisting that the "truly needy" demonstrate strong moral fiber as well as unavoidable misfortune. Both also drew on the moral philosophy of contemporary social organicist thinkers to implicate the nonpoor in improving the lives of the poor.

It remained to the Anglican priest Samuel Augustus Barnett and his spouse Henrietta to reject the punitive aspects of the new model of social welfare while magnifying its Christ-inspired service aspects. Toynbee Hall opened its doors in East London in 1884. It was named for Anglican scholar and Oxford don Arnold Toynbee, who inspired a generation of educated middle-class reformers to embrace the new approach. Canon Barnett called upon Oxford students to come share their class-based blessings in a "spirit of neighborliness." This first settlement was followed by almost fifty more in the United Kingdom before World War I.

Within a few years, American travelers to Great Britain encountered the settlements. Students and seekers, both men and women, these young people were inspired by the same texts and the same flavor of social issues as their British counterparts had been. Uneasy with the prosperity and increased cultural isolation of the middle classes, unable to exert social leadership in traditional ways, and challenged by new vocational opportunities, these individuals were eager and able to embark on an urban adventure. Jane Addams, Robert Woods, Stanton Coit, and Vida Scudder actually visited the English settlements. Other early leaders, such as Chicago's Graham Taylor, were fed by the travelers' reports as well as the transatlantic texts of Christian

Socialism. The founders of the American settlement movement became its leaders for the next forty years.

The first American settlements, in Boston, New York, and Chicago, followed the spirit of Barnett's dictum that the residents would learn from their new neighborhoods. Hull House, founded in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr in the heart of working-class Chicago, was the most widely known. For Addams, the settlement ideology was inseparable from her personal experience. A female college graduate who was resisting the traditional "family claim" (Addams 1893, 13), Addams was unwilling to pursue individual gain or personal culture without social responsibility. While building on traditional associations of women with nurturing and social service, Addams and the other women reformers of her generation used the settlement house movement to change the society into which American college women graduated. The young men who gravitated to settlement work were also unusual for their time. Often influenced by liberal Protestantism, many were searching for a vocation that was service-oriented without being traditionally religious and that would give expression to their liberal-to-radical political leanings. Settlement house men were also unusual in their pursuit of such traditionally "feminized" reform issues as children's well-being and sanitation. In the bustling, noisy, ethnically diverse urban neighborhoods, these college graduates learned unanticipated lessons about social morality, political expediency, cross-cultural encounters, and the lives of the working classes.

The settlement programs grew rapidly in the first two decades after their founding (the "Twenty Years" of Jane Addams's institutional memoir of Hull House). From scattered child drop-ins and underpopulated reading groups in the first year or two, both in-house and outreach programs multiplied. Settlement residents learned to solicit donations for the meeting rooms, playgrounds, art studios, theaters, clinics, and gymnasiums they built. In addition, settlers became their neighbors' advocates with existing agencies and pioneers of new agencies for sanitary services, education, labor standards, and child welfare at both local and federal levels. The settlement houses attracted reformers and university personnel. They became classrooms for post-1900 social work schools.

After their Progressive-Era beginnings, tangled up in the heady world of social reform, the settlements contracted, institutionalized, and reevaluated themselves during and after World War I. Settlements became less fluid and more identified with particular neighborhoods, activities, or religious groups. Settlement workers commuted to work rather than living in the houses, and full-time workers were more often paid as staff rather than housed as volunteers. Settlements sought annual funding with catchall agencies like the Community Chest and, later, United Way, which were designed to detect and shun controversial causes and persons. Surviving and evolving settlements have served the children and young people of their communities for over a century, in the latter part of that time primarily as activity centers rather than as the experimental stations they were formerly.

Mina Carson

See also: Americanization Movement; Charity Organization Societies; Community Chests; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; *Hull-House Maps and Papers;* Immigrants and Immigration; Philanthropy; Pittsburgh Survey; Progressive Era and 1920s; Social Gospel; Social Work; *Twenty Years at Hull-House*

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Sexism

Sexism is a form of oppression that results in the subordination of women and girls on the basis of their biology or gender. There are several consequences that follow from this subordination, including the overrepresentation of women among the poor, inadequate provisions for women and girls in social welfare policy, and the treatment of poor single mothers as a "special case" of deviancy and social pathology that requires extraordinarily intrusive forms of governmental intervention. Given the complex nature of social structures, sexism never appears as a perfectly distinct phenomenon. Sexism is intertwined with other discriminatory forces, such as class exploitation, racism, and homophobia. As such, the effects of sexism are particularly devastating for women and girls who are located in the working class, in communities of color, and in the lesbian community.

The domestic labor thesis holds that women are more likely to be poor than men because women typically forgo educational achievement, job opportunities, and career development in order to care for their male partners, elderly parents, and children. From this perspective, women subsidize men, and society as a whole, by performing unpaid domestic labor. Where heterosexual women are concerned, the theory suggests that if a woman sacrifices her own life chances to support her male partner and family but then goes through a separation and divorce, her risk of impoverishment will be much greater than that of her former partner. Divorce settlements rarely generate enough compensation for these women; the vast majority of once-married mothers with children do not receive adequate child support payments. The domestic labor thesis obviously cannot account for the fact that lesbians who have never had male partners are overrepresented among the poorest of the poor. But the theory does shed light on the condition of many single mothers who are separated from their male partners, either by death or because of the breakdown in their relationship. The significant racial differences within the poor single-mother population, however, should not be neglected. Although divorce does lead to poverty for many white women, many poor single Black mothers who have left their male partners were already poor before their separation, because their male partners did not earn a living wage.

There are two types of sexist oppression in the workplace that affect women's income and wealth: exclusion and differentiation. Although discrimination against women in employment is illegal under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, serious inequities nevertheless persist. Girls and women are often discouraged from pursuing the same educational opportunities and career paths as the males from their same class and age cohort. In these cases, they are informally excluded from the full-time paid workforce because of gender attributes or expectations assigned to them as women. Some girls and women actually are encouraged to seek paid employment, but not in the same jobs or along the same trajectories as their male counterparts. Treated differently than male workers with the same qualifications, these women are often funneled into specific employment sectors—such as service work, light manufacturing, and textiles—where low wages and unskilled dead-end jobs are common. Some of the most exploited women in these positions work in sweatshop conditions. Even among the women workers who earn a minimum wage, however, the risk of poverty is quite high. A household with two dependents that is led by a full-time, year-round worker who earns a minimum wage still falls well below the poverty line, and single women are far more likely than single men to have at least one dependent in their household.

Women often enter the employment market with the same qualifications as men. Although more men than women earn professional degrees, women surpass men in their rates of high school completion, college enrollment, and college graduation rates. Women are nevertheless typically paid less than equally qualified men and are often passed over for raises and promotions. Employers who do promote entry-level workers to supervisory and junior management positions often look for the social and psychological characteristics that are generally associated with typical male behavior, such as an assertive leadership style, and prefer to build familiar all-white-male mentoring networks and management environments. Because women workers often assume much greater burdens in child rearing and domestic labor than do their male counterparts, they often cannot pursue the activities that are needed to ensure they will earn a promotion and a better income. Qualified women are also often subjected to "mommy tracking" and "glass ceilings." Even when they are in fact available for overtime, on-the-job-training, travel, and other additional duties, they are often denied the opportunity to advance their careers because their employers assume that all women workers prioritize their families over their jobs.

The discriminatory treatment of women in the social welfare policy field is expressed in at least two ways. First, the needs of low-income women are often neglected, as social policy experts, legislators, and entire bureaucratic structures either privilege the needs of men over those of women, ignore the gendered bases of poverty, or expect women to conform to masculine policy assumptions. For example, key programs such as subsidized child care, which are common in other Western countries, would help poor women meet the care needs of their children when they leave them to work in the labor market. Yet child care is not guaranteed even though welfare policy requires poor women to work their way out of poverty in jobs outside the home.

A second way in which social welfare policy practices its sexism against poor women arises from stereotypes about their reproductive behavior and seeks to regulate sex and childbearing. Poor women of color, in particular, are treated by social welfare policy as irresponsible and sexually promiscuous deviants who cannot be trusted either to make proper fertility decisions or to raise their own children. Sexism has produced the dangerous myth that because poor women are social outlaws, strong moral policing and behavior modification components must be included within governmental poverty assistance programs. Although this myth can be easily refuted by social science data, it is nevertheless widely regarded as objective truth. As a result, sexist and racist ideology has become deeply normalized and institutionalized not only in American social welfare policy practices but also in the laws that govern income assistance, child removal, child support enforcement, and Medicaid.

Anna Marie Smith

See also: Child Care; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Domestic Work; Family Structure; Foster Care; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Reproductive Rights; *The Vanishing Black Family;* Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Share Our Wealth, 1935

For politicians such as Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, the severity of the Great Depression inspired radical plans to eliminate poverty. In 1934, the charismatic Senator Long began promoting a redistribution program he called "Share Our Wealth." As governor of Louisiana, Long had attacked entrenched corporate power, abolished the poll tax and property taxes on the poor, and built highways, hospitals, and public schools. He also created a powerful political machine that controlled the state's legislature and press and ruthlessly targeted political opponents. Elected to the Senate in 1930, Long supported Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1932 campaign, but he ultimately found the president's programs too moderate. His Share Our Wealth campaign proposed taxing the wealthy to ensure that no American's income was less than one-third or more than 300 times the national average. Long expected the plan to be the cornerstone of his campaign for the presidential election of 1936, but he was assassinated by a political opponent on September 9, 1935.

Sarah Case

See also: Bonus Army; End Poverty in California (EPIC); Great Depression and New Deal; Townsend Movement; Wealth; Wealth, Distribution/Concentration

Here is the sum and substance of the share-our-wealth movement:

1. *Every family to be furnished by the Government a homestead allowance, free of debt, of not less than one-third the average family wealth of the country. . . . No person to have a fortune of more than 100 to 300 times the average family fortune. . . .*
2. *The yearly income of every family shall be not less than one-third the average family income. . . .*
3. *To limit or regulate the hours of work to such an extent as to prevent over-production . . . [and] allow the maximum time to the workers for recreation, convenience, education, and luxuries of life. . . .*
4. *An old-age pension to the persons over 60.*
5. *To balance agricultural production with what can be consumed . . . include[ing] the preserving and storage of surplus commodities to be paid for and held by the Government . . . [without] destroying any of the things raised to eat or wear, nor [the] wholesale destruction of hogs, cattle, or milk.*
6. *To pay the veterans of our wars what we owe them and to care for their disabled.*
7. *Education and training for all children to be equal in opportunity in all schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions for training in the professions and vocations of life. . . .*
8. *The raising of revenue and taxes for the support of this program to come from the reduction of swollen fortunes from the top, as well as for the support of public works to give employment whenever there may be any slackening necessary in private enterprise.*

Source: Richard D. Polenberg, ed., *The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933–1945: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 2000), 130–131.

Sharecropping

When approximately 4 million enslaved people were freed after the defeat of the Confederacy in the Civil War and the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) to the U.S. Constitution, a new system of land tenure soon emerged in the cotton plantation regions of the American South. This system was characterized by landless farmers, both Blacks and whites, working in families for a "share" of the crop. This share would be paid in the form of an advance in farm supplies and other provisions, with the remaining coming due at the end of the year when the crops were harvested. If farm families contributed only their labor to the arrangement, known as "sharecropping," they were usually paid around one-third of the crop as their share. If they contributed tools or animals in the bargain, known as "share tenanting," they worked for half or even two-thirds of the crop. Black farmers were typically sharecroppers, whereas white farmers in this arrangement were typically share tenants. In both cases, however, the system left the farmers mired in poverty and deeply indebted to the merchants who initially furnished supplies and other items on credit. This sharecropping system lasted until the 1940s, when it began to disappear as southern landowners replaced sharecroppers with wage laborers working mechanical cotton pickers.

Sharecropping took hold in the South for several interrelated social, political, and economic reasons. First, the failure of the federal government to provide the formerly enslaved with land, long-term and low-interest loans, and adequate protection immediately after the Civil War left them few resources with which to challenge their former masters. Second, most freedmen and freedwomen, as they were called at the time, refused to work in a slavelike system of gang labor under close supervision by white bosses. They wanted family farms of their own, or at least ones they could rent, and they wanted to farm them free of any immediate supervision. Third, although the U.S. Army tried to introduce a system of wage labor, poor crop yields due to the withdrawal of Black women and children from the fields, an infestation by army worms, flooding—especially in areas ravaged by the war—and scarce agricultural resources such as tools and mules to work the land doomed the wage system almost from the start. Also, it was too easy for unscrupulous planters to hold back on wage payments or to simply not pay at all. Finally, short supplies of credit and cash made it difficult in any case for wages to be paid until the crops were harvested. In this context, the Black farmers preferred—even insisted in many cases—that they work the land on shares. Supply merchants and many southern landlords began to look upon the share system as a way of sharing the risks of production with labor. As a result, sharecropping had emerged as the preferred form of land tenure throughout the cotton South by the 1880s.

Alabama sharecropper Bud Fields and his family at home, 1935 (Library of Congress)

Tragically, sharecropping soon became an economic box from which there was no easy exit. And it entrapped within its walls white landowning farmers, who had lost their lands and independent farming status by the thousands by 1900. The mechanism of entrapment was simple enough. In order to cover their risks in advancing supplies to their sharecroppers and tenant farmers, landlords resorted to "furnishing merchants," many of whom were northern suppliers, who charged high interest rates for the supplies advanced in order to cover the risks involved. These furnishing merchants took liens on the crops of the farmers whom they supplied and required them in turn to grow only cotton on the land. This further reduced the croppers to the status of dependent farmers unable to even have garden crops on their places. Almost everything consumed by the helpless sharecroppers was purchased at inflated credit prices through the merchants' stores. Most southern states also passed crop-lien laws that gave the furnishing merchants first claim to the crops, before the claims of landlords for rent or workers for wages. As a result, landowners sometimes became merchants themselves, and many merchants became landowners, buying cheaply priced plantations from their profits as suppliers. And any sharecropper who might try to sneak his family away in order to avoid working another year, indebted to the store with no end in sight, could be arrested and forced to work, sometimes in chain gangs.

Scholars debate why the system became so firmly rooted in the South. Some emphasize the lack of a diversified economy in the postbellum South. With few jobs outside of plantation agriculture, sharecroppers had no alternatives. Others suggest that the ever-declining cotton prices made it nearly impossible for sharecroppers and tenants to work themselves out of their debts or to avoid the usurious credit prices they were charged. And most scholars point out that the Jim Crow racial context of the postbellum South, which pitted poor whites and Blacks against each other, offered no political means for challenging the system. If anything, southern white politicians used the "race issue" to perpetuate their power while poor southern whites lashed out at Blacks as scapegoats for their own miserable impoverishment. In this racially charged environment, any southern Blacks who protested the economic injustice of sharecropping risked beatings and horrible deaths by lynching.

Sharecropping as a system of southern agriculture began to break around the time of World War I. The prewar boll weevil infestation (which destroyed crops and resulted in record-breaking foreclosures of farmlands) and the overproduction of cotton (resulting in low cotton prices) in the 1920s created an economic crisis as landowners lost their farms to the banks. As a result, thousands of sharecroppers and tenants were displaced from the soil, causing a flood of southern Black refugees to northern cities. The fatal blow occurred, however, with the Great Depression of the 1930s. Ironically, a New Deal program aimed at paying farmers to cut back on crop production in order to increase crop prices finally killed sharecropping. Southern landowners refused to pass on the federal payments to the Black and white sharecroppers and tenants who worked their lands. Instead, they simply evicted them from their farms and plantations. In addition, many southern landowners used their federal crop payments to mechanize their plantations, especially in the rich delta lands of Mississippi, further reducing the need for sharecroppers after 1940. Thousands of Black sharecroppers joined the earlier stream of migrants to urban places in the North in a movement of people known as the Great Migration. By the mid-1950s, sharecropping as a system of labor had all but vanished from the scene.

Ronald L. F. Davis

See also: African American Migration; Freedmen's Aid; New Deal Farm Policy; *Report on Economic Conditions of the South;* Rural Poverty; Slavery

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Sheppard-Towner Infancy and Maternity Protection Act

See Health Policy; Maternalist Policy; Progressive Era and 1920s

Sinclair, Upton

See End Poverty in California (EPIC); *The Jungle*

Slavery

Slavery was both a contested symbol of dependency in pre–Civil War American political and social thought and an economic institution that directly or indirectly affected the lives of millions of Americans, Black and white. Ideologically, the relationship between poverty and slavery was prominently debated in three important periods: (1) the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when the racist ideology that accompanied slavery's first major expansion was culled from the matrix of contemporary attitudes toward the poor; (2) the era of the Revolution, when slavery functioned both as a symbol of tyranny and impoverishment and as an allegedly necessary means of containing threats from below; and (3) the antebellum era, when slavery was alternately attacked as a system of blighting poverty and defended as a form of poor relief that constituted a moral alternative to the "wage slavery" of free laborers in industrial capitalism. Although slavery was generally profitable in a narrow sense, it must be judged a broader economic failure in that its effects hindered industrialization and urbanization in the South until well into the twentieth century. Most important, slavery exacted an enormous human toll in lives that were subjected to the destructive effects of poor living standards and systematic violence. The persistence of poverty in the United States owes much to the slave South's deliberate maintenance of low educational and social welfare standards.

During the seventeenth century, North American slavery vied with indentured servitude and free wage work to satisfy the colonial demand for labor. Between the closing decades of the seventeenth century and the opening decades of the eighteenth century, a rise in the price of indentured servants and a decline in the price of slaves coincided with increasing European demand for Chesapeake-grown tobacco and the growth of an incipient rice industry in South Carolina. While in the northern colonies slavery never gained more than a marginal foothold, this confluence of developments encouraged the southern colonies to import more enslaved Blacks from Africa and the Caribbean.

The resulting increase in the slave population was accompanied by an expansion of the plantation system and a deterioration in the already-low living standards of Blacks. The plantation system, with its rigorous division of labor, disciplined organization of work gangs, overseer supervision, profit-driven work pace, and systematic use of violence, steadily replaced the seventeenth-century pattern of small-farm production, placed more control in planter hands, and kept the provision of welfare at a bare minimum, well below the living standard of typical white households. Revised slave codes, with provisions for branding, whipping, and mutilating recalcitrant slaves, reflected the new discipline. The new codes also put an end to the fluidity of seventeenth-century race relations by constructing a legal caste system that confined all Blacks to a status below that of the lowest whites.

Although the English were probably culturally predisposed to view dark-skinned Africans with contempt, the racial antipathy evident in the revised laws should be seen in the broader context of English attitudes toward poverty and

Enslaved people on the J. J. Smith plantation in Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1862 (Library of Congress)

labor. Economic thought during the expansion of English capitalism in the seventeenth century placed a new emphasis on increasing the productivity of the laboring classes in the race to augment national wealth and power vis-à-vis other competing nations. In such a climate of opinion grew proposals not only to incarcerate the poor in workhouses but also to enslave them as a method of combating their alleged tendency to prefer idleness and drunkenness to hard work, or "industry." Unwilling in practice to reduce the status of Anglo-European servants to perpetual, hereditary slavery, the planters who ruled the southern colonies proved less squeamish about enslaving a group of laborers whose skin color could readily mark them as inferior even to the white poor. Slavery thus became a palpable symbol of abject dependency, so much so that disgruntled colonial merchants in the mid-eighteenth century could portray English mercantile policy as an attempt at subjecting the colonies to a degrading slavery.

During the Revolutionary period, slavery faced both ideological and economic challenges to its continued existence. The egalitarian and antislavery implications of the natural rights doctrine in the Declaration of Independence posed a genuine threat to the legitimacy of slavery. Soon the northern states either abolished slavery outright or adopted some scheme of gradual emancipation, while in the upper South, manumissions increased and antislavery sentiment made genuine inroads. At the same time, the falling prices of tobacco and rice decreased the profitability of slave labor, while the indigo industry collapsed altogether from the impact of wartime disruptions.

In response to such challenges, most southerners defended the legitimacy of slavery. Although some, like Thomas Jefferson, agonized over the tyranny and injustice of slavery, most southern elites feared that emancipation would encourage lower-class disorder and result in a race war. Rather than extend "inalienable rights" to slaves, southerners at the Constitutional Convention ensured that the new Constitution sanctioned the right to own slave property and that such property served as a basis for southern political power in the new union of states.

Despite its fundamental violation of Revolutionary doctrine, slavery grew rapidly in the early nineteenth century. After Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793, cotton production rapidly spread into the rich soils of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas as emigrants from the Southeast scrambled to settle land and supply the booming demand of the British textile industry for raw cotton. By 1860, the majority of the nation's slaves, now numbering 4 million, were laboring on cotton plantations located primarily in the lower South.

The natural growth of the mainland slave population—a feature unique in the New World—belied the harsh conditions of North American slavery. Because the slave system was above all a labor system predominantly geared toward staple-crop production, the majority of slaves were subjected to a grueling, nonstop seasonal work routine. The cotton season began with planting in the spring and continued through chopping and hoeing during the long, hot summer; picking, ginning, and shipping in the fall and winter; and in the late winter, clearing new ground and repairing buildings, tools, and cotton gins in preparation for the next planting season. At the same time, slaves planted corn, raised hogs, and cultivated vegetable gardens to supplement the monotonous diet supplied by the planters. Given this intense work regimen, the lazy, dozing slave of the popular plantation legend was certainly a myth.

Such an intense work regimen in a disease-ridden environment took an enormous toll on the health and welfare of slaves. Planters maintained their slaves in conditions little beyond the level of subsistence and bare material support. Although the average diet for adolescents and adults, consisting largely of corn and other grains, sweet potatoes, and pork, was generally "sufficient to maintain body weight and general health," slaves were widely susceptible to diseases of malnutrition such as beriberi, pellagra, tetany, rickets, and kwashiorkor (Fogel 1989, 137, 134). The limited diet exacted the highest cost from children. Low birth weights resulted from the undernourishment and overwork of pregnant women, and early weaning of infants significantly increased the risks to infant health and mortality. Height and weight data indicate that slaves suffered from severe protein-calorie malnutrition primarily in early childhood, increasing their susceptibility to diarrhea, dysentery, whooping cough, respiratory diseases, and worms. Such conditions made slave infants and children twice as likely to die as their white counterparts (Fogel 1989, 143). Nor did the danger of disease end if a slave managed to survive childhood. Intense work, the threat of injury from punishment, and poor sanitary conditions made slaves vulnerable to illnesses throughout their lives.

To survive the relentless work regimen and its effects on health, slaves engaged in a variety of acts of resistance to planters' efforts to exploit their labor. On a few significant occasions, resistance took the form of rebellious plots or uprisings—Nat Turner's 1831 revolt is the most notable example—though some recent scholarship has suggested that other famous slave rebellions were less actual plots than they were panics on the part of slave owners. In any case, such revolutionary challenges to planter hegemony were rare and faced overwhelming odds against success. Far more frequent and concerted was a day-to-day resistance—"shirking, destruction of tools, stealing, malingering, spoiling of crops, slowdowns, and other deliberate forms of sabotaging production"—that constituted an ongoing struggle between planters, who sought to control and exploit their workforce as completely as possible, and slaves, who refused, as far as they were able, to give the planters everything they demanded (Fogel 1989, 157).

Slaves' daily struggle to resist exploitation, to improve their conditions, to acquire whatever education and skills they could come by, and to supplement their diets was greatly abetted by a resilient family, community, and cultural life beyond the fields. Although slave marriages had no status in law in any southern state, slaves married, had children, raised families, and viewed family life as a basis for resistance to an otherwise dehumanizing system. Most masters encouraged marriage out of religious conviction and because they viewed such unions as a means of controlling overt rebelliousness, yet they did not recoil from dividing families through sale. Slaves' community life and culture offered an additional means of solace and resistance to the harsh conditions of plantation labor. Particularly on larger plantations, slaves fashioned a culture that melded elements of disparate ethnic ancestries into a sense of shared pan-African heritage and that emphasized kinship, created work songs and spirituals, told folktales of the weak outwitting the strong, and adapted a form of Christianity that held out the hope of spiritual deliverance from a bleak world of bondage.

National politics reflected the tensions created by the expansion of slavery and the ongoing struggle between masters and slaves on the plantations. Contention over the metaphor of impoverishment played no small role in the resulting conflict. In midcentury, the expansion of slavery into the western territories ultimately destroyed a political party system that was built on cross-sectional party alliances and contributed fundamentally to a divisive sectional politics that resulted in the devastating Civil War of 1861–1865.

In widening northern antislavery circles during the antebellum period, slavery came to symbolize the backwardness of the South in contrast to the dynamic economy of the industrializing North. In the 1850s, the newly formed northern Republican Party based its "free soil, free labor" appeal to voters on the necessity of protecting western territory from the blighting effects of slavery.

For their part, southerners claimed that taking their slave property into western territory was not only a right guaranteed by the Constitution but also a social necessity if the South was to avoid dangerous imbalances in Black-white population ratios. The natural expansion of the slave population also convinced southerners that the worst New World excesses—the cruelty of the intercontinental slave trade and the brutal conditions of West Indian sugar plantations—were not characteristic of southern slavery. Accordingly, southerners developed a vigorous body of racist propaganda that defended slavery as a "positive good" for Blacks themselves, for the South, and for the nation as a whole. At a time when the capacity of the northern economy to absorb and sustain impoverished immigrants seemed highly questionable to many, the southern pro-slavery argument opportunistically claimed that slavery could successfully compete with free labor both in agriculture and in some forms of manufacturing and could still provide a more generous alternative to the impoverishing "wage slavery" characteristic of England and the North. In 1857, a reactionary defender of slavery, George Fitzhugh, wrote that "our negroes are confessedly better off than any free laboring population in the world" (Fitzhugh [1857] 1960, 201).

Slaves themselves, less convinced of their welfare, put the lie to any notion that they were "confessedly better off" under slavery when they deserted their plantations by the thousands during the Civil War. From the vantage point of the present, there can be no doubt that slavery's mistreatment of African Americans hindered the long-term development of the South. As economic historian W. Elliot Brownlee has written, "The heritage of slavery is seen most clearly when we define our modern problem as one of absorbing the unskilled and undereducated into a society that places prime value on the attainment of skills and whose growth is tied to high levels of investment in people" (Brownlee 1988, 250). The slave South's systematic underinvestment in training and education for slaves beyond the most rudimentary skills—a situation that hurt the prospects of ordinary whites as well—has contributed fundamentally to the persistence of poverty in the United States.

Jay Carlander

See also: African Americans; Indentured Servitude; Malthusianism; Nineteenth Century; Racial Segregation; Racism; Sharecropping; Work Ethic

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Slum Clearance

See Housing Policy; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal

Social Contract

See Citizenship; Liberalism; Republicanism

Social Darwinism

In 1859, Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, in which he presented his theory of biological evolution. Debunking creationism and other positions asserting the centrality of humanity in the universe, Darwin concluded from his research that the evolution of species was not the invention of intelligent design but was instead the result of natural selection—what became popularly known (although the terminology did not originate with Darwin) as "the survival of the fittest." Species fortunate enough to possess characteristics that enabled them to adapt to a hostile environment survived and then transmitted their traits to future generations; less fortunate or weaker species simply died off. As Darwin feared and predicted would occur, social thinkers began to (mis)apply his theory of evolution to human society. British sociologist Herbert Spencer was the leading and most renowned advocate of what would later be called "Social Darwinism." Spencer argued that the progress of humanity demanded that those people whose weaknesses showed them to be unfit to survive in the struggle for existence should be left to die off. His ideas were immensely influential, attracting a substantial following in the United States, and justified a cruel indifference to the plight of the poor and other less fortunate people in society. Social Darwinism also led to specious theories of racial supremacy, culminating in the 1930s with the rise of Nazism.

Spencer and his followers were proponents of classical liberalism, decrying government intervention in social and economic life. Even before the publication of Darwin's groundbreaking book, Spencer called for the abolition of poor laws, of national education, of a central church, and of all regulation of commerce and factories on the grounds that these interferences stymied social progress. For Spencer, progress depended on the movement from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex. He and his followers believed that small, minimalist—or laissez-faire—government would promote progress because it maximized individual freedom and in turn stimulated social complexity. Similarly, Social Darwinists also advocated free-market capitalism, a system they believed sparked individual achievement and ingenuity and promised enhanced specialization and a complex division of labor. Laissez-faire government, they argued, would benefit society by letting the free market grow unfettered and by rewarding the most ingenious and deserving. Government regulation, on the other hand, would stand in the way of society's "natural" evolution and progress because its reforms and social protections would impede the competitive forces separating the weak from the strong.

The Social Darwinist understanding of progress was chillingly amoral, lacking any kind of sympathy for human suffering or recognition of the social origins of inequality. Social Darwinists grafted the fierce struggle for biological existence onto human society and came to accept the notion that "Might makes right." Accommodating the needs of the weak and pitiful merely served to enervate the human race. In the wake of Spencer's laissez-faire political philosophy, theories emerged about the superiority of certain races or ethnicities. A particularly egregious example is the rise of pseudosciences like eugenics, which, setting its sights on the genetic perfection of humankind, sought to prevent the supposedly weak and unfit from transmitting their traits to future generations.

Vestiges of Social Darwinism can be found in social and political thought to this day. Charles Murray, the author of *Losing Ground* and coauthor of *The Bell Curve*, is a conservative intellectual who asserts that social welfare programs perpetuate social pathologies not only by protecting people from the consequences of their own behavior but by ignoring the genetically based intellectual inferiority of the poor. These and other modern reformulations of Social Darwinist thought continue to influence those who reject systemic or structural explanations of poverty and social inequality.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: Malthusianism; Racism

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Social Gospel

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a group of American Protestants preaching what became known as the Social Gospel began to raise new concerns and to offer novel solutions for the nation's various social problems. Increasing economic inequality, abysmal health care, dangerous working conditions, exploitation of workers, and unrestrained, rapid urban growth brought clerics out of their churches and onto the streets. The Christian gospel, they believed, was not just about a person's relationship with God but was also about his or her social relationships: God sought to redeem society as well as individuals. Proponents of the Social Gospel, both clerics and laypeople, became key crusaders in Progressive-Era reform efforts for justice by integrating faith with the social, political, and economic issues of the era.

Christian faith and social reform have often gone hand in hand in American history. The temperance movement and the abolition of slavery were two of many early-nineteenth-century reform movements led by Protestants. After the Civil War, new issues arose that challenged preachers and theologians to reconceptualize their faith to make it relevant to a world in rapid transition. Friction defined the relationship between capital and labor, while the nation's population exploded. Millions of people abandoned the countryside for urban life, and immigrants flooded the nation's burgeoning cities, which proved incapable of meeting the increasing demands. Innovative technology and more efficient business practices combined with the maturing Industrial Revolution to reshape the American economy. Disillusioned by the human impact of such unprecedented industrial and urban growth, a group of Protestant preachers and laypeople carved out a place for themselves as reform leaders and social critics. Although resolutely middle-class, they tried to identify with and speak up for the poor, in the hope of curbing the injustices of the era.

A number of factors influenced Social Gospel leaders. Although the movement developed in specifically American ways, European Christians had been facing similar problems for decades. Christian social movements from all over the world produced a body of writings that suggested concrete solutions to modern problems and related religion to city life. As they had in so many other areas during the Progressive Era, Americans seeking solutions to the nation's problems frequently looked back to Europe for inspiration and for models. Christian social scientists raised new questions about their burgeoning disciplines, seeking to apply ethical and often explicitly religious ideas to their analyses of the world they inhabited.

Ideologically and theologically, Social Gospel leaders composed the "modernist" wing of American Protestantism. Modernists were broadly characterized by their efforts to keep their faith up-to-date with the latest scientific and philosophical movements, as opposed to fundamentalists, who more often isolated themselves from the culture around them. The modernists emphasized the possibility of redemption and the essential goodness of humanity, whereas the fundamentalists stressed sin and God's judgment. Social Gospel advocates were interested not in a traditional faith that might be irrelevant to modern conditions but in one that adapted to new, constantly evolving, social circumstances. They had an exalted view of society, believing that God was not only transcendent but also immanent through it. The person and actions of Jesus Christ were central to their ideology. In contrast to groups that placed more emphasis on the God of the Old Testament or on the writings of Paul, these Christians gave the character, words, and work of Christ preeminence. Finally, they were committed to a millennial ideal. They believed that by their efforts, God's kingdom could be restored on earth, a belief that gave the movement a utopian tinge. Such a presupposition led some Christians to defend and advocate American expansionism. If God chose America to usher in his kingdom, they believed, then America had an obligation to build its institutions around the globe. Although the movement was diverse, these themes tended to drive the optimism of the modernists, who sought to live like Christ while wrestling with the relationship between faith and culture. Other groups, like the Salvation Army, also looked to Christ as a model for social reform but rejected the liberal theological ideas of the modernists.

Post-Victorian changing gender roles influenced the Social Gospel movement. During the nineteenth century, liberal Protestant churches had become the province of women, who dominated the pews and often made up a significant majority of the nation's various reform groups. However, by the early-twentieth-century Progressive Era, male ministers were seeking to bring men back to church. They developed a concept of "muscular Christianity," which asserted that Jesus had been a socially active, rough-handed carpenter, a virile, strong, authoritative figure who served as a model for modern Christian man. "Muscular" Christians were not afraid to live the strenuous life, and they attacked society's problems with all their might. Although women continued to be the primary constituencies of Progressive-Era reform groups, muscular Christian preachers did succeed in attracting to church more men, who channeled their vigor into social reform on urban streets.

The Social Gospel influenced many of the classic Protestant denominations, but its most obvious expressions surfaced through interdenominational organizations. The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911–1912 (which linked muscular Christianity with the Social Gospel) and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ were two leading organizations with strong Social Gospel components. At its organizing meeting in 1908, the Federal Council of Churches adopted a "social creed," which outlined many tenets of the Progressive-Era reforms, including a declaration for the rights of workers and a call for the abolition of child labor and for a living wage. Through such interdenominational agencies, the movement accomplished many things. The Social Gospel faithful revived Protestant liberalism and reshaped the role of church in society. Religiously inspired men and women established schools for all ages to educate the new urban public, while settlement houses were built for the poor. Northern churches also created schools in the South for African Americans, who otherwise received little help. Some leaders immersed their churches in such political issues as suffrage, prohibition, and expansionism, while others were subtler about their politics. Social action groups, missionary societies, and student organizations were established or expanded under the auspices of the Social Gospel. From church pulpits, in seminaries, on street corners, and in the academy, movement leaders attempted to convert all who would listen to a new way of life.

Although the Social Gospel developed as laypeople and church leaders struggled together, it was clerics who gave the movement its earliest and most definitive form. Three influential initial leaders of the movement were Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, and Charles M. Sheldon. Gladden began his reformist career as a journalist and then accepted Congregational pastorates in Springfield, Massachusetts, and Columbus, Ohio. As a minister, he resolved to use faith as a weapon against corrupt business, a determination that surfaced in a series of lectures he delivered while in Massachusetts. The talks, collected and published as *Working People and Their Employers* (1876), suggested that business leaders had a responsibility to treat their employees more justly. At the same time, Gladden worked to modernize theology and plunged into explosive debates on such topics as biblical inerrancy.

Gladden next took a pulpit in Columbus, Ohio, where he became one of the most powerful preachers in the nation. His sympathies with labor intensified as he watched Ohio coal executives, some of whom were leading members of his church, ruthlessly fight their workers and attempt to undermine labor unions during major strikes. Committed to the Golden Rule (the admonition to treat others as you want to be treated) as a principle needed in American business, he sided with workers against the wealthier members of the church. He also adopted other causes, including the quest for public ownership of utilities and critiques of American capitalism. Gladden ultimately wrote over three dozen books and gained a tremendous following.

Josiah Strong was more controversial. Also ordained a Congregational minister, Strong organized numerous conferences that focused on Social Gospel themes. He sought to include as many Protestant groups as possible in his work and helped establish the Federal Council of Churches, yet some of his views were contentious. His most famous book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885) defined seven issues that "threatened" the United

States, including increasing Roman Catholicism, immigration, and socialism. Ascribing to a Social Darwinist "scientific" racism, a patronizing ideology found among many but not all Progressive-Era reformers, he believed that Anglo-Saxon Protestant Americans should "civilize" the rest of the nation and then the world. Influenced by muscular Christianity, Strong also wrote a book on Christian manliness, as had Gladden.

Yet another Congregationalist minister, Charles M. Sheldon, had an enormous influence on American Christianity. From his pulpit in Topeka, Kansas, Sheldon worked to alleviate the problems of the common person. He lived at times with different social groups, seeking to understand the hardships they faced and to encourage reform in a variety of areas. In a novel entitled *In His Steps* (1897), which became one of the nation's best-selling books, he articulated a simple solution to the world's problems. The book traces the life of a small congregation that is energized by its pastor who asks his congregants to do one thing before they make any decision: to ask themselves "What would Jesus do?" and then to act accordingly, regardless of the consequences. Sheldon's fictional congregation transformed its city, reflecting his hope that just such an approach could transform America. Legions of Christians, liberal and conservative, have asked themselves "What would Jesus do?" ever since.

Building on the work of these Social Gospel architects, Walter Rauschenbusch became the most influential popularizer of the movement. As the pastor of a German Baptist Church in New York's Hell's Kitchen, Rauschenbusch encountered the worst characteristics of urbanization. Daily confrontations with starvation, unemployment, injustice, crime, and despicable health conditions left him dissatisfied with his traditional theological training. Like clerics before him, he sought to apply his faith to these overwhelming problems and began emphasizing the construction of the kingdom of God on earth. He eventually became a seminary professor, where he had the opportunity to develop and publish what he had learned from his experiences in Hell's Kitchen. His most famous book, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) catapulted him into the national spotlight and made him the nation's leading Social Gospel proponent. Over the rest of his life, he continued publishing influential books on social justice and developed a systematic theology that provided the foundation for Christian social action.

The work of laypeople was also essential for the Social Gospel's success. Jane Addams and Richard Ely were two of the movement's leading lay proponents. Addams was raised a Quaker and was educated at Rockford Female Seminary. While traveling in Europe, she witnessed both the negative effects of industrialization and the various methods that reformers were using to attack social problems, which inspired her to work for similar reform at home. In Chicago, she established Hull House, a settlement house, to help provide for the basic needs of the city's poor and to expose the middle class to the plight of the nation's workers. Although less explicit about her faith than were the clerics, Addams evidenced a strong commitment to many of the same themes and issues raised by liberal Protestants, viewing Jesus as a seminal figure.

Richard Ely was an Episcopalian, an economist, and one of America's best-known and distinguished university professors. He sought to integrate Christian faith with economics and worked to apply his training to building a more just society. He believed that the core of faith could be reduced to two things: loving God and loving one's neighbor. His early work sought to explain and defend America's struggling labor movement, and he went on to help found the American Economic Association with Gladden. Ely was popular at church conferences and became a sought-after speaker. His efforts to balance political economy with religion helped model the integration of faith with the burgeoning social sciences.

Despite Progressive-Era faith that the kingdom of God was at hand, World War I quenched the optimism of many Social Gospel reformers. Although the movement lasted well into the twentieth century and influenced later reformers, such as Martin Luther King Jr., the radical, uninhibited conviction that the kingdom of God could be achieved on earth slowly began to fade. Although the Social Gospel movement did not deal with issues of race or gender as thoroughly as it might have, what it did accomplish was remarkable. In an age of reform, Social Gospel leaders provided the moral and religious basis for the quest for justice.

Matthew A. Sutton

See also: Christian Fundamentalism; Hull House; Protestant Denominations; Settlement Houses; Social Darwinism

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Social Science

See Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Poverty Line; Poverty Research; Social Surveys

Social Security

The term "social security" was coined in the 1930s during the Great Depression and was quickly adopted by lawmakers as the title for the landmark Social Security Act of 1935 (originally labeled the Economic Security Act). Most often credited to the prominent social insurance advocate Abraham Epstein, the term was meant to convey the value and necessity of collective, *public* responsibility for providing people with a basic level of protection against the hazards of the market and against life-cycle risks. Although the Social Security Act of 1935 created other key safety net programs as well, the term "social security" has subsequently come to refer to the Old Age, Survivors', and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program and stands as a testament to that program's importance.

Social Security today is the largest and broadest safety net program, and it is also widely considered to be the nation's most successful one. Nearly all working Americans and their families are covered by the program, and more than 45 million Americans currently receive Social Security benefits. Retirees and their surviving spouses make up the largest category of beneficiaries, but Social Security is far more than a retirement income security program. It also insures families against catastrophic income loss due to the disability or premature death of a breadwinner. Social Security relieves the adult children of retired beneficiaries of much of the financial and emotional burden of providing income support for their aging parents.

Although Social Security benefits are hardly lavish, the program has succeeded admirably in its income support objectives. For the middle quintile of retired couple beneficiaries, whose yearly household incomes range from approximately \$14,000 to about \$22,000, Social Security benefits account for roughly two-thirds of total household income. Thus, for typical retired beneficiaries, Social Security benefits dwarf the proportion of household income derived from all other sources combined, including private pensions, personal savings, and earnings from work.

Among especially vulnerable retiree subgroups, including African Americans, Hispanics, women, and older retirees (who are disproportionately women), dependence on Social Security as a source of household income is even greater than for the remainder of the retiree population. More than half of all retired women age sixty-five and up are widowed, divorced, or never married. Among the Social Security beneficiaries in this group, Social Security provides seventy-two cents of every income dollar; 26 percent have no other source of income but Social Security (AFL-CIO n.d., 13). Social Security is also vital for the fast-growing contingent or nonstandard workforce, including part-time, temporary, and independent contract workers, because few nonstandard workers are covered by private pension plans (Jorgensen and McGarrah 2001). Although the United States lags far behind other industrialized nations in the provision of other social benefits, such as health care, the proportion of retiree household income derived from Social Security in the United States is typical of other industrialized nations. According to a recent study of public and private retirement income security systems in the United States, Japan, and five major European countries, the national public pension system provides a percentage of retiree household income that ranges from a low of 58 percent (Italy) to a high of 83 percent (Germany) (Weller 2001). The United States is right near the middle of this range. On the other hand, the wage replacement rate (the ratio of Social Security benefits to preretirement wages) tends to be lower in the United States than in other industrialized countries.

Nevertheless, Social Security plays a crucial role in reducing poverty among its beneficiaries. Were it not for their monthly benefit checks, nearly half of all elderly Social Security recipients would be in poverty. With Social Security, only 8 percent are in poverty. Prior to Social Security, most workers worked until they died. Those who were too ill or infirm to work often became wards of their adult children or of private charities or were forced to end their days in poorhouses maintained by county governments. The advent of Social Security changed that radically for the better, enabling millions of Americans to retire with dignity and at least a modest level of financial security.

Three features of the structure of Social Security benefits in the United States deserve special mention: Benefits are guaranteed for life, they are adjusted annually to compensate for the erosive effects of inflation, and they are calculated using a formula that replaces a larger share of the earnings of low-wage workers than of high-wage workers.

The lifetime guarantee means that it is impossible for retirees or their surviving spouses to outlive their Social Security benefits, no matter how long they live. Since workers cannot know how long they will live after they retire and since increasing life expectancies are allowing Americans to live longer in retirement, a guaranteed lifetime benefit is a vital feature of a program that seeks to ensure retirement income security. This feature sets Social Security apart from personal savings and many private pension plans, both of which can be and often are depleted by long-lived retirees or their surviving spouses. A large and growing proportion of private pension plans are of the defined-contribution variety, in which a retirement lump sum accumulates in a pension account during an employee's working career. Once the employee retires and his or her account has been depleted, the private pension is gone. It is possible to convert personal savings or private pension lump sums into lifetime benefits by purchasing an annuity from an insurance company, but it is very costly to do so. Moreover, unlike bank deposits, annuities are not federally guaranteed if the insurance company that sold them defaults; instead, there is a patchwork of often poorly funded state guarantee programs.

Of equal importance is the automatic annual adjustment of Social Security benefits to offset the corrosive effects of inflation. This provision was implemented in the 1972 amendments to the Social Security Act, which greatly enhanced the antipoverty effects of the program. Passed at a time when "runaway inflation" was beginning to erode the value of wages and social welfare benefits, cost-of-living adjustments proved crucial to reducing elderly poverty rates. Even the modest inflation rates of recent years would, over time, erode the value of Social Security benefits were it not for these annual adjustments. Without annual inflation adjustments, at 3 percent inflation, retirement benefits would lose a third of their value over fifteen years and nearly half their value over twenty years. Retirees whose benefits kept them out of poverty when they first retired would find themselves pushed far below the poverty line. Social Security's annual inflation adjustments are becoming even more important, as people live longer and spend more years in retirement. This feature of Social Security is unmatched by most other forms of retirement income; nor does it apply to most other public safety net programs. Very few private pension plans adjust benefits to offset the impact of inflation. Annuities that protect beneficiaries against the effects of inflation are simply unavailable on the private insurance market.

Social Security is especially important to low-wage workers. The formula for calculating a low-wage worker's Social Security benefits weights his or her earnings higher than the earnings of high-wage workers in the determination of benefits. As a result, although high-wage workers receive higher monthly benefits than low-wage workers with equivalent work histories, the benefits received by low-wage workers represent a higher percentage of their pre-retirement earnings. This feature of the program has played a major role in alleviating poverty among Social Security beneficiaries.

Social Security is much more than a retirement program; it also provides income support to workers in the event of disability and to the young children and spouses of a worker who dies. For a twenty-five-year-old average-earnings worker with a newborn, Social Security's disability protection is equivalent to a $220,000 disability insurance policy. For a twenty-five-year-old average-earnings worker with a spouse and two young children, Social Security's survivor's benefit equates to $374,000 in life insurance. Given Social Security's zero risk of default, guaranteed lifetime benefits, and protection against inflation, comparable protection simply is not available at any price in the private insurance market (Social Security Administration 2001).

These disability and survivors' insurance provisions of Social Security are especially important to African Americans and Hispanic Americans and are largely responsible for keeping nearly 1 million children under age eighteen above the poverty line. As a result of these family insurance features of Social Security, 26 percent of the program's African American and 20 percent of its Hispanic American beneficiaries are children, as are 10 percent of its white beneficiaries (Rawlson and Spriggs 2001).

Social Security delivers its important benefits with remarkable efficiency. More than ninety-nine cents of every revenue dollar available to finance the program is paid out to beneficiaries. The program's administrative overhead rate of less than 1 percent compares very favorably with the 12 to 14 percent overhead rates typical of private insurers. Several factors account for Social Security's low overhead. As a social insurance program, coverage under Social Security is nearly universal. Private insurers, by contrast, spend large sums on underwriting—essentially, the process of determining whether a prospective customer is or is not a good insurance risk. Private insurers incur costs of managing a diverse investment portfolio, including real estate, stocks, and bonds; Social Security, by contrast, invests its reserves in special government bonds virtually without cost. Private insurers pay their top executives the huge salaries typical of large corporations; the Social Security Administration compensates executives much more modestly.

The program is financed primarily by payroll taxes paid by covered workers and their employers and by self-employed persons. Taxes for 2001 were paid on the first $80,400 of wages and salaries, at the rate of 6.2 percent by employers and 6.2 percent by employees. During 2000, Social Security's receipts (taxes plus interest) exceeded the amount paid out in benefits by $153 billion; this excess of receipts over benefits represents a surplus that was credited to the Social Security Trust Fund, where it is invested in special interest-bearing government bonds. The program currently is expected to continue running surpluses every year until 2025, by which time the Trust Fund balance is projected to reach $6.5 trillion (Board of Trustees 2001, 159).

The law requires Social Security's trustees to make seventy-five-year forecasts of revenues and benefit outlays. These forecasts are published annually each spring. Such long-range forecasts inevitably require guesswork, and their results can vary greatly with small changes in underlying assumptions about such variables as life expectancy or economic growth twenty-five or fifty years in the future. Accordingly, the trustees publish three forecasts, based on optimistic, pessimistic, and middle scenarios, rather than a single forecast. Most media and policy attention, however, is focused on the forecast derived from the middle scenario.

Based on the latest middle-scenario forecast, the trustees project that revenues will be sufficient to pay full benefits promised under current law until 2038. From 2039 until the end of the seventy-five-year forecast period in 2075, revenues are projected to be sufficient to pay 70 percent of promised benefits. It should be noted, however, that the shortfall forecast to begin in 2039 is a pessimistic projection that may not materialize (Baker and Weisbrot 1999).

Critics of Social Security, from President George W. Bush to influential right-wing think tanks, such as the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, have seized upon the conjectured post-2038 shortfall to undermine public confidence in the future of the program. Indeed, in 2001, President Bush appointed a commission that even seeks to undermine public confidence that benefits will be paid out of the enormous surpluses that Social Security will accumulate through 2025 (Baker 2001).

President Bush's commission and other critics allege that workers today who pay taxes throughout their working careers to finance Social Security will face a bankrupted program that will not be able to pay the benefits promised to them when they retire. The solution they offer is to replace Social Security in whole or in part with a privatized system of individual investment accounts. Since these accounts will be in the worker's own name and will be financed by the worker's own contributions, workers need never fear that their accounts will be taken away. Furthermore, the critics allege, by investing their account balances in the stock market, workers will earn high returns on their investments, thereby stretching their retirement funds much further than would be possible under today's Social Security.

Leading financial services firms, such as State Street Bank, Mellon Bank, and Merrill Lynch, have quietly funded the assault on Social Security. It is estimated that these and other firms stand to reap $12 billion over the next ten years from management fees derived from administering individual accounts if partial privatization becomes a reality.

The defenders of Social Security have put forth powerful counterarguments against privatization, but they are not as well financed as their adversaries, and it is unclear at this writing whether they will prevail. First, the diversion of even a modest portion of current Social Security payroll taxes into private individual accounts will trigger a huge financing crisis requiring deep benefit cuts, tax increases, or government borrowing—the very things privatization advocates claim they want to avoid. Whether benefit cuts come in the form of an increase in the retirement age or a reduction in annual cost-of-living adjustments, or are across-the-board, American workers, retirees, and their families would lose heavily. An increase in the retirement age would penalize workers in such physically demanding industries as construction and health care and would be especially harsh for African American males due to their low life expectancy. Any reduction in cost-of-living adjustments would be especially harsh for older women, pushing many of them below the poverty line.

Second, individual accounts invested in the stock market are completely unsuitable as a replacement for Social Security. Social Security, as noted earlier, provides a lifetime benefit guarantee, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and a benefit calculation formula advantageous to low-wage workers. Furthermore, Social Security's disability and survivors' insurance features help insulate family incomes against the loss of a breadwinner. Private individual accounts possess none of these crucial features. To make matters worse, account balances would fluctuate with the stock market and even with the prices of individual stocks. Workers with identical work histories and earnings would face radically different retirement prospects depending on whether the stock market was up or down when they retired and on their luck or skill as investors. Privatization, in short, would replace Social Security's vital social insurance features with a lottery (Harrington 2001).

Of course, Social Security as it currently exists is not perfect, and improvements in it are needed. Some feminists, for example, have criticized the program for its patriarchal structure and advocate increased benefits for older women who face high poverty rates despite Social Security (Ghilarducci 2001). The payroll tax that finances the program weighs heavily on lower-income workers. Furthermore, the eligibility rules for disability benefits have been made too restrictive and should be revised. Concerns about post-2038 solvency could be addressed, in large part, by raising or eliminating the cap that currently exempts earnings in excess of $80,400 from payroll taxes. Privatization, however, would move Social Security further away from these and other needed improvements.

Sheldon Friedman

See also: Old Age; Social Security Act of 1935

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Social Security Act of 1935

The Social Security Act of 1935, signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, remains the most comprehensive social policy creation in American political history. By combining several programs into one law, the act effectively established an entire social welfare apparatus, intended to protect, eventually, the majority of American citizens from economic insecurity. Of the major components of the statute, two were contributory programs geared toward full-time employed individuals: Old Age Insurance (OAI, which has come to be called "Social Security") for retired workers, and Unemployment Insurance (UI), for those who lost their jobs. Eligibility for either depended on a worker's previous employment status, length and constancy of presence in the workforce, and level of earnings. Two others, Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), were public assistance programs aimed at nonemployed individuals considered deserving. The potential of the Social Security Act to alleviate poverty was curtailed, at the outset, by features of policy design that effectively excluded most men of color and the majority of women from the contributory programs. Policymakers amended the law in 1935, transforming OAI into Old Age and Survivors' Insurance (OASI), thus including the wives or widows and dependent children of primary beneficiaries. Over time, additional amendments and demographic changes have made the contributory programs more inclusive and redistributive, though stratifying features remain.

Unlike programs and rules established in earlier eras that clearly distinguished between citizens on the basis of sex or race, such as protective labor laws for women or Jim Crow segregation laws, the Social Security Act was free of discriminatory language. The fact that eligibility for some programs depended on work status while others did not guaranteed a gendered division in program coverage. Public officials in the Roosevelt administration did not intend, however, to establish a higher and lower tier of social provision. In the context of the 1930s, the programs geared to white men appeared least likely to succeed: Both OAI and UI lacked precedents in the United States and relied on unconventional financing arrangements, but OAA and ADC built on preexisting programs and adhered to the established grant-in-aid model.

In the course of implementation, however, the program coverage became stratified in a manner that was gendered and racialized, functioning as income-maintenance programs especially for white males and their families while doing little to keep people of color or single or divorced white women out of poverty. These outcomes were attributable in part to financing distinctions between the programs: OAI and UI were "contributory" programs, funded through automatic payroll taxes, while OAA and ADC depended on repeated appropriations of funds from general government revenues, controversial processes in which the question of whether recipients were "deserving" was constantly revisited. The different administrative arrangements for the programs, national versus primarily state-level authority, also proved deeply divisive.

Reformers in the United States had long desired to create social programs resembling those established in most European nations by the late nineteenth century. They finally found their political opportunity in the midst of the Great Depression as unemployment skyrocketed and state and local forms of social provision were strained to the breaking point. Numerous social movements rallied for government to establish more comprehensive and more enduring programs than relief. A widespread grassroots populist movement known as the Townsendites championed monthly payments of $200, drawn from taxes, to every individual sixty and over on the condition that the money be spent within the month as a means to spur the economy. Left-wing supporters of the Lundeen Bill, or "Workers' Bill," believed that a universal unemployment compensation plan should be financed by general taxation instead of by employee contributions, which they feared would raise prices, lower wages, and hurt consumers. Despite the diversity of their proposals, the activists were united in their desire for programs featuring fairly universal coverage, administration by national government, and financing through general revenues. In all of these regards, their proposals differed vastly from the Roosevelt administration's initial plans for lasting measures of social provision.

President Roosevelt disliked the prospect of long-term general relief; he believed it would have ill effects on recipients, place too heavy a toll on government revenues, and be subject to the vacillation of politics. He envisioned instead that work-related social insurance would serve as the cornerstone of his program. He also acknowledged the necessity of some forms of public assistance, so long as they were crafted narrowly to apply to particular groups of "deserving" recipients. He called for a plan that involved coordinated efforts by national and state governments.

In June 1934, Roosevelt appointed a cabinet committee, the Committee on Economic Security (CES), to study economic security issues, develop recommendations, and draft legislative proposals to be sent to Congress. CES chair and secretary of labor Frances Perkins, her assistant Arthur J. Altmeyer, and CES director Edwin Witte all shared Roosevelt's guiding assumptions about the appropriate design for programs. All three had worked at the state level for social reform—Perkins in New York and the others in Wisconsin—and they retained a belief in considerable state-level authority for social programs. They wanted to build on the foundations of programs already established in many states during the early twentieth century: About half the states had enacted old-age pensions, forty-five had mothers' pensions laws, and only one state—Wisconsin—had unemployment compensation. The three leaders also shared considerable intellectual ties with both the social insurance approach and the social work tradition as epitomized by public assistance.

Of the four major programs in the Social Security Act, Old Age Insurance—later known simply as "Social Security"—was the only one endowed with a strictly national, unified administrative authority. The program was spearheaded by a law professor from the University of California, Barbara Nachtrieb Armstrong, whom Witte had hired to be director of planning for the old-age security staff. Armstrong had recently published a book entitled *Insuring the Essentials: Minimum Wage Plus Social Insurance, a Living Wage Program,* in which she firmly endorsed social insurance as a critical tool for preventing poverty and argued that public assistance programs for the elderly robbed them of their dignity. Armstrong parted ways with the CES leaders, however, on the issue of state-level authority. She and her subcommittee, including Princeton University economist J. Douglas Brown, were convinced that only a fully national system of social insurance could make benefits in old age a meaningful right. The members argued that given the mobility of the population, a federal-state program would present administrative difficulties while a national system would ensure quicker and fuller coverage of the population and superior compliance. Controversy ensued, as Perkins expressed discomfort with the proposal and the counsel to the CES claimed it would be unconstitutional. Armstrong's approach prevailed after she consulted several esteemed scholars of constitutional law, each of whom approved it.

In contrast to popular movements that promoted flat benefits financed by government revenues, the financing scheme and mildly progressive benefits arrangement that the CES officials designed for OAI were fairly conservative. Roosevelt and Secretary of the Treasury Henry A. Morgenthau insisted on the use of insurance-style financing principles. Armstrong and her colleagues planned for employers and employees to contribute to retirement funds according to a regressive combination of a flat payroll tax rate and a ceiling on taxable wages. Benefits would be figured according to a graduated scheme that corresponded to prior earnings, but those who had the lowest incomes would receive higher benefits in proportion to their earnings than would those who had earned more. Because only 25.4 percent of women in the late 1930s participated in the paid labor force at any given time, compared to 79 percent of men, and because women workers tended to have intermittent employment histories or to work part-time due to their domestic roles, they were much less likely than were men to qualify for the work-related programs (Mettler 1998, 26).

Given widespread support for expansion of old-age pensions and because OAI would take some years to establish, the CES bestowed on Old Age Assistance the prominent position of Title I in the legislative proposal. Planned as a federal grant-in-aid to the states, the program was designed to spur states that had not done so already to create programs for the elderly, while prompting states that had already acted to boost their benefit levels. National government would be required to provide funds for one-half of the benefits, up to fifteen dollars per month. In order to receive federal monies, states would be required to implement programs statewide rather than only in certain localities.

The design of unemployment insurance triggered more controversy than did all the other components of the Social Security Act combined. Policy leaders battled over the degree of national authority and uniformity that such a program should feature. Perkins and top CES officials espoused a tax-offset scheme in which employers would be subject to a uniform national payroll tax but individual states themselves would have administrative authority. States could opt for a plan that featured specific accounts for each business (a plant-reserves approach) or a pooled-funds approach. CES staff, the Advisory Counsel, and, once again, Barbara Armstrong all favored a more fully national system. As a compromise, they offered support for a "subsidy plan" in which states would have to comply with administrative standards established by the federal government. In the end, Perkins pushed CES members to decide the issue, and they opted for the tax-offset arrangements, requiring all employers to pay an unemployment tax on covered employees but leaving all matters regarding benefit levels and eligibility criteria to the individual states.

Policy officials also aimed to build upon mothers' pensions, state-level programs aimed at assisting mothers and children who had lost their male breadwinner. Such programs enjoyed a positive reputation, and officials believed that their inclusion within the Social Security Act would help gain political support for the more unfamiliar features of the package. Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) was planned in the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor, whose leaders had long argued that national government could play an important role in modernizing social programs by offering funds to states and elevating standards. Katharine Lenroot, acting chief of the bureau and the daughter of a Wisconsin state legislator, drafted the program in collaboration with Martha Eliot, chief medical officer. They designed a federal grant-in-aid program that would enhance and extend mothers' pensions by offering federal funds to assist those states that planned statewide programs in keeping with federal rules. At the same time, states would retain considerable authority for administering their programs. Lenroot and Eliot hoped that such arrangements would promote the development and professionalization of state-level welfare departments generally. They also believed that

Message to Congress on Social Security, President Franklin Roosevelt, January 17, 1935

Three principles should be observed in legislation on [social security]. First, the system adopted . . . should be self-sustaining in the sense that funds for the payment of insurance benefits should not come from the proceeds of general taxation. Second, excepting in old-age insurance, actual management should be left to the States subject to standards established by the Federal Government. Third, sound financial management of the funds . . . should be assured by retaining Federal control over all funds. . . .

I recommend the following types of legislation looking to economic security:

1. Unemployment compensation.
2. Old-age benefits, including compulsory and voluntary annuities.
3. Federal aid to dependent children through grants to States for the support of existing mothers' pension systems and for services for the protection and care of homeless, neglected, dependent, and crippled children.
4. Additional Federal aid to State and local public health agencies and the strengthening of the Federal Public Health Service.

. . . An unemployment compensation system should be constructed in such a way as to afford every practicable aid and incentive toward the larger purpose of employment stabilization.

This can be helped by the intelligent planning of both public and private employment [and] by correlating the system with public employment so that a person who has exhausted his benefits may be eligible for some form of public work. . . .

In the important field of security for our old people, it seems necessary to adopt three principles: First, non-contributory old-age pensions for those who are now too old to build up their own insurance. . . . Second, compulsory contributory annuities which in time will establish a self-supporting system. . . . Third, voluntary contributory annuities by which individual initiative can increase the annual amounts received in old age. . . .

We cannot afford to neglect the plain duty before us. I strongly recommend action to attain the objectives sought in this report.

the educational component of the program, through which social workers would instruct poor women in child rearing and in domestic skills, was essential and would be handled best by local officials.

In Congress, the administration's bill was considered by the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, both dominated by southern Democrats. Throughout the New Deal years, southern congressmembers offered strong support for federal spending but opposed measures that might threaten the prevailing racial hierarchy. Arguing for states' rights, they consistently sought to limit the extent of national programs within the Social Security Act and to undermine CES efforts to impose national standards on the states. Following warnings from Secretary Morgenthau about the potential administrative difficulties involved in providing social insurance to agricultural, domestic, and temporary workers, the House committee dropped such workers from coverage in OAI. Given patterns of occupational segregation, these exclusions disproportionately withheld old-age insurance from African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. Women of all races similarly were deprived of coverage when religious and nonprofit organizations successfully argued that they could not survive if they had to cover their employees,

President Roosevelt signs Social Security Bill, 1935. (Library of Congress)

who were predominantly women who worked as teachers, nurses, and social workers. All such exclusions under OAI were applied to UI as well, and in addition, workers employed twenty weeks or fewer per year were dropped from coverage.

The House Ways and Means Committee proceeded to make the public assistance measures even more reliant on state-level authority than administration officials had planned by weakening some of the few federal standards the CES had included in the bill. Members voted to strike language that would have mandated that states provide minimum benefits, for "assistance at least great enough to provide . . . a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health." Instead, states were left with considerable discretion, required only to provide assistance "as far as practicable under the conditions in each State" (S. 1130, sec. 42, Seventy-fourth Cong., 1st sess., quoted in Abbott 1966, 279). ADC benefits were set at an especially low level and did not include benefits for mothers, and the matching principle only required the federal government to pay one-third of what states offered, compared to the one-half the federal government paid under OAA. In addition, representatives abolished requirements that civil servants charged with administering Social Security Act programs be hired according to merit system principles. Finally, Congress insisted that a quasi-independent board be established to administer the national components of programs, quashing CES plans for the Department of Labor to be in charge. Overwhelming majorities of each house voted in favor of the bill, and President Roosevelt signed it into law on August 14, 1935.

The Social Security Board (SSB) was established as the agency charged with overseeing the

Presidential Statement Signing the Social Security Act, Franklin D. Roosevelt, August 14, 1935

Today a hope of many years' standing is in large part fulfilled. The civilization of the past hundred years, with its startling industrial changes, has tended more and more to make life insecure. Young people have come to wonder what would be their lot when they came to old age. The man with a job has wondered how long the job would last.

This social security measure gives at least some protection to thirty millions of our citizens who will reap direct benefits through unemployment compensation, through old-age pensions and through increased services for the protection of children and the prevention of ill health.

We can never insure one hundred percent of the population against one hundred percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age.

This law, too, represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built but is by no means complete. It is a structure intended to lessen the force of possible future depressions. It will act as a protection to future Administrations against the necessity of going deeply into debt to furnish relief to the needy. The law will flatten out the peaks and valleys of deflation and of inflation. It is, in short, a law that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness.

I congratulate all of you ladies and gentlemen, all of you in the Congress, in the executive departments and all of you who come from private life, and I thank you for your splendid efforts in behalf of this sound, needed and patriotic legislation.

If the Senate and the House of Representatives in this long and arduous session had done nothing more than pass this Bill, the session would be regarded as historic for all time.

administration of Social Security Act programs at the national level. Arthur Altmeyer was appointed chair of the SSB. Under his leadership, the agency quickly became a major player in steering the subsequent development of the law.

Over the next few years, the future of Old Age Insurance appeared in doubt. The distribution of benefits was not scheduled to begin until 1942, though collection of payroll taxes would commence in 1937. Leaders of the Republican Party and the business community assailed the financing arrangement that permitted the federal treasury to hold the high levels of government reserves that accumulated from contributions to the program. Meanwhile, the public assistance program for the elderly began to flourish, as more than 7,000 Townsend clubs created a fervor in many states for generous benefits and for broader coverage than the law required. SSB officials became concerned that OAA would thwart the development of the more fiscally conservative contributory program.

The Senate Finance Committee recommended the formation of an Advisory Council to study the possibility of alterations to the existing law. The council was chaired by J. Douglas Brown, who had assisted Armstrong in formulating OAI for the CES. Altmeyer offered the committee recommendations that would liberalize OAI in some regards, making it more generous and expansive than the 1935 law had permitted.

The Advisory Council of 1937–1938 planned several measures to transform the national, contributory program into the primary source of social benefits for the elderly. The council suggested that the full government reserve plan, under attack from all sides, be abandoned in favor of a pay-as-you-go financing system assisted by government revenues. It advised that benefits should commence earlier than planned, in 1940 instead of 1942. As a means of increasing average benefits, the council proposed changing the benefit formula to relate to average monthly wages before retirement rather than to average cumulative wages.

Most fundamentally, the Advisory Council proposed an immense expansion of OAI program coverage that would include benefits for the wives of retired beneficiaries and for the widows and children of deceased beneficiaries. Council members understood such benefits not as a social right for women but, rather, as a means of strengthening men's capacity to perform their assigned gender role of providing for their families, even after their deaths. The Advisory Council proposed that familial benefits be correlated directly to the benefit levels of primary beneficiaries. The wage-oriented structure of taxes and benefits would remain intact, with payments for wives and widows scheduled to be less than husbands' benefits but also graduated on the basis of husbands' former earnings. Retired workers whose wives were sixty-five or older were to receive "supplementary allowances" amounting to an extra percentage of the benefits for their wives. Widows were to receive benefits equal to three-quarters of the benefits their husbands would have received.

Although including married women in the contributory program on a noncontributory basis, the council also proposed to disqualify those same women from receiving benefits based on their own participation in the paid workforce. The system would be organized so that a married woman would be eligible for either a wife's allowance or a benefit based on her own previous earnings, whichever would be larger. Given the differential in average wages between men and women, women's earned benefits would typically be smaller than 50 percent of their husbands'. In opting for the wives' allowance, however, they would gain nothing from the payroll taxes they themselves had paid into the system. No provisions were made for spousal or survivors' benefits for husbands, denying working women the opportunity to provide for their husbands in retirement or death.

Congress readily enacted the recommendations as law, so women married to men covered by OAI became beneficiaries of OASI. The rules for coverage of wives and widows did not require evidence of reproductive labor but, rather, were based entirely on marital status in relation to covered men. Divorced women were excluded from coverage, and states were given flexibility regarding recognition of common-law marriages and waiting periods after divorce before a new marriage would be recognized. Also, new stipulations about minimum participation in the contributory program meant that workers who earned especially low wages or worked on a part-time basis—disproportionately men of color and women—became more likely to be excluded from direct coverage in the contributory program.

The amendments of 1939 did not change the national government's authority in the contributory program for the elderly. In the course of implementation, OAI became striking for its national uniformity, distinct from the other programs. Although occupational and earning criteria and marital status were the only distinctions formally inscribed in law, they had lasting implications in terms of race and gender. The mostly white, male primary beneficiaries enjoyed the advantages of clear, impartial, and routinized procedures administered by a single tier of government. In addition, those women who were married to covered men became endowed with measures of security—albeit at lower levels than their partners—in a realm where standardized procedures were the norm and where benefits were considered a right.

Although Old Age Assistance had originally been understood as an honorable program aimed to reward elderly people for their earlier service to society, over time, coverage became increasingly stigmatizing. Owing to its grassroots support, OAA benefits remained higher on average than benefits under the contributory old-age program until 1950, by which time national administrative officials had pushed successfully to enhance the latter program. The 1939 amendments made the OAA's procedural rules more demanding by giving states authority to use means testing to determine program benefit levels. Eligibility standards and benefits varied substantially from one state to another, and decisions about coverage were made by social workers who exercised a high degree of discretion. Over time, the differences in coverage and delivery between old-age and survivors' insurance, on the one hand, and old-age assistance, on the other, stratified the fates of women, depending largely on their race and marital status, and of men, depending on their race and occupational status.

The politics of implementation transformed Unemployment Insurance into a program that was experienced very differently depending upon one's employment status, and consequently, upon one's sex and race. Administrators worked successfully to improve the level and duration of benefits for those at the upper end of the wage scale, mostly white men. States balked, however, when the SSB urged them to raise benefits for low-paid workers, meaning most women as well as most men of color. In addition, while the eligibility status of white males was generally determined on the basis of the national rules alone, states developed an extra set of eligibility hurdles that applied to low-wage workers and women, in particular, when they sought to qualify for benefits. One variant of the state-level rules measured "attachment to the labor force" on the basis of recent work history and earnings levels and thus discriminated in a subtle manner. Another set of rules denied benefits to individuals whose unemployment was related to "domestic reasons," such as pregnancy, childbirth, or marital obligations; these directly disqualified women on the basis of their gender roles. As a result, for well-paid, mostly white male beneficiaries, UI benefits were effectively nationalized and standardized, but for low-wage workers, especially women, the benefits were administered entirely at the state level, where applicants encountered a labyrinth of eligibility rules that made access to benefits difficult.

ADC became, in the course of implementation, the program least able to extend rights of social citizenship to its beneficiaries. It was the most decentralized of all of the major programs in the Social Security Act, providing states with the least incentive and assistance to develop programs and to raise standards. Though the policy design of OAA was not very different from that of ADC, OAA benefited at least initially from strong grassroots support on the part of the Townsend organization and other groups struggling to improve conditions for the elderly. Lacking such support, ADC benefits grew little, and the administration of the program came to take on the worst features of the mothers' pensions program. In determining client eligibility, for example, "suitable home" rules were used to scrutinize the lives of potential beneficiaries, evaluating their child-rearing and housekeeping abilities and the school and church attendance of their children. In addition, some states and localities used "man in the house" rules to withdraw aid from women suspected of or found to have "male callers." Such investigations were often conducted through "midnight raids" by local officials (Bell 1965).

Over time, the Social Security Act was altered again, as Congress included more of the workforce in the contributory programs and later the courts disallowed some forms of discretion in the public assistance programs. Throughout the mid-twentieth century, coverage within the state-run public assistance programs became increasingly inferior to coverage under OASI and to higher wage earners' experience of UI. As a result, the women and minority men still disproportionately relegated to such programs were governed differently as social citizens than were those who had gained access to nationalized social benefits. Even today, African American women are less likely than white women to qualify for spouse and widow benefits, and when they do qualify, the racial wage gap means that their benefits are significantly lower than those of white women. In addition, middle- and upper-class women are far more likely than lower-class women to receive spousal or widows' benefits; in effect, the benefits heighten class inequality (Meyer 1996). The framework of the American welfare state, as established by the Social Security Act, has perpetuated poverty among some social groups even as it has lifted or kept others out of poverty.

Suzanne Mettler

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Federalism; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Great Depression and New Deal; Means Testing and Universalism; Old Age; Racism; Social Security; Townsend Movement; Unemployment Insurance; Welfare Administration; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Social Service Review

First published in March 1927, the *Social Service Review* continues to be the leading journal in the field of social work. Sophonisba Breckinridge and Edith Abbott, professors at the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago, founded the journal as a venue for research about social work and social problems. Reflecting the interests of Breckinridge and Abbott, who had both earned Ph.D.s at the University of Chicago and had spent time at the Hull House settlement, the journal emphasized research on social problems and advocacy for specific welfare policies. It published work in sociology, economics, political science, and history as well as contributions from social workers active in the field.

During the Depression, the journal, then edited by Edith Abbott's sister Grace Abbott, advocated an expansion of public welfare, federal rather than local administration of New Deal programs, and the hiring of social workers to run relief agencies. In the wartime and postwar periods, the journal continued to call for a larger role for the federal government in welfare, including international relief. With the push for greater professionalization of social work in the 1950s, the journal redefined itself as a publication by and for social workers, including more articles on the casework process and on social work education. At the same time, it remained the most scholarly of social work journals, and in the following decades it returned to its earlier multidisciplinary emphasis.

Breckinridge's article from the first issue, excerpted below, shows the journal's support for federal welfare policy and institutions.

Sarah Case

See also: Hull House; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); Philanthropy; Settlement Houses; Social Work; Welfare Administration

In substantially every state there is some provision for meeting [public welfare] needs, but in no two states are the agencies alike; and the great variety and lack of uniformity of treatment . . . causes every suggestion of possible federal intervention to have a very great interest for the student of welfare problems. . . .

In a situation involving such a burden for the taxpayer, fraught with such danger for the helpless and inarticulate groups under care, and involving the right of every citizen to be assured that the standard of care and of expenditures for which as a taxpayer he is responsible is not below the standard set by modern humane and civilized communities, the possibility suggests itself of developing on a national scale the services which have proven reasonably effective on a state-wide scale and which could be enormously stimulated and assisted by the service of a national authority. The fundamental service is, of course, that of securing uniform accurate comparable records, intelligently analyzed and made use of to stimulate those states whose standards are especially low. None of the proposals for the creation of a national department of public welfare contemplates any service of this kind. It is, however, clear that until such records and reports are available and until an agency exists equipped to stimulate, to inform, to direct, and to guide a national program on the basis of a national body of fact analyzed with a national purpose in view, the American public-welfare administration must remain chaotic, fragmentary, uneven, and inadequate, possessing neither of those features to which it is entitled by its public character, namely, comprehensiveness and continuity. And nothing less than continuous, comprehensive, and progressive service in this field can be satisfactory to those who compose the professional group in social service.

Source: Sophonisba Breckinridge, "Frontiers of Control in Public Welfare Administration," *Social Service Review* 1, no. 1 (March 1927): 84, 98–99.

Social Surveys

Social surveys are the systematic collection of data on a specific subject. From approximately 1890 to 1935, social surveys in the United States often encompassed broad topics, a whole city, or a very large sample of a target population. After World War II, surveys increasingly became more quantitative, narrower in their definition of populations, and more focused. Surveys were initially relatively infrequent events and were conducted face-to-face, but surveys now permeate daily life and increasingly occur over the telephone.

The earliest social surveys were done by governments taking a census of their people. Great Britain conducted an early count of its population and was the origin of many concepts associated with empiricism and methodology to collect data. Starting in 1790, the U.S. census has occurred every ten years and provided information affecting government services and funding.

In France from the middle to late nineteenth century, the work of Frederick LePlay focused on family budgets and social amelioration. At the end of this period, Emile Durkheim attacked LePlay's approach, and Durkheim's emphasis on objective science combined with statistics was accepted as more valid than LePlay's applied work. Durkheim's definition was increasingly accepted by many survey researchers in the United States during the 1930s.

In Britain, Charles Booth's seventeen-volume study of *The Life and Labour of the People in London* (1889–1903) became a landmark survey that mapped the relationship among poverty, work, community, and social life. Booth's work influenced many sociological surveys until the mid-1930s. This can be clearly seen in the seven-volume *New Survey of London Life and Labour* (1930–1934) conducted by the London School of Economics.

Booth's work profoundly influenced the writing of Hull House residents, who surveyed their Chicago neighborhood to help people in poverty understand their social patterns and become empowered to initiate social changes. *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895) helped legitimate what is called "the social survey movement," which followed this model of connecting everyday people with data collection about social issues affecting them. Women played a central role in these surveys and in using them to empower the people whose lives were studied, as well as to advocate for social reform. Thousands of social surveys were conducted; some of the most famous ones concerned urban crime. By linking the occurrence of social problems to objectively measured social and economic conditions, the survey movement played an important role in debunking the widely held notion that poverty and other social "pathologies" could be blamed on the behavior of the poor.

The government often helped organize and fund these massive studies. Thus, the nineteen-volume *Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage-Earners in the United States* (1910–1913) was a model of such an effort. Government bureaus—for women, children, immigrants, and labor—amassed data and connected it to governmental decisions and politics. Women often staffed these bureaus and continued the social survey tradition in a wider public arena.

A split between academically based social sciences and other fields, such as social work and urban planning, appeared during the 1920s and 1930s. These groups debated the nature of objectivity and expertise and the relationships to "respondents" and funding. Philanthropic foundations such as the Russell Sage, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations also increasingly paid for massive social surveys over this period.

Until the mid-1930s, broadly defined social surveys often included a combination of firsthand investigation using the case method and statistics to analyze various aspects of a community. This blend of qualitative ground-level research and more detached, quantitative research had theoretical and ameliorative consequences—among them, a capacity to interpret statistical findings through the lens of day-to-day community experience. By the 1930s, the use of strictly quantitative techniques was becoming more common and was increasingly associated with a Durkheimian definition of science, "objectivity," and the expert. Survey researchers less frequently allied themselves with the poor and the populations studied and increasingly aligned themselves with powerful interests.

This distance between researchers and respondents rapidly increased after World War II. The growth in statistical sampling techniques and computers combined to popularize a redefinition of social surveys as methods to collect numerical data on a population. Researchers and other experts in politics, government, and policymaking used these data with little or no input from the poor.

Survey institutions emerged during this period and focused on obtaining funding for continuous surveying of many groups, particularly those experiencing what experts called "social problems." They defined these pathologies as emerging from the poor and not from the economy, racism, or sexism. Concepts such as the "culture of poverty" explained the poor as people with faulty ways of life and ideas. Ghettoization of segregated populations of the poor, of African Americans, and of female-headed households also grew. During the 1960s, the differences between social surveyors and the poor sometimes exploded into angry confrontations. Poor people increasingly suspected the motives of researchers who took data from the people they studied but returned little if anything.

In the 1970s, a "poverty research industry" became more established and continues to this day. This bureaucratic enterprise has increasing prestige within the academy, which sponsors survey institutions to garner billions of dollars in grants from a wide range of agencies, foundations, and private donors. Academic training is allied with and often subsidized by this process.

On a smaller scale, a "participatory action research movement" coexists with this industry and continues the alliance between social surveyors and community interests. Feminist methods for data collection, problem solving, and politics also create an alternative arrangement between experts and the poor. Once again, community action aligns with training and social research for and by the poor, which they can use for their own liberation. Such training increasingly crosses national boundaries and is part of the international effort to decolonize nation-states. Massive amounts of data are increasingly available over the Internet and can potentially help poor people gain access to social facts affecting their lives. These vital efforts are offset, however, by the widespread conservative attitudes and politics that dominate the contemporary poverty research industry.

Mary Jo Deegan

See also: Hull House; *Hull-House Maps and Papers; The Philadelphia Negro;* Pittsburgh Survey; *Poverty;* Poverty Research; *Survey* and *Survey Graphic*

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Social Work

Social workers help individuals, families, groups, and communities deal with social problems and individual difficulties, including poverty. Social work is a broad profession with many subgroups and areas of practice. It is part of a social service system in which informal, voluntary, for-profit, and public sectors interact in complex ways. Although social workers vary in the methods they use, the populations they work with, the settings in which they practice, and levels of professional education, they are drawn together by a common code of ethics and a basic mission and set of values. This mission includes helping meet "the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty" (National Association of Social Workers [NASW] 1999, 1). Historically, social work was the predominant profession working with poor people, yet controversies over the centrality of this role to social work and about the best way to help the poor have haunted the profession from its early years to the present.

Several major debates have dominated the history of social work. One relates to the appropriate balance between professionalization and service. Another is whether problems like poverty are best dealt with by working with individuals and families or by focusing on the community and the political arena. A third is about the efficacy of public versus private approaches to meeting individual and group needs.

Although "doing good"—in the form of almsgiving, charitable acts, and providing shelter for the less fortunate—has been going on for centuries, social work as a profession first began to emerge in the United States in the late 1800s. From the 1860s on, America rapidly transformed itself from a largely rural society to an urban industrial giant. Rural Americans and European immigrants were drawn to the cities, seeking streets of gold. What they often found were low-paying jobs and crowded slums. As poverty and social problems grew, Catholic and Protestant clergy and laypeople developed systems for visiting the poor in their homes, offering moral guidance and attention to economic needs. Voluntary associations of both white and African American women created orphanages, community libraries, and similar institutions and promoted social reforms. At the same time, states experimented with a new "scientific institution," epitomized by the large, well-regulated asylum for the mentally ill. These three movements—visitation of the poor, women's club work, and creation of the scientific institution—led to new ideas and techniques for responding to such social problems as poverty. This in turn bolstered a belief among Americans that effective responses were possible.

By the 1880s, two new movements had emerged, building on the above precedents. The Charity Organisation Society (COS) focused on a new "scientific" charity, while the social settlement labored to reform society and to strengthen urban communities. The COS developed in reaction to the proliferation of small private charities. The movement's founders felt that the home visitors of those charities failed to carefully investigate recipients and that the charities lacked coordination. To keep poor families from receiving help from multiple sources, the COS sought to coordinate the work of all charities in a particular locality through a central registry of applicants and recipients. COS promoters believed that poverty was caused by individual defects, such as idleness and drunkenness. Haphazard charity only furthered the dependency of the poor. The solution was to develop a cadre of voluntary "friendly visitors," generally well-to-do women, who would investigate families, offer assistance in finding jobs and locating short-term support from churches and other sources, and serve as good moral examples for the poor.

As the movement grew, it became apparent that the COS approach could not stem the growth of poverty. Charitable societies found themselves giving direct cash payments to the poor. Also, as the pool of volunteer visitors became insufficient to meet the need, charities began replacing them with paid workers, who were a major forerunner of professional social workers. Like the volunteers before them, they were chiefly white Protestant women, often college-educated, for whom paid charity work was a socially acceptable endeavor. The administrators of the charity societies were almost entirely men.

The social settlement was another response to poverty and rapid urban growth, focusing particularly on immigrants. The prototype of this new invention was Toynbee Hall, a live-in laboratory in a London slum where young male university students studied the lives of the poor and engaged in social reform. Translated to the United States, the model appealed particularly to young, college-educated women, but unlike the COS, both women and men worked in and headed the new settlements. Jane Addams's Hull House, established in Chicago in 1889, exemplified the combination of research, service, and reform that characterized much of the U.S. settlement movement. Beginning with the notion of becoming good neighbors to the poor, Hull House residents soon discovered structural elements of poverty: exploitation of immigrant workers, inadequate wages, and substandard housing. They responded by establishing a day nursery, a club for working girls, cultural programs, and meeting space for neighborhood political groups. They took reform beyond the neighborhood, pressuring the city to improve housing and services (for example, garbage collection), supporting labor unions, and becoming involved in local politics. Hull House tried to support the cultural heritage of its immigrant neighbors and established the Immigrants' Protective League to deal with exploitation.

Not all settlements were like Hull House. Some focused on Americanizing the immigrants in their communities and were less committed to social reform. Most, including Hull House, did not accept African Americans in their programs, although Jane Addams was an early member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. African Americans established their own settlement houses as part of a parallel social welfare system that discrimination had forced upon them.

Most settlements focused on the social rather than individual causes of poverty. This put them at odds with charity workers, who considered settlements an ineffective response to individual dependency. But the rift between the groups has been overemphasized by those seeking neat ideological cubbyholes. For example, COS leader Josephine Shaw Lowell appreciated the importance of structural factors in the poverty of certain types of people, including widows and orphans. Mary Richmond, the influential director of the Baltimore COS, deplored the "'socially mischievous' antagonism between the social worker and the social reformer" (quoted in Trattner 1999, 256–257) and forecast modern social work's stress on the interaction between the social and the personal in her call for the "sympathetic study of the individual in his social environment" (quoted in Leighninger 2000, 54). As the two groups drew closer together, the notion of a distinct occupation—social work—began taking shape. A rudimentary form of public welfare social work emerged with the hiring of experienced workers from private charities to help administer the new mothers' pensions programs, established in many states by 1915 (Crenson 1998). Hospitals and schools also employed people who by then were beginning to be called "social workers." Many of these workers mingled at the national meetings of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections (NCCC), a gathering place for administrators and staff members of state institutions, private charity organizations, and settlements. Work with individuals and families, now called "casework," became more systematic. Finally, formal training for the new field had arrived; close to twenty professional schools of social work existed by 1920.

This new field was hardly cohesive, however. It struggled both with a definition of its boundaries and scope—what common threads ran through its endeavors?—and with the question of whether it constituted a "true profession." In an attempt to find answers to these questions, the NCCC invited Abraham Flexner, an authority on graduate professional education, to address the 1915 conference. Flexner's speech "Is Social Work a Profession?" catalogued the reasons why the answer had to be "no." Flexner noted the vastness of the field, its lack of clear and specific goals, and the fact that social work had not yet developed a meaningful educational program. Most important, he observed that social workers dealt with their cases by summoning the necessary experts, such as the doctor, the teacher, or the legislator, rather than by applying their own expertise. Social workers were mediators, not independent professionals (Flexner 1915). Flexner's remarks energized many social workers in their pursuit of professional standing. They strove to develop specialized knowledge and techniques. Since the most accessible and prestigious sources in this area, such as psychological theories, focused on the individual, the recent rapprochement between reformers and caseworkers began to fray. In the 1920s, casework was in the ascendancy, the country was less tolerant of social reform, and the private social agency became the most prestigious setting for social work practice. Although settlements still existed and although social workers were also employed in public welfare institutions, hospitals, and other settings, the social agency set the tone for scientific professional development. Social workers still worked with the poor, but from a narrower perspective.

Events in the 1930s forced attention back to economic and social forces. Social workers were among the first to witness the toll the Great Depression took, not only on the traditional poor but also on working- and middle-class families. Social workers recently schooled in the wonders of Sigmund Freud found individual casework approaches futile in the face of hunger and unemployment. As they faced clients much like themselves, they rediscovered the importance of structural factors in dependency. Social workers joined other groups in demanding a federal response to unemployment. The field developed a radical, union-based wing, but even the mainstream professional organization, the American Association of Social Workers, adopted a program in 1933 that stressed "the redistribution of wealth and power through reconstruction of socio-economic institutions" (Weismiller and Rome 1995, 2307).

Social workers testified in congressional hearings on public relief, and most supported President Franklin D. Roosevelt's creation of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) under fellow social worker Harry Hopkins. But the particular interest of many lay in institutionalized programs that would create permanent systems of support for children, the elderly, and those with disabilities. The School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago was one of the few schools that had promoted public social work in the 1920s. Dean Edith Abbott felt the profession "should provide scientific knowledge about social welfare problems and lead the way in improving institutional responses" to poverty and unemployment (quoted in Leighninger 1987, 79–80). Edith's sister Grace Abbott headed the U.S. Children's Bureau, established in 1912 to investigate the health and well-being of the country's children. With the backing of secretary of labor and social worker Frances Perkins, the Abbotts and other social workers played key roles in developing the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) portion of the Social Security Act of 1935.

Another social worker, Jane Hoey, directed the new ADC program along with programs to provide assistance to the poor elderly and the blind. Hoey promoted hiring professional, master's-level social workers for the implementation of these programs in the states. Large numbers of social workers, trained and untrained, had been drawn into the public system under the FERA, which did not allow private agencies to dispense public funds. Master's-level social workers were in short supply. To meet the staffing demands of the new public services, many state universities developed undergraduate social work programs. The existence of two degree levels caused much dissension within social work; the bachelor's of social work (B.S.W.) was finally accepted as a professional degree by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in 1969.

In the aftermath of the New Deal, most private agencies retreated to family casework and individual counseling. Public social work struggled to find its role: Was it to engage in casework or to provide economic aid and help clients develop resources for dealing with the structural causes of poverty? The casework response predominated, but a somewhat broader approach emerged in the 1962 "service amendments" to the Social Security Act. Social workers, along with social policy experts like Wilbur Cohen and Elizabeth Wickenden, took center stage in developing this new approach. The amendments provided federal matches to states for rehabilitative services, including casework, foster care, and community work programs.

However, the service approach was soon eclipsed by the community-building and social action focus of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. Although individual social workers engaged in community organizing and worked in programs like Head Start and the Job Corps, the profession as a whole was not prominent in shaping the new antipoverty agenda. Sensitized by the civil rights movement, social workers did increase awareness of the influence of racism on America's public welfare system. And at the end of the 1960s, NASW amended its bylaws to stress the profession's obligation to use "both social work methods . . . and social action" to prevent poverty (quoted in Trattner 1999, 345).

The last several decades have presented continued challenges to social work's attempt to promote effective responses to poverty. Reagan-era attacks on social programs and the abandonment of much of the public welfare safety net under President Bill Clinton have engaged the profession in many rearguard actions. Today, only 1 percent of NASW members work in public welfare. The majority work in private agencies, and about 15 percent engage in full-time private clinical practice. Yet these figures are misleading. The public welfare and Medicaid systems now contract out much of their work with poor clients to private agency and solo practitioners. The question is not whether social workers have abandoned the poor but whether they are engaged in a systematic effort to grapple with the causes of poverty. Current lobbying for sensible welfare reform by NASW and other social work groups holds some hope that such an effort may yet emerge.

Leslie Leighninger

See also: Charity Organization Societies; Hull House; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); Settlement Houses; U.S. Children's Bureau

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Socialist Party

Founded in 1901, the Socialist Party of America (SPA) addressed the questions of poverty and social welfare through electoral politics. Socialists did not accept the common belief that most poverty was due to such individual failings as intemperance, vice, or laziness. They largely blamed poverty on capitalism's inherent inequalities. They saw poverty as inevitable in a society organized around the appropriation of workers' labor by their employers, allowing a few to accumulate huge fortunes at the expense of many. For socialists, charity was not the answer. Instead, they believed that the social ownership of the means of production would eradicate the poverty of progress. Robert Hunter's characterization of the poor in *Poverty* (1904) influenced many socialists.

The Socialist Party's first campaign for the presidency was a ticket of Eugene Debs and Benjamin Hanford. Eugene Debs founded the Socialist Party of America. (Library of Congress)

The Socialist Party's predecessor, the Social Democracy of America, initially looked to communitarianism to help the poor. Its leaders, ex-directors of the American Railway Union, devised a scheme, called "colonization," to pack a sparsely populated state like Washington with socialist sympathizers and take over its political infrastructure. They endorsed colonization because it offered a promising means to help railroad workers who had been blacklisted after the 1894 Pullman Strike.

Colonization quickly proved unfeasible, and socialists turned exclusively to electoral politics. They disagreed, however, as to what this meant. Some viewed it as an educational strategy with the long-term goal of building a revolutionary, class-conscious proletariat; others viewed it as a real opportunity to win elections in the present. This disagreement had major implications for how socialists would manifest their social program. Were they to present a platform with immediate demands, which offered the possibility of short-term solutions to capitalism's worst abuses, or one without them, focusing instead on socialism's ultimate goal of establishing the cooperative commonwealth? They decided on the former course, but not without conflict. They advocated collective ownership, unemployment relief, shorter working days, the abolition of child labor, and compulsory insurance.

During the SPA's heyday, Eugene V. Debs served as its presidential standard-bearer. He ran in 1900, 1904, 1908, 1912, and 1920. He envisioned a society where workers would receive the full fruits of their toil and the opportunity to enjoy those fruits. In his writings and speeches, Debs railed against capitalism for perpetuating a system of stark inequality. He decried the deleterious effects of poverty not only on the body but on the human spirit. His outspokenness brought him the scorn of President Theodore Roosevelt, who called Debs an "undesirable citizen."

It also led to his imprisonment in 1918 for an antiwar speech he gave in Canton, Ohio. At his sentencing hearing, he identified with those whom his accusers held in contempt: "While there is a lower class I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free" (quoted in Salvatore 1982, 295). He served three years. Prisoner 9653 ran the 1920 presidential campaign from his cell, receiving 3 percent of the total vote cast. Upon his release, he devoted himself to rebuilding the SPA and pushing for the penal system's overhaul. In his posthumously published book *Walls and Bars* (1927), Debs addressed the criminalization of poverty, arguing that poverty itself was responsible for a majority of incarcerations.

In 1910, Wisconsin voters elected the first socialist to congress, Victor L. Berger, signaling for many a new era in American politics. At its peak, in 1912, the SPA had 100,000 dues-paying members. That year, Debs received 900,000 votes, 6 percent of the total cast. The SPA had also made great inroads at the state and municipal levels. All told, over 1,000 socialists had been elected to public office, including 2 state senators, 17 state representatives, 56 mayors, 145 aldermen, and 160 councilmen. The party had 323 newspapers and periodicals spreading its message, including the *Appeal to Reason,* which had at its peak at least 400,000 weekly subscribers. In 1905, the *Appeal* serialized Upton Sinclair's *Jungle,* which prompted passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act the next year.

Socialism had a far greater impact than its numbers suggest. The socialist threat fueled labor and other reform efforts during the Progressive Era. An increasing number of business leaders and policymakers began to see that it was better to concede a little rather than to risk everything. Indeed, progressivism owed a great debt to socialism: Socialism both contributed to progressive programs and caused middle-class people, scared of the alternative, to vote for the reformists. Socialists made wages, working hours, pensions, and unemployment national political issues. They would remain matters of national debate for the rest of the century.

Government repression and factionalism led to the SPA's precipitous decline during and after World War I. Yet the movement did not die. Wisconsin constituents returned Berger to Congress three times during the 1920s. In 1928, Norman Thomas, the "conscience of America," became the party's new presidential standard-bearer. He had especially strong appeal among intellectuals and college students, whose support brought him over 800,000 votes in 1932. His platform more closely reflected what would soon become the New Deal than did Franklin D. Roosevelt's. Thomas used his prominence to bring national attention to the plight of southern sharecroppers and helped organize the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in 1934. After 1948, he supported Democratic presidential candidates.

The socialist legacy of Debs and Thomas remained alive largely through Michael Harrington, whose book *The Other America* (1962) inspired policymakers to take another look at the persistent problem of poverty. Harrington, like Thomas, supported Democratic Party candidates, looking to push their program further to the left. Refusing to acknowledge socialism's failure, Harrington remained committed to the idea that democratic social change was possible and, like his socialist forebears, used his speeches and writings to galvanize Americans to have a similar optimistic faith in humankind.

Jason D. Martinek

See also: Communist Party; *The Jungle; The Other America; Poverty;* Progressive Era and 1920s

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Society for the Prevention of Pauperism

Formed in 1818 in New York City, the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism sought to respond to the growing problem of poverty in the early republic through moral education of the poor. Poverty, the organization believed, represented both individual failing and a threat to social stability. The society's board of directors included five members of the Corporation of the City, allowing for public participation and the contribution of municipal funds. Reflecting the contemporary view that individuals were responsible for their own hardship, the society focused on improving character and teaching self-reliance. The group created committees to investigate what it viewed as the leading causes of poverty, including idleness, intemperance, lotteries, prostitution, pawnbrokers, gambling, ignorance, and charitable institutions. Like the later charity organization societies, they viewed charities that indiscriminately gave relief with skepticism, believing they encouraged dependency and further weakened recipients' moral fiber. Only friendly visiting and moral instruction, they maintained, would truly aid and uplift the poor.

The following, an excerpt from the "Report on the Subject of Pauperism to the New-York Society for the Prevention of Pauperism" (1818), reflects the combination of moral conviction and investigation that informed what was then considered the leading edge of charitable work.

Sarah Case

See also: Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Dependency; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Relief

We were not insensible of the serious and alarming evils that have resulted, in various places, from misguided benevolence, and imprudent systems of relief. We know that in Europe and America, where the greatest efforts have been made to provide for the sufferings of the poor, by high and even enormous taxation, those sufferings were increasing in a ratio much greater than the population, and were evidently augmented by the very means taken to subdue them.

We were fully prepared to believe, that without a radical change in the principles upon which public alms have been usually distributed, helplessness and poverty would continue to multiply—demands for relief would become more and more importunate, the numerical difference between those who are able to bestow charity and those who sue for it, would gradually diminish, until the present system must fall under its own irresistible pressure, prostrating perhaps, in its ruin, some of the pillars of social order. . . .

The great and leading principles, therefore, of every system of charity, ought to be, First, amply to relieve the unavoidable necessities of the poor; and Secondly, to lay the powerful hand of moral and legal restriction upon every thing that contributes, directly and necessarily, to introduce an artificial extent of suffering. . . .

The indirect causes of poverty are as numerous as the frailties and vices of men. They vary with constitution, with character, and with national and local habits. Some of them lie so deeply entrenched in the weakness and depravity of human nature, as to be altogether unassailable by mere political regulation. They can be reached in no other way, than by awakening the dormant and secret energies of moral feeling.

Source: "Report on the Subject of Pauperism to the New-York Society for the Prevention of Pauperism," February 4, 1818. Reprinted in of *First Annual Report*, Society for the Prevention of Pauperism in New York City, 1818, in June Axinn and Herman Levin, eds., *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response*

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Soup Kitchens

See Antihunger Coalitions; Food Banks; Hunger; Nutrition and Food Assistance; Salvation Army; Voluntarism

Southern Poverty Law Center

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), a nonprofit law firm in Montgomery, Alabama, was founded in 1971 by local attorneys Morris Dees and Joe Levin. From its inception, the SPLC's goal was to use law to address the roots of Black poverty, broadly defined. However, the SPLC is best known for its innovative litigation strategy to challenge hate groups, particularly the Ku Klux Klan. The center's $7 million judgment against the United Klans of America in 1987—and the SPLC's subsequent enforcement of that and other judgments—are widely acknowledged to have forced the Klan into bankruptcy, shutting down its open operations in the South.

Morris Dees, a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Law, had already made a name as a successful entrepreneur and book publisher when he decided to shift his professional focus to civil rights law. After selling his business, he used the proceeds to establish the SPLC with his law partner and fellow Alabaman, Joe Levin. Civil rights activist Julian Bond, a founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was the center's first president.

Early cases taken on by the SPLC focused on a range of issues, from defending poor Blacks against criminal prosecutions to integrating the local newspaper's weddings section and promoting sex equality. In 1973, Joe Levin argued *Frontiero v. Richardson* (411 U.S. 677 [1973]), a landmark women's rights case challenging benefits preferences given to men in the military, before the U.S. Supreme Court. More recently, the SPLC challenged the state of Alabama's reinstitution of prison chain gangs and, utilizing popular education techniques, developed a comprehensive tolerance education program.

The SPLC's Klanwatch project was started in 1980 to counteract the backlash against the civil rights movement that was fueling increased Klan activity. However, the center's courtroom successes against the Klan in the 1980s exposed Dees and other SPLC employees to retaliation. In 1983, the center's offices were set on fire by Klan members. Nevertheless, the SPLC continued its efforts, with Dees's direct-mail experience playing an important role in maintaining the center's financial stability.

As Klan activity in the South decreased as a result of the center's efforts, the SPLC focused more broadly on using litigation to combat hate crimes. For example, in 1989, the center sued three skinheads who clubbed to death an Ethiopian refugee in Portland, Oregon; in 1995, the SPLC sought to hold antiabortion leader John Burt liable for the death of David Gunn, a doctor shot and killed outside an abortion clinic. The latter case was settled prior to trial for an undisclosed amount. However, anti-Klan litigation is still a major focus of the SPLC's litigation. In 1998, the center secured a $37.8 million judgment against the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, based on their destruction of churches.

The center's office in Montgomery is the site of the Civil Rights Memorial, which celebrates the memory of forty individuals who died during the civil rights movement. The memorial was designed by Maya Lin, creator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Martha F. Davis

See also: Civil Rights Movement; Legal Aid/Legal Services; Poverty Law

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Speenhamland

The term "Speenhamland" refers both to a specific period in the history of the English poor laws and to a particular welfare practice. The period encompasses the years between 1795 and 1834. The practice was for local parish officials to supplement the wages of rural workers to ensure that they could afford enough bread to feed all family members. Critics of the English poor laws insisted that this particular practice dominated relief practices across the entire historical period and that it produced catastrophic results: both a population explosion among the rural poor *and* a precipitous decline in rural wages. They have insisted that a measure intended to help the rural poor ended up hurting the very people that it was intended to help. However, scholarly work since the 1960s has undermined the claim both that wage supplements were widespread and that they had the consequences attributed to them.

England's "preindustrial welfare state" originated in the sixteenth century; it gave local governments—parish authorities—the responsibility to assist those without the means to support themselves. There was considerable variation both across localities and across time in the specific rules for providing assistance, but there was a long history of aiding the unemployed as well as orphans, the infirm, and the aged. As commercial activity intensified in the second half of the eighteenth century, there were significant increases in aggregate relief outlays, greater controversy, and more intense experimentation with new welfare policies.

In 1795, county squires in Speenhamland in Bedford County agreed to a measure to supplement the wages of agricultural workers. They established a minimum-income scale depending on family size and the price of bread. The idea was that wages would be supplemented by parish assistance when they fell below the minimum. However, the measure was passed when England faced the threat of famine because of two consecutive years of bad harvests and obstacles to expanding food imports. The rapid rise in the price of bread—the central item in both rural and urban working-class diets—had already led to food riots, and local authorities were desperate to calm the situation for fear that revolutionary action would jump the English Channel from France to England.

The use of a bread scale was only one of a variety of expedients that local authorities used to reduce the threat of widespread starvation and revolt. Some parishes used funds to purchase wheat that they resold to the poor at below-market prices, and there was also a dramatic expansion in private charitable efforts to feed the hungry. Parallel measures were also taken in 1802–1803 and in 1812, when similar conditions also produced dramatic increases in food prices. Historians generally agree, however, that most of these antifamine measures were of brief duration; they were abandoned as soon as prices returned to traditional levels.

Nevertheless, critics of the poor laws seized on the Speenhamland decision as indicating a fundamental shift in social policy. Their argument was that before Speenhamland, assistance was limited to groups who were outside the labor force: small children, the infirm, and the aged. Speenhamland marked an expansion of the recipient population to include men in their prime working years. This shift, critics alleged, "pauperized" rural workers because their income was no longer a direct consequence of their own work efforts. British philosopher

Thomas Malthus developed this critique of the poor laws—without specific references to Speenhamland—as early as 1798. His argument was taken up by both religious and secular writers, who agitated throughout this entire period for abolition of the system of poor relief.

But such a break in poor law practices did not actually happen in 1795; assistance to the able-bodied had a long history. Moreover, the claim that poor relief contributed to laziness or reduced work effort seems fanciful, since assistance was provided in small face-to-face communities. Nevertheless, these arguments gained greater force because of changes in the English countryside that occurred as the Napoleonic Wars wound down between 1813 and 1815. Except for famine years, the period from 1795 to 1813 had been relatively positive for the rural poor. The wartime economy led to an expansion of wheat production, and a tight labor market produced an upward trend in wages. But the end of the war brought both a significant contraction in wheat production and a dramatic increase in rural unemployment. Since many of the rural poor could no longer earn income in rural crafts or by grazing animals on the common, the result was intense hardship and another dramatic increase in poor law outlays as local authorities struggled to handle the distress. Assistance most often took the form of relief payments to the households of unemployed workers and a variety of schemes to put the unemployed to work on private farms or in public works projects.

Contemporary welfare critics tended to treat all these new forms of assistance as simple variants of the Speenhamland bread scale; they were seen as further indicators of the pauperization of the able-bodied. Moreover, these critics blamed the existence of surplus population not on structural changes in the economy but on increases in the birthrate, which they attributed to the perverse incentives of poor law policies. As Malthus had argued earlier, why should the poor limit their fertility when they were assured by the parish of additional assistance to keep their children alive?

These criticisms were systematically elaborated by the royal commission that investigated the English poor laws in 1834 and proposed much of the language of the New Poor Law that was enacted later in the same year. The new legislation sought to abolish all outdoor relief for the able-bodied, and it established the principle of "less eligibility": The conditions for receiving assistance had to be less attractive than the jobs that were available on the labor market. The logic of the Royal Commission Report has been cited repeatedly in campaigns against outdoor relief in both England and the United States in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

But the claims that poor relief in the Speenhamland period had perverse consequences are not supported by historical evidence. First, the bread scale was not actually implemented on a broad enough basis to have had the consequences that are attributed to it. Second, in both the periods of famine and of high unemployment, the basic reality is that poor law outlays helped the rural poor survive periods of extreme hardship that resulted from economic processes over which they had no control. Third, the claim that poor relief contributed to higher fertility rates is still unproven after more than 200 years. In fact, the evidence is quite clear that birthrates began to decline well before the change in welfare regimes in 1834.

Fred Block

See also: Malthusianism; Poor Laws; Relief; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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See The Grapes of Wrath

Sterilization Abuse

See Birth Control; Eugenics

Strikes

See Great Depression and New Deal; Industrialization; Nineteenth Century; Service and Domestic Workers; Trade/Industrial Unions

Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal assistance program providing cash payments to the nation's elderly and disabled poor. Administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), the program uses eligibility criteria and benefit levels that are uniform throughout the nation, and its payments—like Social Security benefits—are indexed to rise with inflation. In 2001, SSI paid benefits averaging $394 per month to approximately 6.7 million individuals, including 880,000 disabled children (Social Security Administration 2001, 33, 34). SSI is a rarity among American income support programs in that it provides a nationally uniform income floor for the nation's poor—albeit one open only to a limited number of the poor.

Congress created SSI in 1972 by nationalizing the existing state public assistance programs for the aged, blind, and disabled. Legislators wanted SSI to serve as an income supplement for Social Security beneficiaries whose social insurance checks were too meager to provide an adequate income. SSI, therefore, was modeled on Social Security's retirement and disability insurance programs, in that individuals qualify for SSI if they are over age sixty-five or if they have a long-term physical or mental impairment that prevents employment. Children are eligible for SSI if they have a "marked and severe" impairment. As is the case with Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), state agencies conduct the determinations of disability for SSI. Unlike Social Security, SSI applicants need not show a history of work and payroll contributions. Instead, they must meet the program's income and assets tests; benefits are paid from general revenues rather than from the retirement or disability trust funds. In order to qualify for SSI, a person must not have income that exceeds the maximum federal benefit level (currently $540 for an individual and $817 for a couple per month) or assets valued over $2,000 for individuals and $3,000 for couples. Because eligibility for SSI does not require previous attachment to the workforce, the program's disabled recipients tend to be younger than beneficiaries of SSDI.

When SSI was enacted, lawmakers expected it to serve a largely aged clientele, and in 1974, almost two-thirds of recipients were elderly. Over time, however, SSI developed into a program primarily for the disabled. Today four out of every five SSI recipients are eligible on the basis of disability, not age (Social Security Administration 2001, 19). Among disabled recipients of SSI, two-thirds do not receive Social Security checks but instead rely on SSI as their primary source of income (U.S. House of Representatives 2000, 250). Thus, although initially intended as a supplement for the aged, SSI has become a major source of income support for individuals with disabilities, especially for children and adults with little or no work history at all.

Because SSI served recipients who policymakers assumed were incapable of work, it was for most of its history not embroiled in the sharp ideological divisions over welfare dependency that came to typify the political debates over social policy in the 1970s and 1980s. As the number of disabled recipients began to increase after 1983, however, the program became controversial. There were several reasons for this growth. First, in 1984, Congress passed the Social Security Disability Benefits Reform Act, which made it more difficult for the SSA to removed disabled persons from the Social Security rolls. The act, moreover, required the SSA to issue regulatory changes that made it easier for disabled applicants, especially those with mental disorders, to become eligible for disability benefits. Second, the federal courts also pushed the SSA to relax its disability criteria. In particular, the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Sullivan v. Zebley* (493 U.S. 521 [1990]) had a far-reaching impact on SSI. In *Zebley,* the Supreme Court struck down the SSA's regulatory standards for determining childhood disability and directed the SSA to implement more lenient standards. Shortly thereafter, the number of children receiving SSI tripled, peaking in 1994 at nearly 1 million children. These political developments, combined with a weakening economy and other factors, led to a surge in program enrollment and expenditures. Between 1985 and 2000, the number of disabled persons receiving SSI more than doubled, from 2.6 million to over 5.4 million. In terms of real dollars, program expenditures doubled (U.S. House of Representatives 2000, 261, 268).

Accompanying this expansion were three developments in the 1990s that made SSI increasingly unpopular among lawmakers. First, the growth in the number of recipients was most dramatic among groups of the disabled who are often considered less "deserving" of assistance, including adults with mental illness, drug addicts, alcoholics, children with behavioral and emotional troubles, and noncitizens. Second, the media ran several stories alleging widespread fraud and abuse in the program. These stories claimed (1) that drug addicts and alcoholics were using their SSI checks to sustain their habits, (2) that parents were encouraging their children to "act crazy" and fail in school so that they could qualify for SSI, (3) that unscrupulous translators were coaching immigrants on how to fake psychiatric disorders, (4) that adult children were bringing their aged parents to the United States only to enroll them on SSI rather than supporting them once they were in the country, and (5) that prisoners were drawing SSI checks while behind bars. Though government investigators failed to find any evidence of widespread fraud, these anecdotal stories worried many legislators. Finally, rates of exit from the SSI rolls due to rehabilitation decreased, leading some legislators to criticize the SSA for not placing enough emphasis on returning to work.

In 1995 and 1996, Congress enacted a number of measures designed to slow growth in the SSI program. These included provisions that tightened children's eligibility for SSI and that removed legal immigrants, drug addicts, and alcoholics from the program. Lawmakers also instituted tougher penalties for individuals who committed fraud. In 1997, however, amid pressure from state governments and immigrant groups, Congress restored SSI benefits to legal immigrants who had been in the country before August 1996.

Because of the restrictive measures, the number of individuals receiving SSI payments leveled off after 1997. Nonetheless, despite these retrenchment efforts, SSI remains a vital source of income support for impoverished individuals who would otherwise fall through the cracks in the American social safety net.

Jennifer L. Erkulwater

See also: Disability; Disability Policy; Social Security; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Survey *and* Survey Graphic

The *Survey* (1912–1952) and *Survey Graphic* (1921–1948) were complementary publications that fostered thoughtful and wide-ranging discussion of social welfare issues for much of the first half of the twentieth century. Whereas the *Survey* was oriented toward social workers and other social welfare professionals, *Survey Graphic* was intended for the socially conscious lay reader. Both magazines covered topics of interest to progressive reformers, including labor, poverty, international affairs, public health, immigration, and federal and state social welfare legislation. Often these topics intersected with broader questions of race, class, and gender.

The *Survey* began in 1897 as *Charities*, the philanthropic review of the New York Charity Organization Society. Journalist and social welfare activist Paul Kellogg joined the staff of *Charities* in 1902, later becoming editor when the magazine merged with another magazine associated with the settlement movement to become *Charities and the Commons*. In 1907, Kellogg moved to Pittsburgh to oversee the Pittsburgh Survey, a pathbreaking sociological study, funded by the newly established Russell Sage Foundation, of an American city. *Charities and the Commons* was renamed the *Survey* in 1912 because Kellogg wanted the magazine to embody the same commitment to progressive social science he developed in the Pittsburgh Survey.

Kellogg created *Survey Graphic* in 1921 to serve as a companion to the *Survey* and to compete with other journals of public opinion such as the *Nation*. *Survey Graphic* treated many of the same issues that the *Survey* did, but with a more popular approach that embraced art, illustration, and photography as alternative ways to communicate about social welfare. Both magazines valued progressive principles of social intervention and believed in the authority of social scientific expertise. The views of progressive public intellectuals, such as Jane Addams, Louis Brandeis, Alain Locke, and John Dewey, were featured regularly in the magazines. During the 1920s, *Survey Graphic* featured a special issue on the farm crisis well before the agricultural depression was widely apparent, and it explored the emerging public health concern about heart disease. During the 1930s, *Survey Graphic* routinely published socially conscious art and photography, featuring the work of the social realists, Lewis Hine, and Dorothea Lange. In the years before a fully formed civil rights movement emerged, *Survey Graphic* covered African American political and cultural life in its now-famous March 1925 special issue, "Harlem: Mecca of the New Negro" (edited by Alain Locke), as well as in two special issues on race and segregation published during and just after World War II.

By the late 1940s, financial difficulties necessitated a merger between the two magazines, but the merged magazine was never able to identify a coherent audience. It ceased publication in 1952.

Cara A. Finnegan

See also: Charity; Charity Organization Societies; Philanthropy; Picturing Poverty (I); Pittsburgh Survey; Poverty Research; Settlement Houses; Social Work

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Members of the AFL-CIO, along with other labor organizations, hold a protest across from the Gap in midtown Manhattan to bring attention to exploitation of sweatshop workers by the Gap. A sign held by a demonstrator reads, "GAP! Your label, your responsibility, what about workers?" (Lorenzo Ciniglio/Corbis)

Sweatshop

The words "sweatshop" and "sweating system" can be dated to the end of the nineteenth century. They were first used by factory inspectors to describe—and criticize—conditions in a garment industry undergoing massive changes in the face of immigration from eastern and southern Europe, although the relationship between the word "sweat" and arduous, physically draining work has a longer history that can be traced even to Shakespeare.

The association of sweated work with garment production and, in particular, the labor of immigrant women was forged in the early nineteenth century in New York. Women, frequently Irish immigrants, took home bundles of garments, often destined for western or slave markets, to finish in their homes. Pay was low and was often withheld.

Between the 1840s and the 1880s, however, garment production steadily moved out of workers' homes and into ever-larger factories. Industrial changes combined with rapid immigration to reverse this trend by the late 1880s, shifting production from large factories to the smaller, difficult-to-regulate shops that became indelibly associated with the term "sweatshop." The invention of the sewing machine in 1846 and of the cutting knife (which allowed the cutting of multiple pieces of cloth) in 1876 encouraged cheap mass production and dramatically reduced the need for skilled workers. Starting around 1880, thousands of Jews from eastern Europe and, later, Italians expanded the ranks of garment workers in cities like Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and

New York. Many Jews arrived with experience in garment production, and, like their Italian counterparts, they were desperate for paying work. These immigrants sought jobs in the garment industry, often working for friends or relatives who had emigrated to the United States earlier. Wages plummeted with the arrival of newcomers who had no alternative but to work for low pay, while the number of hours immigrants labored increased. Larger factories could not compete with smaller shops that hired only a few immigrant workers and cost only about fifty dollars to open. The industry became dominated by small "outside," or "contractor," shops that took in bundles of garments from larger manufacturers or retailers. The owners of these shops—frequently impoverished immigrants themselves—would bid for contracts and would sometimes further subcontract out bundles. Profits were literally "sweated" from workers.

Thus, in 1888, New York factory inspectors coined the term "sweating system" to describe and denigrate these small, contractor shops. For these American inspectors, as well as for critics in Great Britain who also used the term, the sweatshop was an immigrants' workshop that often doubled as a living space and that featured low pay, long hours, and shocking sanitary conditions. By the 1890s, the sweatshop had become a target for social reformers and public health advocates, if only because they worried that clothing manufactured in sweatshops could infect middle-class consumers with disease. In an era when immigrants were understood as distinct races, critics also worried that the cramped conditions, dusty atmosphere, and perceived immorality of sweatshop conditions would lead to the racial "degeneration" of Jews and Italians. Native-born, white inspectors often understood the sweating system to be at least in part a by-product of Jews' and Italians' racial inferiority, manifest in the immigrants' alleged comfort with filth.

Beginning in the 1880s, armed with fears of epidemic disease and racial degradation, reformers were able to pass some of the most powerful factory inspection legislation to date. However, there were simply too few inspectors to enforce the stringent requirements of the laws, and inspectors came to see alliances with organized workers as the only means of eradicating the sweatshop.

Immigrants also came to describe their workplaces as sweatshops. Yet while inspectors focused on the moral and racial failings of immigrants, Jewish and Italian workers described the sweating system as the result of exploitation and built a powerful labor movement around the goal of its eradication. Starting in the 1880s and accelerating after 1900 with the founding of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and led initially by Jews, workers led several strikes seeking to regulate garment production. Finally, in 1910, at the conclusion of a strike in New York, workers, in alliance with factory inspectors, signed an agreement with manufacturers that allowed for the inspection and regulation of garment shops. Similar kinds of agreements were signed across the country, and the number of contractor shops declined dramatically. However, in regulating sweatshops and the garment homework that remained an integral part of the sweating system, union leaders and social reformers also sought to restrict the employment of working women. By the end of the 1910s, union leaders and inspectors were cautiously declaring victory over the sweatshop. Within a decade, though, and reflecting a decline in the Progressive reform impulse, employers began skirting regulations and workers were again bemoaning the return of the sweatshop.

The New Deal of the 1930s brought a renewed offensive against the sweatshop. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 helped establish a minimum wage and a maximum workweek and brought the federal government into the regulation of the garment industry. With new efforts spearheaded by the government and by unions, whose membership had grown to nearly 400,000 by 1934 (about two-thirds of the garment industry workforce), the number of contractor shops declined by 26 percent between 1936 and 1940.

The gains of the 1930s, however, began to be reversed in the 1960s. In a reprise of earlier patterns, the arrival of new immigrants—this time first from Puerto Rico and then from Central and South America and Southeast Asia—once again spurred the growth of contractor shops that hired between twenty and forty workers. Because many of these new workers were and remain undocumented immigrants, they were hesitant to call on factory inspectors to help improve working conditions. Some employers even use the threats of deportation to coerce workers to accept miserable wages. At the same time, especially after 1970, the American garment industry has been affected by competition from abroad. The increasingly globalized garment industry has led to a dramatic decline in wages and conditions and has spurred a fall in union membership.

By the 1990s, the conditions of garment workers in America and abroad had become the focus of renewed campus and labor activism. The raiding of a sweatshop in El Monte, California, in 1995 where Thai immigrants worked in slavery led to government hearings about the contracting practices of major retailers. At the same time, the efforts of groups like United Students against Sweatshops, the National Labor Committee, and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE) (formed in 1995 from the merger of the ILGWU and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union) focused attention on employers such as Nike, Wal-Mart, Kathie Lee Gifford, and Walt Disney, as well as on universities that license their logos to clothing manufacturers. In addition to supporting worker organizing in the United States and abroad, these efforts have urged the adoption of standards of conditions and have demanded independent monitoring. As the sweatshop has become the center of activism, its meaning is no longer restricted to the garment industry. Indeed, the sweatshop has become a metaphor for exploitative conditions, whether in the clothing, electronics, trucking, or other industries.

Daniel E. Bender

See also: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Immigrants and Immigration; Trade/Industrial Unions

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Tax Policy

Tax policy plays a central role in social welfare provision in the United States. It serves as a mechanism both for distributing (and redistributing) income and wealth across the broad population and for financing government social programs. Tax policy can also be used—and has been increasingly in recent decades—to manage economic growth and to provide subsidies for activities ranging from business investment to child rearing.

Government social programs, including welfare and Social Security, must be financed by tax revenue. In the United States, federal, state, and local governments share responsibility for spending on social services. All must overcome resistance to taxes by individuals and business interests in order to finance social programs and other government responsibilities. The result is a complex mixture of revenue sources and overall levels of taxation much lower than those in most industrial democracies; only Japan, South Korea, and Australia pay a smaller proportion of their gross domestic product in taxes. The American welfare state not only provides a significantly lower level of benefits than do comparable industrialized countries, but the burden of most taxes in the United States falls most heavily on lower-income groups (regressive taxation).

Three major factors account for the low level and regressivity of U.S. taxes. First, the political influence of business interests and the wealthy has led to lower tax rates and the heavy use of tax expenditures or deductions to offset their taxes. Second, in a federal system, competition among states, cities, and metropolitan areas leads to lower taxes as each jurisdiction tries to attract businesses and population. Third, the United States has lower levels of spending on social programs than do the European countries. In the United States, resistance to taxes by wealthy individuals and businesses has made it difficult to expand welfare benefits or to provide new ones, such as health care (although the relatively small size of the American welfare state is accompanied by higher levels of spending on defense).

Federal Taxes

At the federal level, in 2000, 50 percent of revenue derived from the individual income tax (see the accompanying table). Income tax rates were sharply progressive in the 1950s and 1960s, with high-income earners paying rates as high as 91 percent on earnings over $200,000. Under the presidencies of Ronald Reagan (1981–1988) and George H. W. Bush (1989–1993), however, the top tax rates on high-income earners declined to only 31 percent. The top rate was increased to 36 percent under President Bill Clinton's 1993 budget plan to reduce the federal deficit. But President George W. Bush (2001–) instituted a series of major tax cuts in 2001, which will further reduce the tax rates on high-income earners. His administration has also pledged to phase out the federal estate tax, which taxes large inheritances, by 2010. This tax currently applies only to estates worth over $1 million and the change will thus benefit only the richest 1 percent of Americans.

Table 1

Sources of tax revenue, 1960–2000

	1960	*2000*
Federal		
Personal income	44.0%	49.6%
Corporate income	23.3	10.2
Payroll	15.9	32.1
Excise taxes	12.6	3.4
Estates, customs, other	4.2	4.7
State		
Personal income	30.1	34.2
Corporate income	8.3	6.8
General sales	40.1	33.0
Excise taxes	5.6	8.7
Lotteries, gambling	0.7	2.7
License fees	6.0	6.2
Other	9.2	8.4

Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S.

Revenue from the corporate income tax in 2000 accounted for only 10 percent of federal revenue, down from 23 percent in 1960. Personal and corporate income tax revenue is greatly reduced by a broad array of tax deductions, or loopholes, for home mortgages, health benefits paid by employers, pension contributions, and charitable giving. Sizable tax breaks are available for businesses as well, to encourage activities such as business investment, timber harvesting, and the installation of pollution reduction equipment and to offset business losses. Critics claim that such business deductions constitute "corporate welfare" and that the value of these deductions (estimated at between $100 billion and $200 billion annually) is far greater than society's gain from the business investment they are meant to encourage, and far larger than spending on many federal social and educational programs.

Working Americans also pay Social Security payroll taxes on their wages; their employers pay a matching rate. In 2001, this was 7.65 percent. This is a flat-rate tax with no deductions or exemptions allowed. It is highly regressive, since anyone earning more than a fixed amount ($80,000 in 2001) pays no Social Security taxes on the income above that fixed amount. This means that billionaires pay no more in Social Security taxes than do many working professionals. Since the early 1980s, the payroll tax has increased significantly to help meet expected shortfalls in the Social Security and Medicare trust funds when the large baby boom generation reaches retirement age. In 1994, the payroll tax was increased by 1.5 percent to help finance Medicare, the federal program that covers part of hospital and medical costs for those over age sixty-five; this increase does apply to all wage earners. The percentage of federal revenues that came from the payroll tax doubled, from 16 to 32 percent, between 1960 and 2000 (see the accompanying table). But excise tax revenue from cigarettes, gasoline, furs, and other luxury items constituted a smaller share of federal revenues in 2000 than it did in 1960.

The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was established in 1975 to offset the adverse effects of increased Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes on working-poor families and to strengthen work incentives. The EITC is a refundable credit that is administered through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Because it is refundable, the EITC is used not only to reduce a family's income tax liability but also to supplement its household income. The amount by which the credit exceeds taxes owed is paid as a refund. If a family has no income tax liability, the family receives the entire EITC as a refund.

The EITC for families with children provides an average credit of more than $1,900 and (as of 2001) covers families with incomes up to $27,400 or $31,200, depending on the number of children in the family. By contrast, the EITC for workers without children provides an average credit of approximately $200 and ends when income reaches $10,400. Some 98 percent of overall EITC benefits go to families with children, with 2 percent going to working individuals and married couples who are not raising minor children.

Since 1975, the EITC has been increased several times to further offset the effects of federal payroll taxes on low-income families. It was greatly expanded during the Clinton administration to assist many former welfare (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) recipients who, under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, have been pushed into the workforce. Support for the EITC has come from across the political spectrum, with conservatives such as former president Ronald Reagan among its strong supporters; Reagan called the EITC "the best anti-poverty, the best pro-family, the best job creation measure to come out of Congress" (Greenstein and Shapiro 1998). Recent studies have confirmed the effectiveness of the federal EITC in supporting work and in alleviating child poverty. The EITC now lifts more than 4 million people, including over 2 million children, out of poverty each year, and it has become the nation's most effective antipoverty program for working families.

State and Local Taxes

At the state level, sales taxes provide the major source of revenue (see the accompanying table). Rates in 2001 ranged from 2 to over 8 percent. A few states (Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Oregon) have no sales taxes. Ten states, mostly in the South, tax food. States also levy excise taxes on liquor, cigarettes, or gasoline, even though these (and taxes on food) tend to be highly regressive since low-income families spend a higher proportion of their incomes on these items.

Forty-three states have income taxes. Four states (California, Delaware, Montana, and Vermont) have moderately progressive rates, but in other states rates are flat regardless of income. Most state income taxes allow fewer deductions or exemptions than does the federal income tax, but Rhode Island and Vermont allow their residents to calculate their state taxes as a fixed percent of their federal tax liability.

States have also increased their use of lotteries, which tend to be regressive since the poor, the less educated, and the elderly are those most likely to participate. And states have also expanded their reliance on legalized gambling. In 1973, only Nevada permitted casino gambling and only seven states had lotteries; by 1999, all states except for seven (mostly in the Bible Belt) had lotteries. Riverboat gambling or casinos have also been legalized in twenty-six states and on Native American reservations. Although gambling may attract tourist dollars from residents of other states, it also produces negative social consequences, such as addiction and corruption, and likewise tends to be a regressive (although "voluntary") tax.

State government revenue collections rise and fall with the state of the economy. Thus, during times of recession, such as 1990–1991 and 2001–2003, sales and income tax revenues decline, even though demands for welfare and unemployment increase during economic downturns. But unlike the federal government, states cannot rely on deficit spending; all but Vermont are legally obligated to submit balanced budgets, and state borrowing is also constrained by constitutional limits. Therefore, many state and local governments are forced to *increase* taxes during a recession as well as to cut back on services. Recent cuts in federal domestic spending, as well as "unfunded mandates"—federal legislation or regulations that are not accompanied by federal funds for implementation—for such policies as pollution abatement, disability access, and prison improvements have also forced state and local governments to find new sources of revenue.

Local Taxes

Local governments (including school districts) receive nearly three-quarters of their revenue from property taxes. Some local governments also assess income taxes or wage taxes and may add a percent or two onto the state sales tax rate. Many communities offer a "homestead exemption" so that poor or elderly home owners pay less in property taxes. But local governments cannot tax state or federal property or the holdings of nonprofits or religious institutions (although in some communities, nonprofits pay fees for some public services). Local governments must thus rely on state or federal aid. Large cities in particular face serious constraints on revenues. A few, such as New York and Philadelphia, have enacted wage taxes in order to gain revenue from suburbanites who work or enjoy recreation in the city but live elsewhere. A handful of other cities, such as Indianapolis and Nashville, have merged city-county or metropolitan-area governments, which offer a broader tax base. But such consolidations are usually strongly opposed by suburban governments.

High property tax rates in California in 1978 led to the passage of Proposition 13, which drastically reduced property taxes. Tax revolts in other states as well have led to limitations on both taxing and spending. User charges are currently the fastest-growing source of state and local government revenue. Only those persons who actually use a given government service, such as toll roads, college tuition, water and sewerage, or garbage collection, actually pay for it. User fees are usually regressive, since low- and moderate-income earners make more use of public services. Recent sharp increases in tuition at state colleges and universities have put the cost of higher education beyond the reach of many working- and middle-class families.

State and local personal income and property taxes are allowed as itemized deductions in computing federal income taxes. Citizens for Tax Justice (1996) reported that after federal deductions, the average state and local tax on the richest 1 percent was 5.8 percent of their income, but on average, the poorest 20 percent of Americans spent 12.5 percent of their incomes on state and local taxes. Thus, overall, the regressivity of state and local taxes offsets the modestly progressive federal income tax.

To offset these regressive taxes, ten states began to offer EITCs in the 1990s, a move supported by businesses as well as by social service advocates. Despite the economic expansion in the late 1990s, many children in families with parents in the paid labor force remained poor. State EITCs, like the federal EITC, are meant to help reduce poverty among workers with children. Further, with large numbers of welfare recipients entering the workforce, state EITCs complement welfare reform by helping low-wage workers support their families as they leave public assistance.

Susan B. Hansen

See also: Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Health Policy; Social Security; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; "Working Poor"

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Teacher Corps

The Teacher Corps, established as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965, no longer exists. As part of the flood of legislation in the 1960s aimed at improving the opportunities for disadvantaged children in America, the Teacher Corps concept was explicitly aimed at bringing young socially and politically liberal "change agents" into public schools that demonstrated need. These change agents were to be recruited from the ranks of recent college graduates (and particularly, within this group, minorities) with backgrounds in the liberal arts and nontraditional fields; they were meant to infuse the public high school system with new ideas and new teaching techniques. In addition to training recruits, the federal government supplied short-term and modest grants to schools participating in the program. The goals of the corps as originally envisioned were bold: to reform the educational establishment by challenging its inflexibility and introducing to it a fresh and idealistic group of young teachers.

However, the program encountered substantial difficulties, and, after many changes and iterations, it was eventually scrapped in the 1980s under President Ronald Reagan. Many states continued or created state Teacher Corps programs, which met with far greater success and support and continue to operate today. In 1989, while a senior at Princeton, Wendy Kopp dreamed up the concept of a philanthropically funded organization that would, in time, realize many of the goals of the earlier program. The program came to be known as Teach for America, the "national corps of outstanding college graduates of all academic majors and backgrounds who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to ensure that all children in our nation have an equal chance in life" (Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute 2004). Since its creation in 1990, more than 9,000 individuals have participated in the program, teaching over 1.25 million students.

Support for a renewed federally funded Teacher Corps program still exists in some quarters. In 2001, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton proposed the National Teacher Corps and Principal Recruitment Act. Though the legislation has been hung up in committees since its introduction, if enacted, the act would create scholarships and other financial incentives in order to recruit 75,000 teachers a year in order to meet the growing needs of public schools in certain subject areas and districts.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Education Policies; Peace Corps; Voluntarism; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

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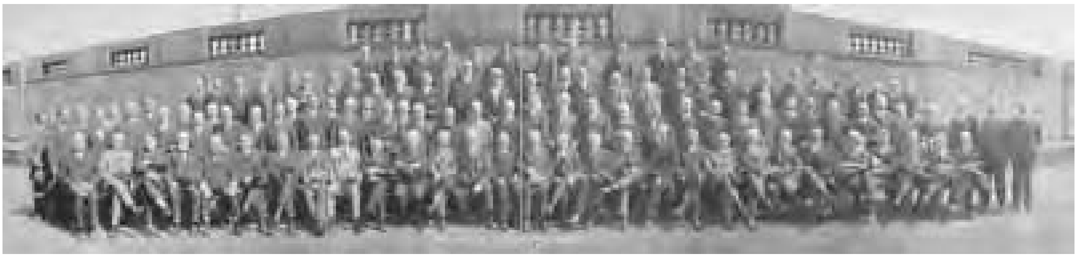
Temperance Movement

The temperance movement promoted moderation in the use of or abstinence from alcoholic beverages, deriving momentum largely from alcohol's association with such social ills as poverty and family violence. Although early in the movement, temperance forces distinguished between distilled spirits, which they believed to be harmful, and fermented and brewed drinks such as wine and beer, which many believed to be safe, eventually most temperance groups attempted to abolish both the manufacture and sale of all alcoholic drinks. The movement



Board of Directors, Anti-Saloon League of America, Indianapolis, April 9, 1924. (Library of Congress)

gained strength throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth, culminating in the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment establishing Prohibition in 1919. Although Prohibition was repealed in 1933, the temperance movement effected numerous permanent legislative and social changes, especially with regard to women. After the repeal of Prohibition, temperance organizations continued, although generally in smaller numbers and different forms.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, unrestrained alcohol consumption came to be seen as a major societal problem. During this period, citizens drank more alcohol than at any other time in U.S. history. Clean water was scarce, and alcohol was generally believed to have nutritional value. Spirits were inexpensive—less costly, for example, than tea or coffee. In addition, drinking distilled alcohol had become patriotic because it supported home industries. Large quantities of grain were cumbersome and costly to move great distances, so surplus grains from the West were difficult to transport for sale in the East. And fruits rotted in transit. Farmers converted products into beverage alcohol, which could be shipped in much less space without fear of decay. However, as consumption of alcohol increased, so did social ills, and groups formed in opposition to excessive consumption of alcohol, constituting what came to be labeled the "temperance movement."

Quakers and Methodists began to question the pervasive use of alcohol, promoting moderation and self-discipline. Members of other religious groups joined the movement early in the nineteenth century, popularizing the idea that intemperance and immorality were associated. Physicians also began to question long-held beliefs about the health benefits of alcohol, recommending alternative beverages. Benjamin Rush, perhaps the most respected American physician of the century, spoke widely to medical students and to the public at large about the dangers of alcohol. The public increasingly expressed disgust with public drunkenness and concern about alcohol's addictive qualities.

Poverty and other economic concerns provided a primary focus for gathering support for the temperance movement. Industrial and political leaders became concerned about the high consumption of alcohol because it led to workers' unemployability, absenteeism, and tardiness. They also worried about drunkards' diminished resources and, therefore, reduced capacity to invest in the growth of the new nation, as well as the cost to the community in providing economic support for impoverished children. Workers and their unions decried intemperance as a deterrent to self-respect and argued that money spent on inessentials such as intoxicating beverages also decreased workers' prospects for prosperity. Reform groups condemned the penury that could be suffered by families, who were dependent on the men in their lives for economic security. For example, in its fourth annual report (1831), the American Temperance Society attributed three-quarters of all "pauperism, crimes, and wretchedness" to the 60 million gallons of spirits consumed annually and claimed that alcohol "beggared more families [. . .] than all other vices put together."

Because of widespread poverty and abuse within alcoholic families, women and children were seen primarily as innocent victims of intemperance, providing women an ideal issue around which to organize. By midcentury, women were joining men's temperance organizations in large numbers and forming their own temperance unions. By the last quarter of the century, women had become the primary promoters of reform in the name of temperance; their largest organization, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), marshaled hundreds of thousands of women to seek temperance legislation and other major reforms on behalf of women.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, nearly every state denied personal and real property rights to married women. Alcoholic men might sell or lose all family property through unemployment, gambling, or other profligacy, even if that property had been brought to the marriage by the wife. If a woman sought employment to support herself and her children after her husband had become alcoholic, her husband could demand that the employer pay her wages directly to him. The recognition that men's intemperance impoverished women and children and left them with no other means of protection permitted women to argue for social, legislative, and judicial reform and to insist on women's need for suffrage as self-protection. Women's compelling arguments based on the temperance issue facilitated changes in legislation governing personal and real property rights, ownership of wages and children, physical abuse, oversight of women prisoners, and age of sexual consent. In addition, women's temperance organizations, especially the WCTU, provided a primary force for passage of the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote.

Great changes in drinking patterns resulted from the temperance movement. Reasons for major societal change are always complex, and the reduced costs of alternative beverages and the need for sobriety in industrial employment as well as other factors contributed to a reduction in excessive inebriation. However, the temperance movement played a major role in altering drinking habits. Intoxication, generally accepted as legitimate social behavior at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was broadly frowned upon throughout the second half of the century. Consumption of alcohol fell by nearly three-quarters from 1830 to 1850, and there was a gradual shift from distilled spirits to beer among drinkers after midcentury.

Today, the WCTU, the largest women's organization in the nineteenth century, exists in greatly reduced numbers. New variants of earlier movements have formed: Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) brings together those who have lost children or other loved ones at the hands of intoxicated drivers to work for legislative and cultural changes with regard to alcohol consumption, as did the WCTU. Alcoholics Anonymous, like a similar nineteenth-century group known as the Washingtonians, unites those with problematic dependence on alcohol to fight addiction together. Some religious denominations continue to oppose the use of intoxicating beverages. Statistics suggest that three of ten drinkers became chronic alcoholics in the early nineteenth century; today experts estimate that three in two hundred do so. Although Prohibition is generally seen as a failed effort, changed attitudes toward intoxication and laws affecting women and children have been permanent.

Carol Mattingly

See also: Feminisms; Nineteenth Century; Progressive Era and 1920s; Protestant Denominations

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Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

See Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

Tenant Organizing

Tenant organizing emerged as one strategy in the struggle against poverty in the nineteenth century, when renters in rural and urban areas began to mobilize to protest high rents, poor living conditions, and unjust leases imposed by often-distant landlords. Based on tactics such as withholding rent ("rent strikes"), resisting eviction, suing landlords, and taking over abandoned sites ("squatting"), tenant organizing should be understood as an economic and political response to poverty, segregation, maldistribution of land, and the structural shortage of decent-quality, affordable land and housing.

In 1845, more than 10,000 tenant farmers from eleven counties in eastern New York engaged in full-scale revolt against their landlords, refusing to pay rent and challenging landlords in court. Six years in the making, this massive rent strike protested a centuries-old legal provision that tied tenants to the land. Lawyers called their tie "lease in fee," but the farmers called it "voluntary slavery" and "unhallowed bondage." The tenants emerged victorious, ending the lease in fee that had kept many of their households in poverty.

This famous strike was one of many attempts by tenants in the nineteenth century to redefine the tenant-landlord relationship and improve the quality of housing. It drew on a transatlantic discourse that challenged traditional property rights as well as on republican notions of civic virtue. In spite of the 1845 victory, tenants across the nation remained at a disadvantage in tenant-landlord relations. During the turbulent urban and industrial expansion after the Civil War, low-cost urban housing was typically shabby and sometimes dangerous, lacking adequate air, light, and clean water—as Jacob Riis and other reformers documented and publicized. Rural housing was no better. In both areas, there was always a housing shortage for workers. By the turn of the twentieth century, the right of the landlords and their agents to determine and collect rents on units had been firmly established in law, while the rights of renters were few.

Although most tenant actions were individualized, collective actions surged as the nation became more urbanized and housing conditions deteriorated, particularly among the most vulnerable and poor. These actions drew on a tradition of transatlantic protest and, for those in poverty, on an understanding that the high rents they paid were just as much to blame for their financial hardship as were the low incomes they received for their labor. In addition to rent strikes, tenants worked with labor unions, boycotted landlords and buildings, and joined together to prevent evictions. Very few tenants participated in Progressive-Era housing reforms. Though women and socialists led these actions, it was not uncommon for children and the elderly to participate. The majority of these dramatic actions stopped once tenants had achieved their goals. Some such actions, however, led to more sustained efforts linking labor unions and ethnic organizations in limited dividend and cooperative housing projects.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, renters continued to collectively fight evictions and rent collectors and were often assisted by the growing ranks of the unemployed. Formal and informal tenant associations addressed grievances at the building and city levels and sometimes demanded rent reductions from landlords who had profited from rents and speculation. Urban renters also joined New Deal liberals, labor unions, and radicals in the call for federal public housing, viewing the program as a way to create jobs, decent-quality housing, and communities where tenant organizing would not only continue but spill over into surrounding neighborhoods. In the South, white and Black tenant farmers formed the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers' Union, among other associations, to win better leases and higher crop prices and to prevent evictions caused by federal programs to reduce crop production. African Americans also used these associations to fight for civil rights with the assistance of Socialist Party and Communist Party workers and white allies. Whether in urban or rural areas, tenant organizing during the capitalist crisis highlighted how the maldistribution of land, the power of landlords, and rent contributed to poverty and political inequality.

Neither government nor private home construction during the capitalist crisis of the 1930s met the nation's housing needs. This shortage worsened during World War II with the massive migrations of workers and their families from the rural South to cities in the North and West. Landlords were quick to raise rents, absorbing wage gains. Nonwhite renters faced the greatest housing hardships because they generally earned less than whites and, from San Francisco to Detroit to Miami, were excluded from many neighborhoods by racially restrictive covenants and by whites who staged both peaceful and violent demonstrations. Wartime housing shortages produced a wave of housing rallies and tenant organizing across the nation, action that helped expand public housing and federal rent control in congested housing areas.

After World War II and the passage of the 1949 Housing Act, urban renewal projects produced an upsurge of tenant activism. Targeting nonwhite and poor neighborhoods, directors of urban renewal agencies and the public officials who assisted them earned a reputation for destroying vibrant communities and replacing affordable housing with freeways, shopping centers, luxury apartments, and convention centers. Given the persistence of racial discrimination in housing and employment and given the shortage of decent affordable housing in many nonwhite communities, tenants blended their anti–urban renewal attacks with demands for legislation to ensure fair and open housing and employment. Housing discrimination kept nonwhites and the poor away from the schools and social networks through which better jobs were distributed and thus maintained social, racial, and economic inequality. Members of tenant associations became more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and income groups after the war, though women continued to outnumber men in the fight to preserve rent control, enforce building codes, improve maintenance and services, and expand the amount of government-assisted, low-income housing.

Tenant organizing contributed to the social and political movements in the United States and around the world in the 1960s. To be sure, tenants still organized around grievances with landlords and for legislation and programs favorable to tenants, but they also addressed such issues as useful jobs, health care, ending discrimination, and peace. In some cities, public housing authorities offered tenants meeting space, funding, and technical advice to increase participation in policymaking, while President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration supplied organizers and lawyers through Community Action Programs and Legal Aid. Some tenants, impatient with government housing programs and inspired by the radical discourses of the 1960s, organized squats that refurbished abandoned buildings with sweat equity and then ran them cooperatively and democratically for use rather than speculation and profit.

Even though President Richard M. Nixon and all succeeding administrations slashed federal spending for community action, the protest culture, political networks, and institutions nurtured in the previous two decades of tenant activism remained intact in many communities. Through local associations and their national federation, the National Tenant Union (founded in 1980), tenants continued to address century-old issues, from improving their buildings to promoting politicians and legislation. As the nation's environmental movement grew, tenants resisted private and public projects that posed environmental and health hazards to their communities. Occasionally, these protests took place in middle-income neighborhoods, but they have sprung increasingly from nonwhite and poor communities whose residents refused to continue being exposed to a disproportionate share of pollution. Public housing tenants built citywide umbrella associations and created the National Tenant Organization to advocate for them. Although a few tenant association leaders have been co-opted, others have improved public housing policy, have demanded greater resident hiring, and have beaten back attempts to displace tenants without adequate replacement housing. More recently, tenants have protested plans to privatize public housing projects.

Tenant organizing at the turn of the twenty-first century has been as challenging as ever, for private and public landlords have many tools to curtail tenant activism: well-funded local, regional, and national associations; a culture and legal system that privileges property rights and profit over human rights; access to police and marshals; and databases for screening the credit and "character" of tenants. Moreover, tenants still have trouble sustaining organizations and movements after victories, and their associations suffer from high turnover rates among members. But because rent remains one of the greatest contributors to poverty, tenants continue to organize.

John Baranski

See also: African American Migration; Communist Party; Community Organizing; Housing Policy; Legal Aid/Legal Services; *Progress and Poverty;* Property; Racial Segregation; Urban Renewal; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Wealth

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Tennessee Valley Authority

A public corporation established in 1933, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) reshaped the landscape of the Tennessee River valley, creating a system of navigable waterways and sources of fertilizer and electricity for the seven-state valley region. It also built a new way of life for the inhabitants of the nation's most impoverished communities, providing cheap power, new sources of employment and wealth, and enhanced public services, even if the authority's original vision of a stable, sustainable rural Southeast never materialized. After World War II, TVA became the template for multiuse, regional development programs around the United States; eventually, U.S. policymakers exported the model to Asia and South America.

An act of Congress chartered TVA to generate and distribute hydroelectric power, erect dams for flood control, produce fertilizers, control erosion, and build a navigable waterway from the headwaters of the Tennessee River near Knoxville to its confluence with the Ohio River at Paducah, Kentucky. But the authority's scope envisioned much more than a vast program of public works. TVA sought to uplift the region's impoverished rural folk, improving nutrition, health care, recreational opportunities, and education. It also promoted conservation and attracted new industries to the American Southeast.

TVA was born in January 1933 when President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt toured Muscle Shoals, Alabama, with Senator George Norris of Nebraska, the great old warhorse of progressive reform and campaigner for public power. During World War I, the federal government had constructed Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River to produce nitrates for munitions. The dam was not completed until after the Armistice, and private utilities, in league with the administrations of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover, repeatedly frustrated Norris's plans to generate public hydroelectric power. The sad disparity between the gleaming technical might of the unused dam and the dark, kerosene-lit poverty of the Tennessee River valley prompted Roosevelt to more dramatic action than Norris had ever imagined.

Two workers with the Tennessee Valley Authority operate jackhammers. The TVA, a program covering the entire Tennessee Valley and parts of Alabama and West Virginia, was established during the New Deal administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt to control flooding and use dams to provide power. (Arthur Rothstein/Corbis)

Over the course of its first decade, the Tennessee Valley Authority dramatically altered its approach to regional development and social welfare. The early TVA hoped to restore a sound agricultural economy without manufacturing, unsightly urban growth, or fundamental change on the farms. Indeed, TVA officials generally interpreted the Great Depression as a warning against the dangers of industrialization. At the same time, they saw rural poverty as a land use problem rather than an economic one. Better agricultural practices and swifter access to markets lay at the core of TVA's early efforts.

This "Decentralization Program" achieved limited success. Operating in the nation's poorest region, the authority refused to challenge either local political prerogatives or traditional economic arrangements. The TVA constructed dams, harnessed hydroelectric power, and manufactured fertilizer, but it hardly affected the economic structure of the Southeast or succored its impoverished people.

In 1938, soon after President Roosevelt focused new attention on southern poverty, the Tennessee Valley Authority changed direction, taking the lead in the federal government's drive for southern industrialization. TVA's first chairman, Arthur E. Morgan, was ousted; Morgan's rival and successor was David E. Lilienthal. Under Lilienthal, the TVA abandoned the "phosphate philosophy" of economic growth—the idea that small, rural-oriented industries could strengthen the agricultural economy and raise living standards while preserving the area's rural character.

As the World War II defense buildup proceeded, TVA recruited large manufacturing plants to the region. TVA also promoted rural electrification and pressed for further industrialization of the valley region, especially the development of large-scale, finished-products industries. Among the TVA's wartime achievements was the development of new manufacturing processes for aluminum. The authority assembled a team of scientists for this project, and its success dramatized the economic benefits of industrial research. This stimulated the South's postwar love affair with scientific research, helping to develop the kind of technological community the region had never possessed. At the same time, it shifted the authority's priorities toward regional economic growth, often to the benefit of newly arrived businesses and skilled workers, and away from improving the welfare of the valley's poorest residents.

The record of economic progress in the Tennessee River Valley in the decade after 1938 seemed to confirm TVA's confidence in manufacturing-based growth. The authority could hardly claim the entire credit for the valley area's gains in nearly every economic indicator, gains that, after all, reflected the national economic revival. Nevertheless, the authority did point with pride to the valley's relative gains over the nation and the rest of the South, both in indices of manufacturing growth and in general economic progress. The early vision of a valley inhabited by small, decentralized rural industries had faded into the reality of an industrializing region. By 1946, most wage earners in the region toiled in cities of 10,000 or more people.

"If we are successful here," FDR (1933) had proclaimed, "we can march on, step by step, in a like development of other great natural territorial units within our borders." After Roosevelt's death, President Harry S Truman's administration envisioned TVA as the model for similar river valley authorities on the Missouri, the Columbia, and other American rivers. But these ambitious programs never won congressional approval on the size and scope imagined by their backers. In later years, Lilienthal and many other TVA veterans took their expansive vision overseas, joining multipurpose river-development projects in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In 1964, in an effort to transpose the New Deal TVA vision to war-torn Vietnam, President Lyndon B. Johnson offered to establish a multibillion-dollar Mekong River Authority in Indochina if North Vietnam would desist from its efforts to reunite Vietnam under a communist regime.

By that time, TVA had become a shadow of its earlier self. When Dwight D. Eisenhower had assumed the presidency in 1953, his administration had reined in the TVA, limiting the scope of its social welfare, education, and economic development programs. It became mainly a power company and dam-building operation. The authority remained deeply committed to a New Deal model of conservation that stressed industrial development and found itself the enemy of a new environmentalist ethos. When TVA pressed for the construction of Tellico Dam on the Little Tennessee River during the 1970s, a massive public works project that threatened the habitat of an endangered fish called the snail darter, the agency's transformation was complete. The most far-reaching, experimental, and comprehensive effort to revive a laggard region and its impoverished people had become a symbol of pork-barrel politics and bureaucratic insensitivity.

Bruce J. Schulman

See also: Great Depression and New Deal; *Report on Economic Conditions of the South;* Rural Poverty

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Think Tanks

See New Right; Poverty Research

Title VII

See Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991

Townsend Movement

The Townsend movement, a popular mass movement of the Great Depression, was dedicated to the enactment of a national system of old-age pensions called the Townsend Plan. In the fall of 1933, unemployed physician Francis E. Townsend of Long Beach, California, proposed that the federal government should pay pensions of $150 a month (later raised to $200 a month) to all citizens over the age of sixty who agreed to retire and spend the money in thirty days; the pensions would be paid for by a national sales or "transaction" tax. He promised that his plan would bring full employment and universal prosperity, eliminating the need for the New Deal welfare and job programs, which he viewed as expensive, wasteful, and destructive to beneficiaries' self-esteem. In January 1934, Townsend and real estate developer Robert Clements launched Old Age Revolving Pensions, Ltd., with the goal of building support for his plan. By the end of 1935, the organization claimed more than 2 million members and had collected approximately 20 million signatures on petitions calling for the Townsend Plan's immediate enactment (Holtzman 1975, 49; Burg 1999, 103–104, 232).

Though dismissed by most economists and policymakers—including President Franklin D. Roosevelt—as unsound and potentially ruinous to the economy, the Townsend Plan found a large following among the aged. The onset of the Great Depression had intensified the financial insecurity of the nation's growing elderly population; the nation's elderly were living longer but often lacked work or savings sufficient to support themselves. The rash of bank failures and the scarcity of jobs also made it difficult for families to care for their needy older relatives. Townsend's promise of generous, immediate assistance proved appealing to financially insecure old people, their families, and those sympathetic to the plight of the impoverished elderly.

Townsend's plan challenged many of the basic assumptions underpinning early-twentieth-century old-age social welfare policy. For example, the notion that the government would undertake the financial support of its older citizens contradicted the widely held belief that families should care for their aging relatives. Likewise, the demand for federal pensions sought to nationalize a form of public relief that had traditionally been administered by state and local governments. Townsend also proposed that old-age assistance should be granted to all older citizens as an entitlement for a lifetime of service to the nation rather than as a form of stigmatized charity meted out to those deemed sufficiently poor and deserving. Perhaps most radical, Townsend desired $200 a month for all American citizens, regardless of their race, gender, place of residence, marital status, or work history. In short, Townsend repudiated the meager benefits, fragmentation, and inequities of the old-age relief of his day by demanding a national pension program that would provide generous, dignified, universal benefits to all older citizens.

Although the Townsend Plan bill introduced in January 1935 never had serious prospects of passage (it was defeated in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 206 to 56), the size and fervor of the lobbying campaign launched on its behalf brought national attention to the Townsend Plan and posed an electoral threat to politicians across the North and West. The Townsend movement's rise also coincided with the introduction of the Roosevelt administration's Economic Security Bill (subsequently modified into the Social Security Act of 1935), providing a natural point of comparison for politicians debating the contours of the nation's first federal old-age social welfare system. Critics of the Economic Security Bill noted the Townsend Plan's superior coverage and benefits, and some conservative politicians even used their support of the Townsend Plan to camouflage their opposition to other welfare proposals. Supporters of the Economic Security Bill used comparison with the Townsend Plan to highlight the moderate nature and fiscal soundness of their bill and to suggest that its passage provided the best way to undercut support for the Townsend Plan. The powerful presence of older Americans demanding Townsend's vision of generous and dignified benefits thus influenced the atmosphere and terms of debate surrounding the creation of Social Security.

Though the passage of Social Security did little to diminish the enthusiasm of the Townsendites, support for the movement fell sharply in 1936 due in part to negative publicity generated by a congressional investigation that revealed the large profits earned by the movement's leaders and the unscrupulous methods used by some of its organizers. Francis Townsend's alliance with demagogic popular leaders such as the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith and Father Charles Coughlin, along with his harsh criticism of FDR, caused further dissension within the movement. The recession of 1937–1938 helped revive interest in the Townsend Plan enough to make it a factor in the midterm election of 1938 and to win a second vote on the Townsend Plan in the House of Representatives in 1939 (it was defeated 302–97), but the onset of World War II led to its long-term decline. Wartime full employment, the prosperity of the postwar era, the death of aged members, and the increasing availability of old-age benefits diminished the organization's ranks to fewer than 32,000 members by 1952 (Holtzman 1975, 49). Nevertheless, Townsend maintained his reputation as a representative of older Americans, advocating for more generous old-age benefits until his death at ninety-three in 1960. New senior citizen organizations such as the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) emerged in the subsequent decades, continuing the tradition of senior citizen political activism pioneered decades earlier by Townsend and the Townsend movement.

Steven B. Burg

See also: Ageism; Old Age; Social Security; Social Security Act of 1935

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Trade/Industrial Unions

The union movement has not merely pursued income gains for its membership but has also advanced a critique of workers' powerlessness on the job and of inequality in the labor market, politics, and the community. Beginning with the first Industrial Revolution in the early nineteenth century, workers have combined their voices and actions in organizations they hoped would counter the economic power and workplace control wielded by employers. By the mid-twentieth century, unions also had become important partners in the welfare state and proponents of social policies that promote economic security.

Although unions characteristically organized workers within capitalism, some of their claims generated a radical critique of the capitalist marketplace. In the lexicon of early-nineteenth-century male workers, workingmen sought a "competence," that is, a steady remunerative job that paid enough to support a family even during layoffs. Concentrations of economic power that interfered with this competence sometimes aroused opposition, in the name of democracy, to developing capitalism. Similarly, the labor movement's mid-nineteenth-century critique of "wage slavery" embodied not just a derogatory comparison between white and Black labor but also the promise that good wages would generate the conditions necessary for industrial freedom itself.

During the half century between the onset of antebellum industrialization and the rise of the craft unions that dominated the American Federation of Labor at the end of the nineteenth century, American labor organizations saw themselves as part of a broad social reform movement concerned with the abolition of slavery, the reduction of child labor, and the political empowerment of millions of immigrants into the urban, industrial polity. Printers, railroad engineers, machinists, shoemakers, iron workers, textile operatives, brewery workers, carpenters, and cigar makers developed locally powerful unions that sought to raise wages and regularize working conditions in their respective trades and occupations. But these unions were episodically functioning institutions that could not rely on their own power to sustain wages even of the best-paid male workers. Given the deflationary pressures and the drive for managerial control that pushed nominal wages down during the decades after the Civil War, many of these unions were forced into violent strikes designed to defend the working-class incomes in an entire community. This was the dynamic that transformed the railroad strikes of 1877 into a mid-Atlantic insurrection; likewise, in the 1892 lockout at the Homestead plant when Carnegie Steel abrogated a contract, the well-paid iron rollers of the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers Union won solid backing from the vast majority of more poorly paid workers.

Craft unions were the backbone of the union movement from the mid-1880s, when they founded the American Federation of Labor (AFL), to 1932. Craft unions were organized on the basis of worker skills and trades. The AFL also included a few industrial unions—in the needle trades and in coal mining—which organized everyone in an industry regardless of his or her particular job and irrespective of skill. Reflecting the bias of the crafts, the official policy of the AFL itself was that of "voluntarism," which rejected government minimum-wage and unemployment insurance programs (for male adults). The AFL held to this view into the 1930s, in part because the federation considered unions to be the wellspring of self-reliance and "manly independence," in part to avoid inviting interference by a hostile government, and in part to enhance the presumptive attractiveness of union wages and working conditions. This led to a radical division between the interests of a highly paid stratum of unionized workers and the bulk of the working population—usually more than 90 percent—who enjoyed few social protections or state-mandated income standards. Indeed, AFL craft union leaders, most from the British Isles or northern Europe, saw African Americans, the new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, and those from Mexico and East Asia as a kind of lumpen proletariat unsuitable for trade union membership. Although socialist and syndicalist rivals to the dominant craft leadership of the AFL put forward a quite different vision, the union movement of the early twentieth century did little to link itself directly to a program that might have reduced poverty.

Even if the AFL set its interests apart from those of the majority of the male working class, it also participated in the patriarchal exclusion and protection of women workers. The "family-wage" ideal the AFL espoused in the Progressive Era assumed a male breadwinner. The federation viewed women workers as transients in the labor market and therefore unorganizable, and while it supported equal-pay legislation and protective labor legislation for women, it did so because these policies would prevent women workers from undercutting male wages. Despite the hostility of the AFL to the economic and organizational interests of women as workers, some women workers mobilized on their own and with the help of allies in the Women's Trade Union League and the Industrial Workers of the World.

The New Deal and its aftermath transformed the character of American trade unionism and the social program it advanced. In the twenty years after 1933, trade union membership soared more than fivefold, reaching about 35 percent of the wage-earning population by the mid-1950s. More important, many of these new workers were enrolled in huge new unions that effectively organized the key industries of mid-twentieth-century America: coal, steel, auto, longshoring, rubber, electrical products, and trucking. Although many companies in these industries had traditionally been high-wage employers, others were not: The organization of East Coast garment shops, California canneries, New England textile mills, and big-city department stores helped double the effective wage in these occupations. Likewise, the turn away from day and casual labor in maritime work, first on the West Coast and later in the East, eliminated the skid row districts in many port cities, eventually generating a cohort of extremely well-paid workers on sea and shore.

The new industrial unions successfully pursued three programs that materially reduced income instability and insecurity among the working population, many from those very racial and ethnic groups that had been disdained by the old AFL. First, unions like the United Auto Workers and the United Steelworkers negotiated seniority schemes that gave millions of ordinary workers a property right in their job, thus generating in the middle years of the twentieth century the dignity-enhancing "competence" first sought by the shoemakers and textile hands of the antebellum era. Second, these same industrial unions successfully negotiated pay increases that disproportionately benefited the lowest-paid stratum of the workforce, thereby flattening the wage hierarchy and generating the material conditions necessary for a mass consumer society. Nonunion firms like Kodak, IBM, and the large financial and insurance institutions followed the "patterns" established in heavy industry, if only to forestall unionization of their own employees. Real wages in the United States doubled between 1940 and 1970. Massive productivity enhancements proved to be responsible for some of this growth, but the relatively equitable distribution of this technological dividend is largely attributable to the existence of a powerful union movement.

One major change that followed the rise of industrial unions and the labor-friendly measures of the New Deal administration was the shift in overall union attitudes regarding government policies toward labor relations and social welfare. The unions of the New Deal era became forceful advocates of a rise in the social wage, through the labor contract for their members as well as through social policies that would benefit the unorganized. Government programs that lifted the real income of the entire working class lowered the incentive for corporate flight to low-wage regions and made collective bargaining seem like a sure path to routine and incremental progress in wages and working conditions. Postwar unions were, therefore, strong advocates of an increase in the minimum wage, of Social Security, and of the establishment of a system of national health insurance. During the 1960s, key progressives from the world of labor, including Walter Reuther, Michael Harrington, and Willard Wirtz, proved staunch advocates of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty.

During the 1960s, some unions also began organizing among those poverty-wage sectors of the working class that had been largely excluded by New Deal–era labor laws and social policies and by many pre–New Deal unions. Union support for incorporating low-wage workers was not universal, because some unions, especially from the crafts, resisted job training and apprenticeship programs and regulations designed to open employment opportunities to men of color. But, led by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), other unions played the key role in raising the pay of at least 3 million local government clerks, janitors, and sanitation workers, the last, most notably, in the famed 1968 Memphis strike that proved the occasion for the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Likewise, Hospital Workers Local 1199 conducted a vigorous set of strikes and organizing campaigns in New York and other East Coast cities, which helped transform the political economy of the health care sector, thus lifting it out of the world of philanthropic charity, for employees and patients alike. Finally, in California, Florida, New Jersey, and Texas, the unions sought to organize the migrant labor force in agriculture, for generations an icon of poverty-level work and degradation. This task proved largely ineffective in the East, but in California the United Farm Workers, led by the charismatic Cesar Chavez, won political and organizational support to make it possible for unionized agricultural workers to secure a wage and enjoy living conditions above the federal poverty line.

Despite a decline in union membership since the 1970s, unions have actually grown in the public and service sectors in which women are disproportionately employed. Whether in order to attract women members to union membership or in order to represent them, unions have made important contributions to legal and policy challenges to women's disproportionate poverty. This union role did not develop automatically; rather, it was the result of mobilizing by working-class feminists within unions—through the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), for example—who put problems of gender inequality at work and in the labor market on the union agenda. Since the mid-1970s, when CLUW was formed, public-sector and service-sector unions, such as AFSCME and the Service Employees International Union, have spearheaded efforts to make affordable child care available to more workers and to close the gender wage gap through comparable-worth policies.

Deindustrialization, global competition, and the growth of political and managerial hostility to organized labor slashed union membership rolls, economic leverage, and policy influence during the years after 1978. Poverty wages and sweatshop conditions reappeared in industries—such as meatpacking, the garment trades, urban janitorial service, and even commercial construction—that had once been thoroughly unionized. Pattern bargaining—whereby unions seek similar wage and benefit arrangements across an industry or sector—lost its pace-setting potency, thus generating a new wave of wage inequality between workers in the union sector and those outside it. In the 1950s, the weekly earnings of production workers in "miscellaneous manufacturing" stood at about two-thirds of those in the major automobile firms; by the end of the 1980s, those earnings had dropped to less than 50 percent. Likewise, the real value of the minimum wage and of unemployment insurance payments fell steadily after 1968 because the unions and their liberal allies lacked the political influence to sustain them.

Under these conditions, the trade unions can no longer rely upon collective bargaining mechanisms to advance the interest of their members or of their larger working-class constituency. By the early twenty-first century, many of the most dynamic labor organizations, including the Service Employees International Union and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE), have generated political alliances and mobilizing strategies that put the unions at the center of a broad reform coalition that fights for living-wage legislation, universal health insurance, higher minimum wages, and the social regulation of transnational capital.

Nelson Lichtenstein

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Family Wage; Living-Wage Campaigns; Service and Domestic Workers; Sweatshop

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Transportation Policy

Since at least the turn of the twentieth century, transportation policy has strongly influenced how and where America's poor live, work, and play. In the first decades of that century, most large and medium-size cities boasted outstanding mass transportation systems. Privately owned but publicly regulated electric streetcar and steam railroad systems provided affordable service that allowed a wide range of urban residents to travel to sites of employment and recreation. However, beginning in the 1920s and throughout the country, mass transportation systems—on which the urban poor depended—began a long decline. Public policy at the local, state, and federal levels encouraged this decline in the decades to come, while simultaneously subsidizing the growth of private automobile use and road building. The results of these policy choices have had far-reaching consequences for America's poor.

The lack of adequate financial assistance, coupled with public regulations and taxes, contributed to the difficulties of private mass transit operators. Many lines went out of business, and in most cases where local governments took over aging mass transit systems, decades of decreasing service and increasing fares followed. Meanwhile, huge public subsidies were devoted to roads and cars. Public road building accelerated in the 1920s, but the federal Interstate Highway Act of 1956 proved most significant, both in the expansion of road building and in the accompanying decline of mass transit. Providing 90 percent federal funding for highways built by states, the 1956 legislation amounted to the largest public works program in American history and literally and figuratively placed in cement the nation's automobile-focused transportation policy.

The building of the federal interstate highway system during the following decades had vast and wide-ranging consequences for poor people in the United States. For some among the rural poor, the highways provided new opportunities and diminished the isolation of life away from fast-growing metropolitan areas. As the interstate system made the movement of goods by truck rather than by train increasingly efficient and inexpensive, numerous kinds of private employers took advantage of the new transportation system by locating enterprises near highways in rural areas, where labor, land, and tax costs were often lower. In addition to bringing work to once-remote areas, the interstate highways also stimulated the reverse process, allowing the rural poor to reach nearby large towns and cities more quickly and reliably and to take advantage of economic and social opportunities that were farther afield. At the same time, the reliance on the highway system as an avenue of opportunity put a premium on private car ownership, an asset sometimes beyond the reach of the rural poor.

The new highways affected the lives of poor and working-class people in metropolitan areas even more significantly. First, the construction of highways in urban areas required the demolition of large numbers of homes and businesses in roadway rights-of-way. According to one estimate, interstate highway building destroyed 330,000 urban housing units between 1957 and 1968, and the state and local officials choosing highway routes frequently selected paths that disproportionately harmed poor and minority neighborhoods (Mohl 1993). For example, in Florida, relatively poor, usually African American communities in Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Saint Petersburg, and Tampa all experienced serious disruption as the result of highway building. And in innumerable instances around the nation, new roads that skirted the edges of low-income neighborhoods created both daunting physical barriers separating the poor from their more affluent neighbors and harmful air- and noise-pollution health hazards.

The interstate highway system also played an important role in deconcentrating the economic life of metropolitan areas away from urban centers and toward suburban peripheries, encouraging plant relocation as well as the massive boom in suburban shopping malls and other commercial activities that drew business away from central cities. The growing suburbanization of industry and commerce affected poor and working-class urban dwellers profoundly, albeit less directly, by reducing their access to many available jobs. The inconvenient or nonexistent city-to-suburb public transportation options available in most metropolitan areas and the scarcity of low-income housing opportunities in most suburban areas combined to increase commute times and dependence on cars. Those among the urban poor who could not afford to buy, maintain, and insure a reliable automobile were effectively cut off from the rapidly growing suburban labor market. Residential segregation compounded the problem for people of color, who were barred by a powerful combination of racial covenants, discriminatory real estate and lending practices, and racist attitudes from moving to—and often from getting jobs in—growing suburban areas.

In addition to altering the physical and economic environment, the building of new highways contributed to a new political environment. Especially by the mid-1960s and later, community-based citizens' groups were beginning to mobilize in opposition to road builders' plans to condemn and clear land in low-income urban neighborhoods; such organizing in turn created a powerful venue for residents to express their anger with city development policies and decision-making processes. When fighting alone, poor communities still lost many more highway battles than they won. But when they were part of a larger coalition, some notable victories occurred. In metropolitan Boston, for example, groups representing the urban poor, working-class ethnic neighborhoods, suburban environmentalists, and large educational institutions combined in the early 1970s to convince state officials to cancel the remaining highways planned for the area and shift substantial state resources to public transportation instead. Furthermore, the many highway fights—along with other simultaneous conflicts such as those over urban renewal projects and over the control and use of federal antipoverty funds—contributed to the beginning of a new political era in many cities in which community participation increased significantly and the concerns of poor neighborhoods could not be as easily ignored.

Despite an altered political culture, however, the public transportation systems that the urban working classes relied on disproportionately continued to suffer in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Legislation passed by Congress, especially in the mid-1970s and early 1990s, provided small new financial boosts to these mass transit systems, but the overwhelming bias of public policy continues to favor the private automobile and the publicly subsidized roads on which it travels.

Peter Siskind

See also: Housing Policy; Racial Segregation; Rural Poverty; Urban Poverty; Urban Renewal

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Twenty Years at Hull-House, *Jane Addams*

In 1889, Jane Addams (1860–1935) and her colleague, Ellen Gates Starr, moved to Chicago to open a settlement house in the Nineteenth Ward, a neighborhood teeming with immigrants from over twenty different ethnic backgrounds. They opened the doors of Hull House in the fall with the intention of teaching literature and the arts to the people in the neighborhood. These classes in "high" culture were well attended from the outset, and Hull House grew in popularity and scope, eventually offering courses through the University of Chicago Extension and more practical classes such as English, American government, cooking, and sewing. Twenty years later, Jane Addams wrote a memoir of her experience as the director of the most renowned and influential settlement house in America: *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (1910). In it, she subtly offered a progressive social philosophy framing poverty and urban squalor as systemic social and economic problems and not merely the result of individual failure.

The dual educational program at Hull House served people who already had a basic education and aspired to higher learning and people, especially recent immigrants, who needed help to prepare for citizenship and to acquire basic skills to improve their employment opportunities. Addams's discussion of the cultural offerings at Hull House debunked the presumptions of elitists, who doubted that the "unwashed masses," especially those born abroad, could appreciate classes on Shakespeare or classical music. Her colorful anecdotes portrayed her neighbors as intellectually curious, insightful, and sensitive to the refinements of high art. Addams artfully admonished her readers to remember that poverty can by no means be a fair measure of a person's intellect or morality.

Though Addams betrayed an elitist preference for refined and educated people, she also told stories that often subverted these elitist prejudices. She often depicted her neighbors as having more wisdom than the teachers visiting Hull House and made snide remarks about priggish college professors who were unable to make their knowledge accessible and relevant. Addams rejected the paternalistic attitude characteristic of the many settlement houses that sought to "cure" the lower classes of their ignorance and crudeness. Addams believed that all citizens would benefit not only from the knowledge of high culture but also from the experience of material struggle. Of a decidedly democratic disposition, Addams argued that both upper and lower classes benefited from contact with one another. Avoiding the self-righteous polemic in favor of artful storytelling, she tried to convince her largely middle- and upper-class readership that they had just as much to learn from the poor and foreign-born as these people did from them.

Addams's observations of her neighbors taught her that even their most disturbing behavior was often a rational reaction to a destructive social environment. Eschewing moralizing of any kind, Addams ascribed social pathologies to an inadequate social and economic system, never to the inferior character of an individual or group. Her critique of the system notwithstanding, Addams never embraced a particular ideology and asserted that the complexity of each individual experience, and of social problems in general, precluded the application of a particular formula to bring about a solution. She favored the messiness of democracy and cooperative effort.

Addams continued her work as a reformer and advocate but gradually moved on from Hull House and toward efforts to promote democracy and peace internationally, for which she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.

Robert J. Lacey

See also: Hull House; *Hull-House Maps and Papers;* Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; Progressive Era and 1920s; Settlement Houses

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U

"Underclass"

The term "underclass" is both a synonym for poverty and a term used to blame poor Americans for their poverty. It was originally coined by the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (Myrdal 1963) to describe poor people whose jobs had disappeared and who were being driven out of the economy and to the very bottom of the class hierarchy. Journalists and social scientists later added the connotation of blame, using "underclass" as a term for poor people whom they painted as lazy, promiscuous, drug addicted, and criminal and as preferring welfare over work and single motherhood over marriage. Like another widely recognized blaming term, "the undeserving poor," "underclass" carries with it the implication that the poor are not deserving of help. Indeed, "underclass" is a particularly vicious term because it sounds technical and scientific even as it is used to blame people.

Blaming terms function as labels that cover the entire person, leaving no room for redeeming features. Blaming terms can be divided into two kinds: *popular* and *professional*. Widely used popular blaming terms of the past include "paupers," "ne'er do wells," "tramps," and "the dregs." Today's popular blaming terms include "bums" and "welfare queens." These are used in public, but in addition, there are, and always have been, a much larger number of private blaming terms. Most of them are so profane and hateful that they are never used in public or in print.

"Underclass" has always been strictly a professionals' term. A handful of politically liberal social scientists first began to use Myrdal's term in the late 1960s in order to call attention to the structural, principally economic, shifts underlying poverty as sizable numbers of urban factory and other blue-collar jobs disappeared. For the small number who used it this way, Myrdal's term had the attraction of capturing the extreme economic marginalization of a segment of the working class under the impact of industrial restructuring.

Before long, however, and especially during the ghetto disorders of the late 1970s, "underclass" came to be used as a blaming term to label a subgroup of supposedly alienated, culturally deviant inner-city residents. As such, it started to replace the "culture of poverty," the then-dominant professionals' blaming term. "Underclass" was also applied almost entirely to poor African Americans and Latinos, and as a result it became a racial code word.

No one knows who first redefined "underclass" from a synonym for the poverty-stricken to a term blaming the poor, or whether it was a journalist, social scientist, or someone else. In any case, the initial adopters of the blaming term were mainly politically conservative social scientists, social critics, and intellectuals. They pointed to what they saw as the failure or the unwillingness of the poor to act in accord with mainstream or middle-class values, a deficiency that social scientists call "deviant behavior" and that conservatives believe is a major cause of poverty. They ignored the research findings that most poor people shared mainstream American values but that many lacked the jobs, incomes, or economic security required to live in mainstream ways. They simply could not afford to be middle-class.

Journalists rarely used "underclass" in Myrdal's sense, using it, instead, almost entirely in the blaming sense and adopting it at about the same time as the social scientists did. The journalists' accusations of the poor resembled those employed by the social scientists, but this should not be surprising, for these accusations are hoary old stereotypes of the poor that were applied during the nineteenth century to poor German, Irish, Italian, Polish, and Jewish immigrants. Similar stereotypes have been traced back at least to the Middle Ages but are probably much older than that.

The journalists made the term "underclass" more publicly visible, especially during the mid-1980s when the arrival of inexpensive crack cocaine in the ghettos drove up rates of street crime, including murder, especially by drug buyers and sellers. Indeed, the number of poor people assigned to the underclass by the news and other media increased sufficiently to turn the underclass into a national problem, after which several government agencies and private foundations provided funds to undertake studies of "underclass behavior."

The visibility of the term seems also to have had an effect on its definition. Perhaps because of its attention-getting quality, writers began to employ it as an alternative term for the poor or to use it without defining it at all, leaving readers (and perhaps themselves) guessing whether they were describing or blaming the poor.

The popularity of "underclass" as a blaming term peaked in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the country's economy was in trouble. As the economy improved, more poor people found jobs and had less reason to use crack, and fewer people and organizations found it necessary to blame the poor. Since the mid-1990s or thereabouts, both definitions of "underclass" have been employed in the news media, but so far in the twenty-first century, the term seems to be in decline. This may be related to the elimination of the federal welfare program in 1996, a change that forced large numbers of poor people into the minimum- (and subminimum-) wage jobs that were created during the economic boom of the 1990s. Even though many of the poor workers were earning less than they did while they were on welfare, they could no longer be accused of "dependency" or blamed for refusing to work.

The future of "underclass" is unpredictable. Maybe its popularity will increase again, especially in a recession, when many become even poorer than they already are. Then rates of homelessness, family breakdown, crime, and the like will go up again, and so will the demand for a blaming term. Eventually, however, a change of economic and political conditions or the invention of an attention-getting new word could relegate "underclass" to the pile of obsolete terms for the poor.

Herbert J. Gans

See also: African American Migration; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Poverty Research; Puerto Rican Migration; Urban Poverty

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Undocumented Immigrants

See Day Labor; Domestic Work; Immigrants and Immigration; Immigration Policy; Informal Economy; Migrant Labor/Farm Labor; Sweatshop

The Unemployed Worker *and* Citizens without Work, *E. Wight Bakke*

The two-volume work *The Unemployed Worker* and *Citizens without Work* (1940) is a classic of Depression-era social science, based on path-breaking research by Yale University sociologist and later professor of economics E. Wight Bakke. Expanding upon survey methods he had developed in research on unemployed workers in early 1930s England, Bakke undertook a massive eight-year study in New Haven, Connecticut, of what was to remain the decade's overriding social concern: the impact of extended joblessness on individual workers as well as on the very fabric of economic and social life, as measured and observed in the unemployment and welfare offices, union halls, commercial enterprises, civic institutions, and—most poignantly—in the households of unemployed men. Although Bakke had no way of anticipating the unprecedented length or severity of the Great Depression when he started his research in the early 1930s, his approach was uniquely well suited to capturing the unfolding dramas, crises, and eventual "readjustments" made by workers and their families as they grappled with what he aptly dubbed in his subtitle, "the task of making a living without a job." Combining quantitative survey techniques with ethnography, participant observation, intensive case studies, and personal interviews—all conducted with a select sample of workers over the course of several years—he offered a carefully nuanced picture of unemployment as a life-altering experience for individual workers, whose very identities were wrapped up in work and earning, as well as for their families, surrounding neighborhoods, and communities.

Accompanying his subjects through the frustrations of futile job searches and unyielding employment offices, Bakke vividly portrayed the gradually escalating material and psychological effects of economic insecurity—often presented in the words of his subjects—while also tracing the strategies they devised to get by. Shattering the pernicious myth that these workers had grown lazy and dependent on "the dole," he took readers through the often painful and humiliating steps workers would take to stretch their resources and pick up extra income—such as borrowing from or relying on earnings from family members, including their wives and children—before turning to public assistance. He also offered powerful testimony to the impact on family and community life, showing, among other things, that families were devastated but more often than not resilient in adapting to the displacement of the traditional male breadwinner. In striking contrast to later commentators, who would treat this as the beginning of an inevitable descent into family "disorganization" and pathology, Bakke found that the best-adjusted families were those in which the husband had come to accept the greater economic autonomy and household authority of their income-generating wives.

The more fundamental message of Bakke's study, however, was that the days of individualistic economic "self-reliance"—if ever a reality—were long since gone, while the task of maintaining the conditions of economic opportunity and security was the joint responsibility of government, private-sector employers, and collectively organized workers. In the passage excerpted below, Bakke takes note of the emergence of working-class consciousness and its implications for the way Americans thought about traditional values and future social policy.

Alice O'Connor

See also: Family Wage; Great Depression and New Deal; Labor Markets; Poverty Research; Unemployment

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The weight of evidence in the observations we have made in New Haven is that the solidification of a working class is well on the way. This fact has an important bearing on social and economic policy. It means that the satisfaction of human demands will be undertaken by the development of practices and institutions, which have a class character and that economic and political arrangements must take account of the fact of class stratification. Security will be increasingly sought through bargaining between groups. Working-class groups will continue the process perfected by other social groups to use government as a lever toward greater security. This increasing reliance on organization and government is no indication of the decay of self-reliance. It is a form of self-reliance that substitutes collective for individual skills. Class organization and class pressure become the developed means for escaping dependence and providing self-maintenance. The development here charted is not one from self-reliance to dependence, it is from individual to collective self-reliance.

Source: E. Wight Bakke, *Citizens without Work: A Study of the Effects of Unemployment upon the Workers' Social Relations and Practices* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 105.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate measures the fraction of people who want a job and cannot find one. Unemployment and poverty are related because earnings from work in the paid labor force are the main source of income for most working-age people and their dependents. Employment status also determines eligibility for such major social welfare protections as Social Security retirement and survivors' benefits. Whenever unemployment rises, household incomes fall and poverty rates increase, as does the overall level of economic insecurity.

Each month the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which is part of the U.S. Department of Labor, calculates the unemployment rate. The bureau arrives at this figure from telephone surveys of 60,000 households that it conducts during the third week of each month. These households are chosen to try to mirror the main characteristics of the entire U.S. population. The BLS asks questions of each household in order to find out who is working, who is not working but looking for work, and who is neither working nor looking for work. It uses the responses to these questions to compute monthly unemployment figures.

The labor force is defined as those who want jobs—the sum of those people working and those people without jobs who have been looking for work. The labor force is a subset of the entire population; it excludes all people who do not want a job. Some of these people have retired, some have decided to be a stay-at-home parent, some are in school, and some are too young to work.

The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force unable to find work. On the first Friday of each month, the BLS releases the results of its survey from the previous month. For the year 2002, the unemployment rate was 5.8 percent, the average of the twelve monthly unemployment rates for the year. This was an increase of 1.8 percentage points from 2000, the end of the 1990s economic boom (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Many economists have criticized the way the official unemployment rate gets computed. For starters, it ignores discouraged workers, those people who want a job but who have not looked

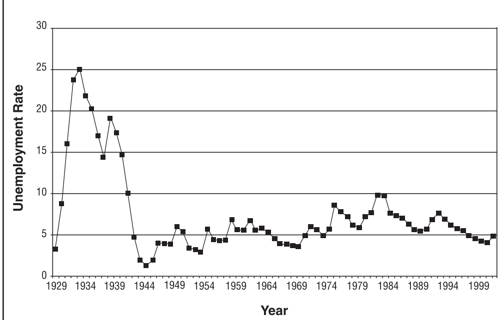
Unemployed workers want unemployment insurance, but mostly they want jobs. (Photographer: Rick Reinhard. Courtesy of National Employment Law Project: www.nelp.org)

for work because employers are not hiring. It also counts as fully employed someone who can only find a part-time job but would like a full-time job. And the survey has been criticized for not accurately reflecting the U.S. population. For example, households that are so poor that they do not own telephones or have homes cannot be surveyed by the BLS. Yet these two groups are much more likely to have unemployed adults, since the lack of jobs and income is a main reason for not having a phone and being homeless.

Despite these criticisms, most economists think that the published unemployment rate provides a good index of the U.S. unemployment problem. Although not perfect, it still provides a good measure of the extent to which the economy cannot create jobs for those who want to work. Moreover, since mismeasurement problems stay relatively the same over time, the unemployment rate provides an excellent measure of unemployment trends. When published figures go up, we can thus be pretty confident that the actual unemployment rate is rising, and vice versa.

Figure 1 presents a historical picture of U.S. unemployment from 1929 to 2001. Unemployment was at its highest levels during the Great Depression of the 1930s, averaging 20 to 25 percent of the labor force. World War II then brought unemployment rates down to under 2 percent. Unemployment rates remained at relatively low levels during the 1940s, the 1950s, and the 1960s. Several recessions in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s pushed up the national unemployment rate. The prolonged economic expansion of the 1990s then reduced unemployment to 4 percent in 2000 from 7.5 percent in 1992. Then the recession of 2001, which was followed by a prolonged period of slow economic growth, pushed the unemployment rate up to 6 percent in the first half of 2003 (U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Figure 1
U.S. unemployment rates, 1929–2001

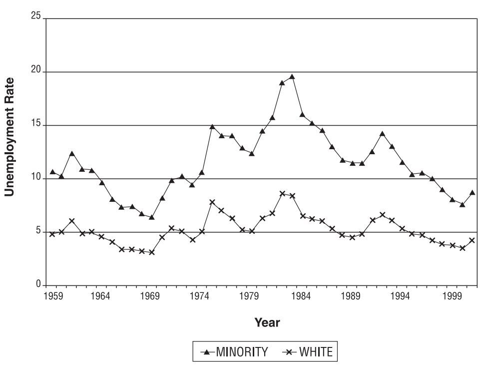


Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure 1 presents only average unemployment figures. But what is true on average is not true of all the parts of the whole. Some groups experience much higher rates of unemployment while other groups tend to have below-average unemployment rates.

As Figure 2 shows, racial minorities have significantly higher unemployment rates than do whites; they are a bit more than two times as likely as whites to be unemployed. For example, in 2001, the white unemployment rate was 4.2 percent, whereas for Blacks and other minorities the unemployment rate was 8.7 percent. Economists have several explanations for this phenomenon. Some attribute the difference to discrimination against minorities. Others attribute higher minority unemployment to lower levels of education, experience, and job skills.

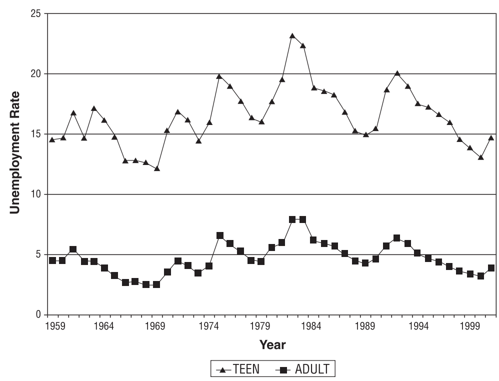
Figure 2
U.S. unemployment rates for minority and white workers, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Teenagers are also more likely to be unemployed than are adults. In large part, this stems from their lack of steady employment experience and from the fact that younger workers tend to be last hired and first fired. Figure 3 compares the unemployment rates for workers twenty years old and over (both male and female) to the rates for teenagers (both male and female). Although the lines tend to rise and fall together, teens experience around three to four times the unemployment that adults do. For example, in 2001, teen unemployment was 14.7 percent while for everyone else the unemployment rate was 3.9 percent (U.S. Department of Labor 2000).

Figure 3
U.S. unemployment rates for teenage and adult workers, 1959–2001

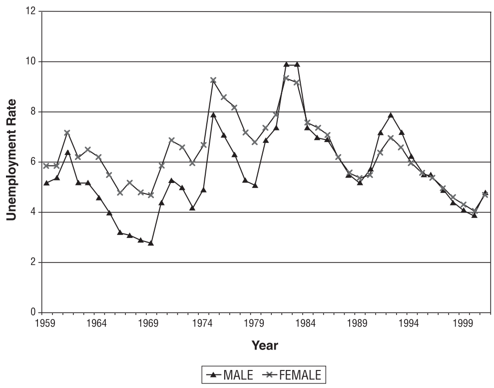


Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Combining the results for Blacks and for teenagers, Black teens are around eight times more likely to be unemployed than white adults. The actual figures from 2001 drive home this point: Unemployment was 3.7 percent for adult whites but a whopping 27.8 percent for Black teens.

The unemployment situation of women is somewhat more complicated. Until the early 1980s, the unemployment rate for women usually exceeded that of men by a small amount—close to 1 percentage point. Since then, the two have been close to equal, as Figure 4 shows; sometimes females have experienced slightly higher unemployment than males, and in other

Figure 4
U.S. unemployment rates for male and female workers, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

years female unemployment rates have been lower than male unemployment rates.

Unemployment would not be such a traumatic experience if unemployment lasted for a short period of time. If laid-off workers could quickly find another job, they would be able to return to their normal life with minimal disruption and minimal loss of income. However, when unemployment lasts for a long period of time, households are likely to run out of government benefits (such as unemployment insurance), use up any savings they had put away for the proverbial rainy day, and exhaust their ability to borrow money from friends and relatives. It is these long bouts of unemployment that spell disaster for individuals and households. Typically, whenever the overall unemployment rate rises, the duration of unemployment for individuals also rises. This makes rising unemployment a recipe for financial disaster, and it is one important reason why unemployment and poverty are related to one another.

But there are other reasons that higher unemployment rates lead to higher poverty rates. Excluding those people who are retired, the main source of income for virtually every household turns out to be the wages derived from work. At times of high unemployment, many individuals lose their jobs and their incomes entirely. Others lose their jobs and are forced to take part-time work. With less work comes less income. Because wage income is so important to household income, whenever unemployment rises there tends to be an increase in poverty. To be sure, employment does not guarantee incomes above the poverty line, as is demonstrated by the problem of millions of employed people who receive below-poverty wages. However, in the United States especially, without income from a job it is much harder for households to maintain a standard of living above the poverty line.

But the relationship between poverty and unemployment is just not a one-way street. Unemployment can lead to poverty, but poverty can also lead to unemployment. Poor households may not be able to afford the reliable transportation needed to take them to work every day, and so they can easily lose their job. Poor individuals are also unlikely to be able to afford the child care necessary to allow them to go off to work. Similarly, the poor may put off medical care and may not be able to eat well, leading to health problems that result in the loss of a job or the inability to hold down a job. If extreme poverty leads to homelessness, it can make it harder to find employment when job applications ask for a current address and phone number.

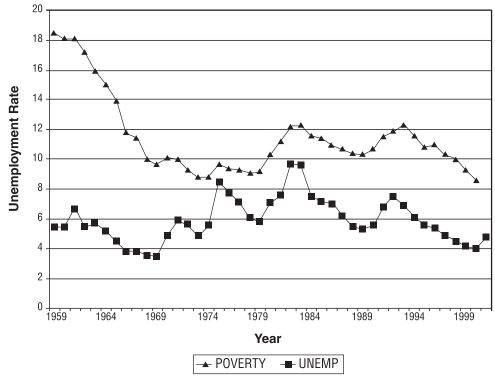
There are also long-term trends that need to be considered. Children are especially hurt when they grow up in poor families. Poor children do not perform well in school and have higher dropout rates. This is compounded by the fact that poorer communities are less likely to attract high-quality teachers and have less control over their schools. For these reasons, among others, poor children are more likely to grow up to be unemployed (and thus poor) adults (Sexton 1961).

Figure 5 looks at the relationship between the overall poverty rate in the United States and the overall unemployment rate in the United States. The figure makes it clear that these two measures are somewhat related. In the 1960s and the 1990s, both unemployment and poverty fell. And during the recessions of the early 1980s and early 1990s, both the unemployment and poverty rates rose.

But several factors keep poverty and unemployment rates from always moving together. First, government benefits like unemployment insurance and welfare provide income to people without jobs. Although welfare does not, in most instances, bring income above poverty levels, it does provide a temporary measure of protection that may be combined with other income sources. Second, poverty measures are derived from household incomes, whereas unemployment rates measure the experiences of individuals. Many people are members of households with more than one adult. When one adult loses a job, others may continue working and manage to keep household income above the poverty line. This factor has become increasingly important over time as more and more women have entered the labor force. Third, as we saw above, the overall unemployment rate can fall or be artificially low due to a rise in the number of discouraged workers who are no longer looking for work and are thus not meaured in the official statistics, but this does not necessarily mean that jobs and income are increasing. Finally, since the United States measures poverty in absolute terms, economic growth should reduce the U.S. poverty rate over time. In contrast, there is no long-term trend in the rate of unemployment, and no reason to expect unemployment rates to fall as living standards rise. We can see the effects of these forces in Figure 5. Unemployment rates climbed in the 1970s, but poverty rates remained relatively stable due to rising government benefits, more workers per household, and rising living standards on average.

Figure 5

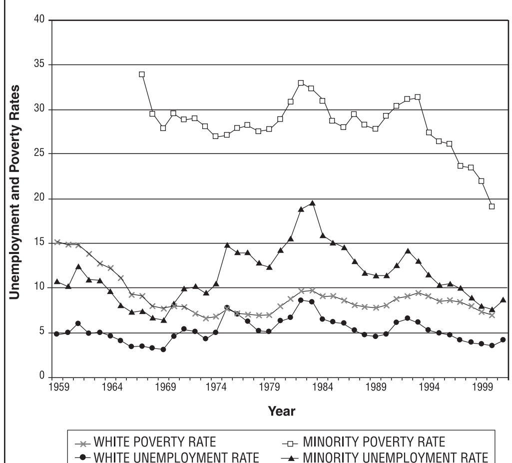
U.S. poverty and unemployment rates, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure 6

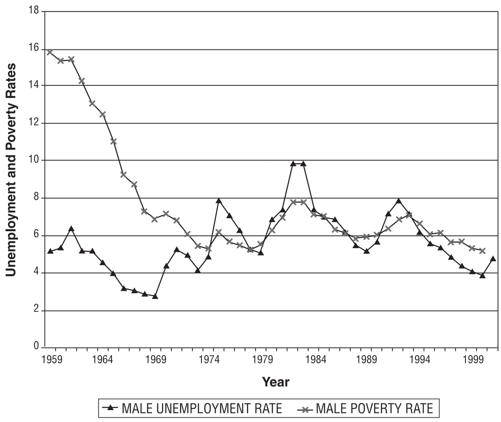
U.S. poverty and unemployment rates for minority and white workers, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure 7

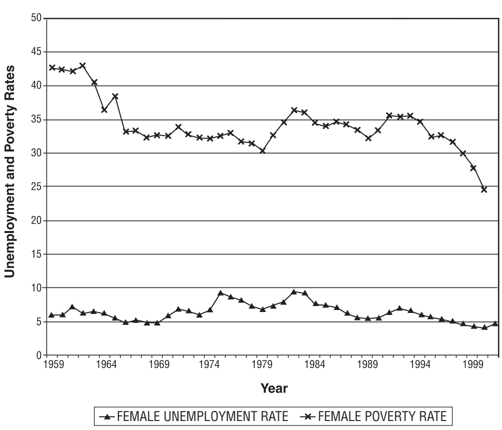
U.S. poverty and unemployment rates for male workers, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure 8

U.S. poverty and unemployment rates for female workers, 1959–2001



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2002. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure 6 looks at the relationship between unemployment and poverty by race. The poverty figures here are for households headed by Blacks, since the U.S. Census Bureau has not calculated poverty rates for all minorities stretching back over long periods of time. Like the overall figures, the relationship between unemployment and poverty for both whites and minorities in Figure 6 is rather close, more so for minorities than for whites. This is partly because minorities are less likely than whites to have other sources of income that can be used during times of unemployment. As a result, job loss is more likely to result in poverty for minorities than for whites.

Finally, Figures 7 and 8 show the relationship between unemployment and poverty by gender. These relationships are noticeably weaker than the race relationships and the overall relationship between poverty and unemployment. For example, Figure 7 shows male unemployment rates rising sharply in the 1970s while poverty rates for households headed by a male fell. This occurs because all married couples are considered to be a household headed by a male. When one adult loses his or her job, other adults in the household can pick up the slack and keep the household out of poverty. This occurred with great frequency in the 1970s as women entered the labor force in large numbers.

Unfortunately, the Census Bureau does not collect information on poverty rates for households headed by teenagers. However, for some of the reasons discussed above, teen unemployment and poverty rates for households headed by teens will probably be closely related.

Steven Pressman

See also: Economic/Fiscal Policy; Employment Policy; Feminization of Poverty; Labor Markets; Poverty, Statistical Measure of; Social Security Act of 1935

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Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance, also referred to as unemployment compensation, is the chief governmental program of income support for unemployed individuals in the United States. Unemployment insurance is not means-tested; rather, it addresses poverty by providing income support as a matter of right to laid-off workers (O'Leary and Rubin 1997, 164–165). In recent nonrecession years, state unemployment insurance (UI) benefits and payroll taxes each annually amounted to $20 billion or more, with benefits considerably higher during economic downturns as a result of greater numbers of recipients and of benefit extensions (U.S. Department of Labor 2002a, 5).

The related goals of the UI program are to provide involuntarily unemployed workers with adequate, temporary income replacement and to automatically stabilize the economy by using accumulated trust funds to maintain consumer spending levels during an economic downturn. Secondary goals include supporting the job search of unemployed individuals by permitting them to find work that matches their prior experience and skills and enabling employers to retain experienced workers during layoffs (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 27–30).

Unemployment insurance is a federal-state social insurance program. Established in the United States with the passage of the 1935 Social Security Act, federal law (now including the Federal Unemployment Tax Act) provides employer tax incentives and federal administrative funding to states with unemployment insurance laws conforming to the basic federal framework. In response to these federal incentives, all states have established and maintained state unemployment insurance laws since the passage of the federal enabling legislation (Blaustein 1993, 149–153, 158–159).

In order to achieve the UI program's goals, adequate weekly benefits must reach sufficient numbers of laid-off workers for a sufficient period. Otherwise, unemployed workers are unable to maintain sufficient consumer spending to support economic activity in their communities while they are looking for suitable jobs. On these counts, unemployment insurance programs in the United States are more limited than government assistance programs provided for unemployment in other developed nations (Storey and Neisner 1997, 615–625; Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 33–36).

Qualifications for regular unemployment insurance benefits are set almost entirely in state (and not federal) laws. Expressed in their most basic terms, eligibility rules require prior work history and willingness to work. Disqualification from benefits is imposed for separations from employment for reasons considered voluntary. The most common disqualification provisions are for leaving work without good cause, for discharges due to misconduct, and for refusals of work (Blaustein 1993, 278–283; Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 91, 101–123). Over the life of the program, state laws have become more restrictive in their treatment of workers separated from employment for reasons other than layoffs, especially those out of work due to quits and discharges (Blaustein 1993, 283–287).

State unemployment insurance laws also control the levels and duration of regular benefits. The basic duration of regular state benefits in the United States is twenty-six weeks. This generalization largely applies to laid-off workers with a substantial period of employment prior to their unemployment; part-year or part-time workers are not always eligible for the full number of benefit weeks. Only eight states (Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and West Virginia) and Puerto Rico currently pay unemployment to all laid-off workers for a full twenty-six weeks; in other states, the maximum duration of benefits depends upon the particular formula employed in state laws. Massachusetts and Washington State currently have a maximum duration of up to thirty weeks of regular benefits (U.S. Department of Labor 2002b). During periods of higher unemployment, benefit extensions are typically provided for a specified number of weeks. In the past four recessions, Congress has adopted temporary, federally funded extension programs (Blaustein 1993, 228–241).

Weekly benefits generally come to around 35 percent of lost wages, on average, for unemployed workers (see Figure 1), with higher-wage workers having a lower rate of wage replacement because their benefits are capped at weekly maximums, which are set by state laws. These national averages mask considerable variability in unemployment benefits from state to state. In 2002, maximum weekly unemployment insurance benefits ranged from $210 in Alabama to $512–$768 in Massachusetts (depending on the number of dependents) (U.S. Department of Labor 2002b). Average weekly benefits in the United States in June 2002 were $258 (U.S. Department of Labor 2002c), a below-poverty level in many of the lower-benefit states.

Unemployment insurance is not paid to all unemployed workers. Some are separated for disqualifying reasons, some have insufficient earnings to qualify, and some do not apply. Although experts have debated the precise reasons, there has been a generally noted decline in receipt of unemployment insurance benefits in the United States since the 1950s, with a marked decline in the 1980s (see Figure 2). The reasons given for this decline in the proportion of unemployed individuals receiving unemployment

Figure 1

UI wage replacement ratio: Average weekly UI benefit/average weekly wages, 1938–2002

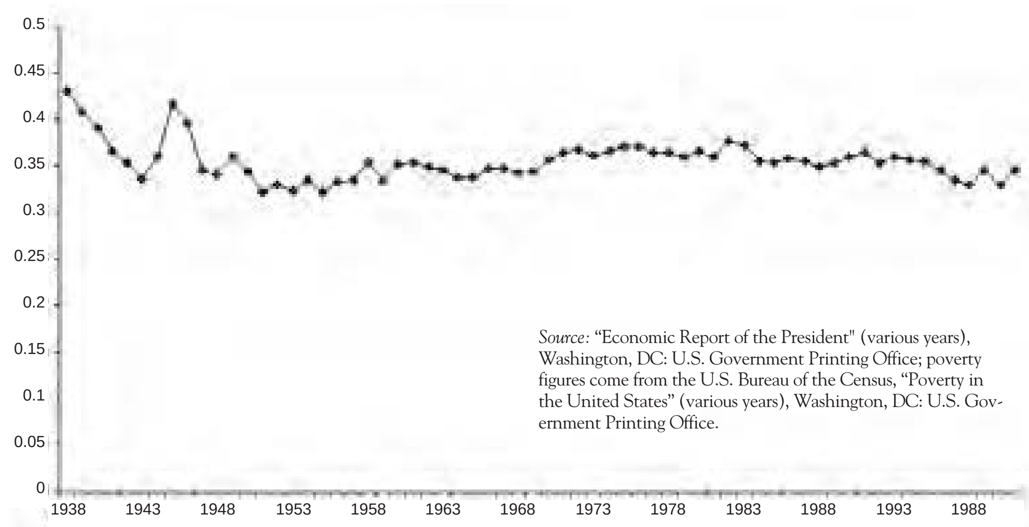
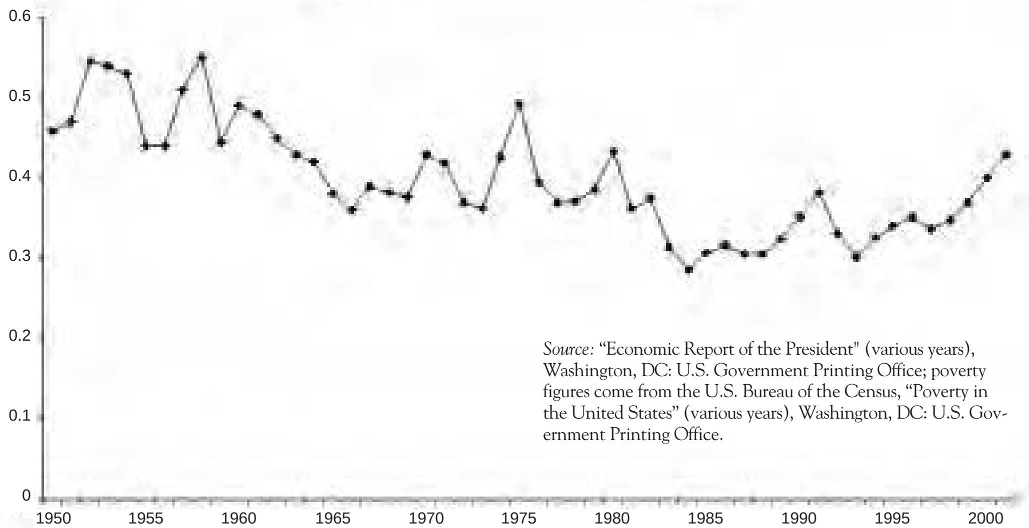


Figure 2
Rate of receiving UI, 1950–2000



Source: "Economic Report of the President" (various years), Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; poverty figures come from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Poverty in the United States" (various years), Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

insurance include more restrictive state laws and penalties, changes in unionization rates and manufacturing employment, and shifts in the geographic location of unemployment (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1996, 44–49). In addition, the expansiveness or restrictiveness of the administrations in different states is probably a factor in the range of variation in benefit receipt (Vroman 2001, 102–103, 134–135).

Low-wage and contingent employees experience more unemployment, yet they receive unemployment insurance benefits at levels below their participation rates in the labor market. A recent study of mid-1990s data found that "low-wage workers were twice as likely to be out of work as higher-wage workers but only half as likely to receive UI benefits" (General Accounting Office 2000, 13).

The New Deal origins of unemployment insurance still affect current rules governing eligibility for and disqualification from benefits. To a significant degree, many unemployment insurance rules reflect the male-breadwinner model of households that was prevalent at the founding of the program. This model presumed a non-working spouse available to perform child care and other domestic tasks. Current unemployment insurance rules adversely affect female workers disproportionately because they must leave work due to domestic responsibilities or limit their work search to conform to these responsibilities (McHugh and Koch 1994, 1422–1436).

Unemployment insurance is financed by both state and federal payroll taxes, which are imposed on employers falling within legal definitions of covered employment. Federal laws defining employment cover the employees of most private employers (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 163). State unemployment insurance laws are free to cover employment that is not subject to federal taxation, and a number of states have broader definitions of covered employment (Blaustein 1993, 162).

Nonemployees, mainly independent contractors and self-employed individuals, are not covered by unemployment insurance programs. Another major exception in coverage is made for some agricultural laborers (Blaustein 1993, 278; Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 163–167, 169–171). There are also a number of specific occupational exclusions and inclusions in both federal and state laws (U.S. Department of Labor 2002d, tables 1.1–1.11).

Private employers pay a tax rate imposed upon these taxable wages that is partially established by valid claims filed by their former employees, a process known as "experience rating" (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 73–89). State unemployment insurance payroll tax structures vary, but generally employers with little or no history of layoffs owe far less than employers with prior claims; in many states, employers with no history of layoffs pay no tax (U.S. Department of Labor 2002b).

Nonprofit and governmental employers generally reimburse state trust funds for any benefits paid to their employees and do not pay experience-rated unemployment insurance taxes (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 163, 167–168). Nonprofit and governmental employers also do not pay the federal unemployment tax (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1995, 167).

An international comparison of programs reveals three distinctive features of U.S. unemployment insurance programs: First, unlike all other unemployment insurance programs in major developed nations, these programs in the United States are administered by the states rather than the national government (Storey and Neisner 1997, 603–604). As a result, competition between the states over employer tax and program benefit levels provides considerable restrictive pressures on unemployment insurance programs in the United States (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1996, 28–34). Second, in the United States, employers pay virtually all the costs of unemployment insurance programs, whereas in other countries, employees usually share a considerable, if not equal, portion of unemployment insurance financing (Storey and Neisner 1997, 604–609). This translates to considerable employer "ownership" of unemployment insurance programs in government deliberations about the cost and scope of the program. Third, state unemployment insurance taxes are set by experience rating in the United States, unlike programs in all other developed nations, which use flat taxes (Storey and Neisner 1997, 607). Some analysts feel that using experience rating to determine unemployment taxes heightens the concern of U.S. employers regarding unemployment insurance eligibility and benefit levels, because these factors have a direct impact on their payroll tax levels (Advisory Council on Unemployment Compensation 1996, 99–112).

Richard W. McHugh

See also: American Association for Labor Legislation; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Social Security Act of 1935; Unemployment

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Unions

See Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Service and Domestic Workers; Trade/Industrial Unions; Wagner Act

Urban Poverty

Urban poverty refers to poverty in cities, which is distinguished from rural or suburban poverty by its concentration, its conspicuousness, its causes, and its racial and ethnic composition. Most poor people in the United States do not live in central cities, but a disproportionately high percentage of central-city residents are poor. In 2001, the Census Bureau counted approximately 32.9 million poor people in the United States, of whom some 13.4 million (or 40.7 percent of all poor people) lived in central cities, compared to about 12.1 million (36.8 percent of the poor) in suburbs and 7.5 million (22.8 percent) in rural areas (percentages and populations do not add precisely because of rounding). However, while 11.7 percent of all Americans were poor in 2001, 16.5 percent of people living in central cities were poor, compared to 8.2 percent of people in suburbs and 14.2 percent of people in nonmetropolitan areas (Proctor and Dalaker 2002, 8–9). Over the course of American history, urban poverty has probably attracted a disproportionate share of commentary as well, for a variety of reasons. Urban poverty carries with it distinctive problems, such as dense living conditions, poor sanitation, and the diseases that can result. Furthermore, because the rich and poor live relatively close to one another in cities, the difficulties of the urban poor are especially evident to those who are better off. This fact has helped make cities the birthplaces of many important innovations in poor relief, ranging from poorhouses to settlement houses. It has also made cities the setting for a whole host of social investigations into the nature and sources of poverty—investigations often distorted by sensationalistic images of the poor. In attempting to explain the inequalities of urban life, many observers have divided the poor into categories of "deserving" and "undeserving." These categorizations have often drawn upon and contributed to racial and ethnic stereotypes, reflecting the large number of immigrants and, since the early twentieth century, of African Americans among the urban poor. Yet the attempt to distinguish the worthy from the unworthy poor has never corresponded to reality: Urban poverty has historically been the result of structural and economic conditions rather than of individual or behavioral characteristics.

In the eighteenth century, cities in British North America generally enjoyed lower rates of poverty than those of England. Nonetheless, economic inequality and poverty were important problems in American cities from colonial days: In Philadelphia in 1772, one in four mariners, laborers, sawyers, and carters received poor relief (Smith 1990, 174). In many ways, preindustrial urban poverty established patterns that would be followed for decades or even centuries. Urban working people faced frequent unemployment caused by cyclical or seasonal economic downturns, epidemic disease, injuries, and political turmoil.

The practice of public poor relief in eighteenth-century cities derived largely from British precedent, which emphasized kin responsibility for the poor where possible and public responsibility for the local poor in other cases (under "settlement laws," nonlocal poor were not supposed to be aided; rather, they were to be sent back to their place of legal residence). City governments offered both outdoor relief, in which poor people were aided in their own homes, and indoor relief, in which the destitute were placed in an institution such as a poorhouse. Several cities built workhouses during the colonial period as a way of recouping some of the costs of aiding the poor and discouraging the able-bodied poor from seeking relief. Despite such early attempts to distinguish the deserving from the undeserving poor, some historians have seen this as a period when prevailing attitudes toward the poor were relatively benign: Poverty was viewed as an integral part of God's plan for humanity.

In the postcolonial period and the early nineteenth century, structural changes in the industrializing economies of cities such as New York and Philadelphia took a toll on working-class urban residents. Jobs formerly performed by a single worker were subdivided into individual tasks in new factories and large workshops. The result was the de-skilling of much artisanal work, the rise of sweated—that is, sweatshop—labor, and a growing class of men who were dependent on wages and vulnerable to economic contractions.

For those excluded from or segregated within the industrial labor market, conditions were even worse. For poor urban women, industrialization meant the decline of household production and the need to earn money in a labor market sharply segregated by sex. Among African Americans, a few prospered, but the majority were kept out of industrial jobs and forced into menial labor. The arrival of impoverished immigrants, particularly the Irish fleeing the Great Potato Famine of the 1840s, augmented the ranks of the urban poor.

Both indoor and outdoor aid underwent a transformation during the first half of the nineteenth century. Poor relief became less accepting of poverty as a facet of divine providence and more condemning of the poor as lazy and intemperate. Private antipoverty associations such as the New York Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor (established in 1843) sought to correct what reformers saw as the degenerate domestic habits of the poor. Poorhouses reached a peak of popularity among reformers during this period, and although more people received outdoor assistance than indoor, the asylum was an important symbolic statement of the aim to reform the poor through isolation and regimentation.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a peak period for urbanization and industrialization in the United States, as well as a high point in immigration to American cities. Millions of poor immigrants from southern and eastern Europe arrived during this period, and most settled in cities, typically in neighborhoods characterized by poor paving and sanitation, overpriced housing, and high population densities. These new arrivals faced harsh conditions at work as well, including long hours, frequent unemployment, and wages that failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living. To make ends meet, many men "tramped," traveling in search of work, and many families moved, took in boarders, cut back on consumption, went into debt to local grocers or landlords, got help from kin or friends, or sent additional wage earners (most commonly children) into the workforce.

As a last resort, many turned to relief, but this became increasingly difficult as advocates of "organized charity" in the 1870s and 1880s attacked public outdoor relief for "demoralizing" the poor and for being too costly. By sending well-off native-born women as "friendly visitors" to monitor the condition of relief applicants, the charity organizers hoped to eliminate fraud and redundancy in charitable giving and to aid only the truly deserving, while "uplifting" the poor and introducing immigrants to American ways. In several cities, including Philadelphia and Brooklyn, the charity organizers succeeded in eliminating public outdoor relief altogether in the 1870s.

The depression of 1893, the worst the nation had yet seen, revealed to many the shortcomings of the charity organizers' individualistic and moralistic approach to poverty. The economic shock provided fertile ground for a growing movement of "progressive" reformers who stressed poverty's environmental and societal causes. Simultaneously, new understandings of child development helped create support for tenement reform, child labor and compulsory-education legislation, juvenile courts, and other reforms aimed at improving the lives of the urban poor through "child-saving." Settlement houses, such as Jane Addams's Hull House in Chicago, provided an important base for middle-class reformers, particularly young, college-educated women, who aimed to help the poor through the emerging professions of social science and social work.

The era around the turn of the twentieth century was a time of tremendous physical growth and restructuring for cities. Although poor and working-class European immigrants continued to cluster in "ghettos," electric trolleys and automobiles allowed wealthier members of ethnic communities as well as native-born urbanites to live in new "streetcar suburbs" in less densely settled areas of the industrial metropolis. The major exception to this pattern was African Americans, who left the rural South for the urban North by the hundreds of thousands during and after World War I and found themselves tightly segregated in both housing and labor markets.

The Great Depression of the 1930s transformed both the experience of and the response to poverty in American cities. By the summer of 1933, unemployment in the United States had reached 24.9 percent, but in many cities the problem was even more severe: In Toledo, Ohio, unemployment reached 80 percent (Katz 1996, 207). Private charities, ethnic mutual insurance societies, and municipal welfare systems were overwhelmed by the increase in demand for relief.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal provided relief and work to millions of impoverished city dwellers. The Works Progress Administration employed more than 3 million people within a year of its 1935 creation, many of them building roads, public buildings, and other infrastructure improvements in the cities where they lived (Katz 1996, 236). For workers in the private sector, the Wagner Act (1935) provided an important tool for organizing and bargaining with employers. The resulting union contracts protected many workers from the frequent encounters with poverty that had for more than a century been virtually inseparable from wage labor.

In the decades following World War II, cities underwent tremendous demographic, economic, and spatial transformations that profoundly shaped the character and scope of urban poverty. Demographically, the Great Migration of African Americans that had begun in World War I picked up again with considerable force during and after World War II. Between 1940 and 1970, 5 million Blacks left the South for northern and western cities (Katz 2001, 39). At the same time, an even greater number of whites, encouraged by federally subsidized loans and by highways constructed with federal funds, left central cities in a comparable "great migration" to the suburbs. The net effect was to deplete the populations of northern and midwestern cities and to transform their racial composition: Between 1950 and 1970, Philadelphia changed from 18 to 34 percent Black, and Detroit from 16 to 44 percent Black (Massey and Denton 1993, 45). During the same years, nearly 40 percent of the population of Puerto Rico left for cities on the U.S. mainland, principally New York (Davis 2001, 124).

As Black and Puerto Rican migrants were arriving in search of opportunity, however, many of the high-paying industrial jobs they sought were moving elsewhere. Enticed by federal tax and procurement policies, the interstate highway system, more advantageous state labor laws, and cheap land, corporations moved jobs from northern central cities to the suburbs, to the Sun Belt, and overseas. Between 1967 and 1987, Philadelphia lost 64 percent of its manufacturing jobs, and Chicago lost 60 percent (Wilson 1997, 29). Some of the lost manufacturing jobs were replaced by service-sector work, but unskilled service jobs tended to be less unionized, less stable, and less well paid than industrial work. Thus, low-wage workers saw their real incomes drop in the late twentieth century. A large class of working poor people emerged in cities throughout the country, alongside even larger numbers of the unemployed (those looking for work) and the jobless (discouraged workers no longer looking). And while both housing and employment opportunities moved increasingly to the suburbs, African Americans remained largely in central cities, confined by a housing market segregated by race.

Martin Luther King Jr. and others within the African American civil rights movement insisted that the nation address the segregation and poverty that affected Blacks in the urban North. Partly in response to these demands, President Lyndon B. Johnson instituted a War on Poverty that included a variety of measures for relieving conditions in American cities. The Community Action Program, created in 1964, and the Model Cities program, rolled out in 1966, required that poor people themselves participate in administering the federal funds. Though innovative, these programs received relatively little funding and frequently met with opposition from local politicians. These programs proved to be ineffectual in averting the riots that killed scores of people and damaged hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of property in Black ghettos throughout the country in the summers of 1964 through 1968.

The industrial decline at the root of the unemployment in Black ghettos also undermined municipal tax bases, putting pressure on city services, particularly in the wake of New York City's brush with bankruptcy in 1975. In the 1980s, the ascendance of right-wing politics in statehouses and in Washington, D.C., led to cuts in aid to cities already suffering from fiscal austerity and facing new problems, such as AIDS, crack cocaine addiction, and a sharp rise in homelessness. These years also saw cuts in a variety of federal social welfare programs serving millions of urban residents. Food stamps, school lunches, Medicaid, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (or "welfare") were all cut back during the Republican presidency of Ronald Reagan. It was Democrat Bill Clinton, however, who signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996 and thus ended the entitlement to welfare and forced many city dwellers off relief rolls and into poverty-wage jobs.

As the twenty-first century began, race remained a crucial component of urban poverty. African Americans, particularly in large cities, remained highly segregated residentially and at much greater risk than whites for unemployment and poverty. In 2000, some 7.9 million people, most of them Black and urban, lived in census tracts in which more than 40 percent of the residents were poor (Jargowsky 2003, 4). These neighborhoods often also suffered from crime, drug use, and low educational attainment.

At the same time, the problem of urban poverty cannot be reduced to a stereotypical portrayal of a Black "underclass" living in an inner-city ghetto. Urban poverty is not simply Black and white: Since immigration laws were reformed in 1965, many poor immigrants, particularly from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia, have swelled the ranks of the urban poor in cities across the country. Nor is poverty defined simply by race and ethnicity. Women remain at higher risk for poverty than men, and age is also a major factor. Now, however, it is not the old but the young who are at greatest risk: In 1995, 36 percent of inner-city children under age six were poor, compared to 16 percent of young children in suburbs (Katz 2001, 39).

Michael B. Kahan

See also: African American Migration; Charity Organization Societies; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Economic Depression; Globalization and Deindustrialization; Homelessness; Immigrants and Immigration; Industrialization; Puerto Rican Migration; Racial Segregation; Settlement Houses; "Underclass"; Urban Renewal; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Urban Renewal

The term "urban renewal" is sometimes used generically to refer to any public or private effort to redevelop an urban area, and at other times it refers to a specific federal program that existed from 1949 until 1974. This entry will address both the specific program of that name and some of its successor programs that have pursued similar goals.

The federal urban renewal program was proposed after World War II as a response to the rapid decline in industrial, commercial, and residential activity that was overtaking most American cities. Local civic leaders desperately wanted federal assistance so that they could respond to this decline with various redevelopment initiatives. A temporary coalition between business interests and supporters of housing for the poor led to the passage of the Housing Act of 1949, which created the urban renewal program and authorized substantial funding for new public housing units to replace those demolished by earlier urban renewal projects.

Under the urban renewal program, cities were provided federal funds, with which they were to acquire land in "blighted" areas of the city, demolish buildings, relocate residents, and redevelop the land for new uses. Cities had to provide one-third of the cost, which was usually met through local public works projects. States also had to pass laws enabling localities to utilize the power of eminent domain to acquire "blighted" properties.

New York City: Urban renewal in Harlem. 1930s photograph. (Bettmann/Corbis)

The housing goals of urban renewal were soon subordinated to the redevelopment goals for two principal reasons. First, public housing was unpopular both in Congress and at the local level, so many fewer units were funded than were authorized in 1949, and those that were developed often faced stiff local opposition. Second, local officials placed their highest priority on revamping their central business districts with new private and public developments, and they often wanted to move low-income people away from the downtown area rather than to improve their neighborhood living conditions.

Therefore, over the life of the urban renewal program, many more low-income households were displaced than were provided replacement public housing. In addition, until 1970, relocation benefits were grossly inadequate, so poor households had difficulty obtaining housing in the private sector. Displacement also resulted in the destruction of neighborhood ties and traditions that had sustained low-income families. Particularly hard-hit were African Americans, whose neighborhoods were disproportionately bulldozed and whose relocation opportunities were limited by racial discrimination. The extremely high concentration of African Americans in public housing was, in part, the result of urban renewal.

Urban renewal was also criticized for failing to achieve downtown redevelopment goals. Many massive projects were isolated from their surroundings and resulted in a loss of human scale within downtown areas. Yet even if projects had been better designed, they probably would have failed to counter the strong economic and social pressures driving the exodus of retail and commercial activity to the suburbs.

In response to a growing chorus of protest, the goals of the urban renewal program were substantially modified by the Housing Act of 1968. It was more strictly targeted to residential renewal, replacement housing requirements were tightened, and localities were encouraged to use rehabilitation, rather than clearance, where possible. Also reducing the negative impact of the program was the passage of the Uniform Relocation Act of 1970, which substantially increased relocation benefits for those displaced by this and other federal programs.

However, by the early 1970s, the program remained sufficiently unpopular that it became one of the targets of President Richard Nixon's efforts to redesign and reduce the federal commitment to revitalizing cities. With the passage of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, it and several other programs were combined into the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The CDBG program uses a formula, rather than a lengthy application process, to distribute funds, and it gives local officials wide discretion in how to spend its funds. Whereas urban renewal was criticized for obliterating low-income neighborhoods, CDBG has often been accused of ignoring them in favor of other local projects and of spreading funds to communities that have less pressing needs. However, the bulk of CDBG funds are targeted at lower-income areas and are primarily used for housing rehabilitation rather than clearance. The Housing Act of 1990 supplemented CDBG with another housing block grant, the Home Investments Partnership (HOME) program.

Another successor to the urban renewal program was the Urban Development Action Grant program, created during President Jimmy Carter's administration in 1978. This program was targeted at central-city economic redevelopment, and it required substantial leveraging of federal funds with private investment. It never reached the scale of the earlier program, and it was often criticized for unfairly subsidizing some businesses at the expense of others. President Ronald Reagan's administration persuaded Congress to abolish this program in 1988.

Currently, most redevelopment of downtown areas is carried out with private funds, augmented by state and local government support through such mechanisms as development bonds and tax increment financing (TIF) districts. Some federal CDBG funds are also used for this purpose. (When local elites consider attracting a particularly desirable industry or when they are especially committed to a large project, such as a sports stadium, state and local subsidies can become quite large.) Private developers, such as James Rouse, developed creatively designed retail centers that successfully lured downtown workers in to eat and shop, capitalizing on the fact that throughout the postwar central-city decline, the central business district had retained its function as an administrative center. These centers were also supported by a growing emphasis on tourism, which became a major new downtown economic force. The redevelopment projects of the 1980s and 1990s tended to be more modest in scope than the urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s, therefore generating less displacement, although the demolition of single-room-occupancy hotels for some of these projects was found to contribute to homelessness.

President Bill Clinton attempted to revive federal support for declining areas through the Urban Empowerment Zone program (1994), but little new federal funding accompanied this effort. In addition, federal housing assistance programs continue to be funded at levels far below the extent of need. In many residential areas, nonprofit community development corporations (CDCs) piece together multiple public and private funding sources to create affordable housing and limited commercial redevelopment. However, reduced federal funding means that their efforts reach only a small portion of those in need of affordable housing.

R. Allen Hays

See also: Housing Policy; Racial Segregation; Urban Poverty; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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U.S. Agency for International Development (AID)

The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) is the federal government agency responsible for overseeing the implementation of U.S. bilateral foreign aid. It was officially created by an executive order of President John F. Kennedy in 1961 as part of the Foreign Assistance Act, but the agency's goals were established earlier. The Marshall Plan reconstruction of Europe after World War II set the pathway for future projects to help countries recovering from disasters, attempting democratizing reforms, and climbing out of poverty. U.S. AID was organized to unify previous aid efforts by combining the work of the Export-Import Bank on currency issues, the Department of Agriculture's surplus distribution programs, the International Cooperation Agency's economic and technical assistance, and the Development Loan Fund's strategic loan programs. U.S. AID does not administer military aid.

Today, U.S. AID has an annual budget of $6 billion and, under the guidance of the Secretary of State, operates programs in more than seventy-five countries. The agency itself describes its raison d'être as to "advance U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance" (U.S. AID, "About USAID"). The agency has claimed many victories in the decades since its inception. According to the agency's Web site, over 3 million individuals are saved each year thanks to U.S. AID's immunization projects, and its family planning programs have improved the lives of 50 million couples worldwide. Regional projects have met with great success as well; millions of South African deaths were prevented by U.S. AID action to deter a massive famine in 1992, and approximately 21,000 Honduran families have been educated about cultivation techniques that have already reduced soil erosion there by 70,000 tons.

However, there are both limitations to and criticisms of U.S. AID's work. First, and contrary to the belief of the vast majority of Americans, only 0.5 percent of the U.S. federal budget is devoted to nonmilitary foreign aid. This clearly curtails the scope of possibility for U.S. AID. Second, some argue that the goals of the agency are misguided and are too rooted in a concern for U.S. business interests. For example, the agency has targeted $15 million since the early 1990s on developing the energy sectors of poor nations. Environmentalists and other critics point out that most of this money is spent on fossil fuels rather than on cleaner and renewable alternatives. The United States has captured by far the largest share of these mushrooming markets for private power. In addition, U.S. foreign aid has sometimes been used as a carrot to entice vulnerable nations to adhere to U.S. foreign policy goals, a fact long criticized by third world nations. A notable instance was Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, which extended U.S. AID monies to Latin American nations friendly to both anticommunism and U.S. businesses.

Nevertheless, U.S. AID has fulfilled an important role in extending assistance to many of the neediest communities in the world. By highlighting the suffering of underdeveloped nations, the centrality of development to sustaining peaceful and prosperous relations worldwide, and the vast improvements that even small infusions of aid money can make when administered appropriately, U.S. AID continues to perform a vital service.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Peace Corps; World Bank

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U.S. Children's Bureau

The U.S. Children's Bureau (CB) is a federal government agency devoted to research and advocacy on behalf of the nation's children. The CB was created by Congress in 1912 at the urging of a national network of women reformers and their male allies. Originally charged with the investigation of child life, the bureau expanded its scope over the following decades to include the administration of programs devoted to maternal and child health, the regulation of child labor, and services for disadvantaged children. Although the CB was not conceived as an antipoverty agency, its studies consistently highlighted the devastating effects of low family incomes on children, and its staff designed government programs—most especially Aid to Dependent Children—to support poor children. Until 1946, the CB maintained a high profile among those concerned with the welfare of children. Thereafter, the agency lost status and jurisdiction: By 2002, it was housed in the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and its focus was narrowed to abused and neglected children and foster care.

The CB emerged in the ferment of early-twentieth-century progressive reform. Progressivism comprised a set of mostly middle-class responses to problems that reformers believed were caused by the increasing pace of immigration, urbanization, and industrialization. Eager to establish new places for themselves in the world, educated women not only participated in but also effectively led a spectrum of these reform campaigns, especially those intended to improve the lives of women and children. Lillian Wald and Florence Kelley, activists in New York, hatched the idea of a federal agency devoted to collecting and disseminating information about the nation's children. As early as 1903, the two women began drawing allies into their hopes for such an agency, arguing that Americans could not make sound decisions about the welfare of children if they did not have knowledge of children's condition or of the results of existing programs to improve children's lives. Finally, in 1912, their efforts resulted in creation of the U.S. Children's Bureau, situated in the Department of Labor.

As soon as the bureau was created, women reformers urged President William Howard Taft to appoint a woman to head the agency. Ultimately, he acquiesced and appointed the women's nominee, Julia Lathrop, as the CB's first head and the first woman to run a federal agency. Lathrop mostly hired women for her new bureau, making it a female stronghold in the overwhelmingly male federal government.

During its first two decades, the CB's most significant achievements related to maternal and infant health. The bureau's first research projects revealed that the United States had some of the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in the industrialized world and that high infant mortality rates correlated with poverty. Unable directly to reduce poverty, however, the CB attempted to intervene where it could by providing preventive health care services for mothers. Outlined in the Maternity and Infancy Act (1921), this program funded state health education initiatives for pregnant women and babies. The funds especially supported the work of itinerant public health nurses, who set up temporary clinics in the remotest areas of many states to examine pregnant women and babies and to offer mothers information on how best to preserve their own and their children's health. The CB administered this program—sometimes identified as the country's first federal social welfare measure—until 1929.

By that time, the CB was deeply involved in issues explicitly related to poverty. When the stock market crashed in 1929, the CB emerged as the federal agency best informed on the effects of unemployment and the inadequacy of existing relief efforts. The bureau then participated in shaping the founding legislation of the U.S. welfare state: the Social Security Act (1935) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938). Best known for establishing old-age insurance and unemployment compensation for many American workers (mostly white men), the Social Security Act created several other programs as well. The CB designed four of them, and they constituted the agency's most significant antipoverty programs. These programs included services for crippled children; a revived maternal and infant health program exclusively for impoverished mothers, especially in rural areas; and services for children with special needs. The CB administered all of these programs.

The most important of the bureau's contributions, however, was Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), which provided funds to the states for the sustenance of children whose fathers could not support them. Although the CB believed that adequate wages for men constituted the best antipoverty program, its administrators recognized that sometimes families were without a male breadwinner. ADC aimed to spare mothers in these unfortunate families from the labor market. Though created by independent professional women, the program promoted their firm belief that most women would be economic dependents of men and should care for their children without recourse to professional child care providers. As a means-tested program, ADC stigmatized its recipients in a way that other Social Security programs did not. Against the bureau's will, the newly established Social Security Board administered ADC.

A longtime opponent of child labor, the CB fared better in relation to the Fair Labor Standards Act. The bureau implemented the provision that prohibited child labor in industries engaged in interstate commerce.

In 1946, the CB began to lose power. A federal reorganization moved it from the Department of Labor to the Federal Security Administration, leaving work on child labor to the Department of Labor. In 1969, the bureau was buried deeper in the federal bureaucracy and lost its health programs to the Public Health Service. Since that time, the CB has focused primarily on research and advocacy for children with special needs.

Robyn Muncy

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Child Welfare; Child-Saving; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Family Wage; Maternalism; Social Security Act of 1935; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; U.S. Department of Labor; Welfare State

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), originally the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), was created in 1953 as the first cabinet-level office for social welfare programs, and it has played a primary role in shaping and administering federal programs that affect low-income people, notably Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC, now Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF). HHS also administers other means-tested public assistance programs, social insurance programs and medical insurance programs, and a range of other programs affecting low-income people, including Medicaid, child care programs, and child welfare programs. Although many HHS programs address the problems faced by low-income persons, over the years none has come under greater scrutiny or attracted more controversy than the AFDC program, or "welfare." Since the mid-1970s, HHS leadership has been closely focused on pursuing welfare reform to "end welfare as we know it" and replace it with limited income support in return for work.

Historically, HEW/HHS has addressed poverty in two ways, via social insurance and public assistance, with different results.

Social insurance, including Old Age, Survivors', Disability Insurance (Social Security), and Medicare, is overseen by the Social Security Administration within HHS. Entitlements to pensions in old age or disability have been granted to wage earners on the basis of their employment or relationship to someone who is employed. Social insurance has historically served those with regular full-time employment in specified fields and occupations, leaving out large numbers of domestic and agricultural workers, service workers, and part-time workers. As a result, its beneficiaries have been disproportionately white and male; many nonwhites, recent immigrants, unskilled and less educated workers, and women have been overlooked. Poverty has been greatly reduced among those covered by social insurance, but not among those not included.

HEW/HHS has addressed citizens not covered by social insurance through means-tested public assistance programs, or "welfare." Unlike social insurance programs, public assistance has served those unable to work, not expected to work, or not engaged in regular wage labor. Until 1957, HEW/HHS's largest federal welfare program was Old Age Assistance. Since then, AFDC has been the largest and best-known federal welfare program, and it has been the focus of HEW/HHS initiatives with regard to low-income people.

Over time, HEW/HHS has addressed welfare in different ways and has exerted varying influence on the overall federal agenda regarding poverty.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, HEW was the main federal bureaucracy overseeing programs helping low-income Americans. Although headed by business leaders and politicians, the department's Bureau of Public Assistance (renamed the Bureau of Family Assistance and then the Welfare Administration) was dominated by social workers. Through their influence in this period, HEW expanded federal public assistance programs and redirected them toward a social service approach called "rehabilitation." In 1962, the Public Welfare Amendments institutionalized a rehabilitative approach to AFDC, providing welfare clients with federally funded services aimed at promoting self-support. These amendments marked HEW's first step directly linking welfare with work, as the self-support services were aimed at employment.

In the 1960s, social workers' influence over welfare waned, changing the way HEW addressed the poor. In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration eliminated the Welfare Administration, headed by social worker Ellen Winston, and replaced it with a new agency called Social and Rehabilitative Services, headed by a vocational education and rehabilitation expert named Mary Switzer, a woman whom Johnson expected to pursue work-based welfare reform more aggressively. As a result, HEW passed the 1967 Work Incentive Program (WIN), linking welfare more closely to work.

During the second half of the 1960s, the War on Poverty—the largest federal intervention in the field of poverty since the New Deal—bypassed HEW in favor of a new federal bureaucracy, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). This reduced HEW's influence upon the overall federal poverty agenda. The OEO avoided the social work perspective of HEW, eschewing social services in favor of training and jobs programs. In addition, OEO avoided association with welfare programs and poor single mothers. This outcome left HEW with little role to play in a broader assault on poverty, save for administering AFDC.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, HEW policy for the poor on welfare shifted directions several times.

Under Johnson, HEW attempted to replace welfare with a guaranteed minimum income. This effort continued in a different form, the Family Assistance Plan, under President Richard M. Nixon, but was defeated in 1972. In the end, HEW expanded and guaranteed income support only for the needy elderly, blind, and disabled through the passage of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), leaving needy single mothers on AFDC without guaranteed income support.

At the same time, HEW also began a research initiative that led to yet another approach to welfare reform. In 1965, the office of Assistant Secretary of Program Evaluation (ASPE) was created in HEW to direct research on HEW programs and poverty. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, ASPE pursued a research agenda based on microeconomic analysis of welfare programs and on intense research on the behaviors of welfare clients and the poor. This intense scrutiny of the poor coincided with conservatives' attacks on welfare clients and welfare programs, accelerating the process already under way within HEW/HHS of using welfare to force poor women into the labor market.

In the 1980s and 1990s, HEW, renamed HHS, consistently pursued welfare reform that required poor women to work. Under President Ronald Reagan's Republican administration, this goal derived from cost-cutting priorities and a belief among HHS leadership that welfare encouraged "loafing" and "immoral behavior." The 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act and the 1988 Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program reflected these beliefs. In the 1990s, President Bill Clinton's HHS leadership presided over an effort to reform welfare that it could not control. Although HHS wanted to pursue welfare-to-work goals through well-funded services to welfare clients, the Clinton administration and Congress passed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, abolishing AFDC and replacing it with TANF, a program that offers limited income assistance and services while imposing work requirements and strict lifetime time limits on welfare participation.

Jennifer Mittelstadt

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Poverty Research; Social Security; War on Poverty; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created in 1965 with the elevation of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA, which had administered the public housing program, the Federal Housing Administration, and the urban renewal program since the late 1940s) to a cabinet-level department. The director of the HHFA, Robert Weaver, became the first secretary of HUD and the first African American to serve in a cabinet post. Its most important functions are (1) to oversee federally assisted housing programs for the poor, such as public housing and housing vouchers; (2) to oversee the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) program of assistance to moderate-income home buyers; (3) to oversee federal community development programs such as urban renewal and Community Development Block Grants; (4) to enforce laws protecting racial and other minorities from housing discrimination and promoting fair housing; and (5) to promote research and development of new ideas for community development and housing.

HUD was born in an atmosphere of controversy. The administrations of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson were eager to create and expand programs that would benefit their urban political base and that would reach out to African Americans newly empowered and enfranchised by the civil rights movement. However, most southern Democrats and Republicans were opposed to these initiatives, and it was only with the extraordinary Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress created by the 1964 election that President Johnson was able to push through the creation of this department. From the beginning, the legitimacy of the department and its funding levels were tied to the level of presidential and congressional support for urban initiatives. Unlike some other federal departments, HUD does not have a politically powerful constituency that enables it to withstand ideological changes in leadership.

The complex and contradictory pieces that make up the department reflect the conflicting goals of federal urban redevelopment and housing policies. The FHA was created during the Great Depression to revive the middle-class housing market by providing federal insurance for long-term, low-down-payment mortgages. It really came into its own after World War II, as FHA loans helped build the suburbs. However, the FHA ignored central-city neighborhoods and reinforced the discrimination against people of color that was prevalent in the private banking industry. In the late 1960s, new programs were created to reorient the FHA toward making loans in disadvantaged areas, but the FHA's corrupt or incompetent administration of these programs produced scandals in many cities. Despite these difficulties, the FHA continues to play an important role in mortgage lending.

The public housing program was created in 1937 to house people whose incomes were too low to benefit from FHA programs and to provide substitute housing for those in the path of slum-clearance efforts. Although the program provided much better housing to many low-income persons than they could have obtained on the private market, it was plagued by funding, design, and site-selection problems. Middle-class neighborhoods vehemently resisted the construction of public housing, so such housing was usually built in already poor areas. The high-density high-rises that were typical of public housing were not conducive to the creation of stable, safe, low-income communities. Therefore, the program has brought much controversy to HUD. During the last five years, HUD has been demolishing many high-density public housing projects. The intention is to replace them with mixed-income communities, but the extent to which displaced tenants will benefit from the new housing is not clear.

Criticism of public housing led to the creation in the 1960s and 1970s of HUD programs that utilized assistance to private developers and landlords to create housing for the poor. The Section 8 program, created in 1974, became the largest and most successful of these programs. It encompassed both new construction and assistance to tenants living in existing units. During President Ronald Reagan's administration, the new construction element was phased out, and emphasis was placed entirely on Section 8 vouchers that subsidize the rent of low-income tenants. Current problems with HUD vouchers include a low level of voucher funding relative to the need and the inability of the payment standard upon which assistance is based to keep up with rising housing costs.

Enforcement of fair housing laws became a responsibility of HUD with the passage of the Housing Act of 1968. Through the first twenty years of this role, HUD's enforcement mechanisms were weak, often simply involving negotiations between the offending parties and those filing the complaint. Several court cases put pressure on HUD and on local housing authorities to use federally assisted housing in ways that did not reinforce racial segregation, but intense local opposition again made enforcement difficult. Finally, in 1988, HUD was granted much more vigorous enforcement mechanisms, and promoting fair housing remains a high priority within the department. Unfortunately, despite HUD's efforts, the vast majority of Americans still live in racially segregated neighborhoods.

The urban renewal program was created in 1949 to counter the decline of the central cities in the face of suburbanization. From the program's inception until the passage of the Housing Act of 1968, most cities used the funding to displace low-income residents to make room for large commercial or public works developments. The 1968 act reoriented the program to renewing low-income areas and to creating, rather than destroying, low-income housing. However, the program fell victim to the reevaluation of all HUD programs during the moratorium on HUD spending declared by President Richard M. Nixon's administration in 1973–1974. It was replaced with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which emphasized housing rehabilitation and was thus less devastating to low-income neighborhoods. However, CDBG replaced the competitive grant process with a formula entitlement that distributed funding to a larger number of communities, some of which had less severe problems than the larger central cities where urban renewal had been concentrated. CDBG also gave cities considerable discretion as to how funds could be spent, thus reducing HUD's micromanagement of local efforts.

Over its entire history, HUD has oscillated between more centralized and less centralized control over local housing and redevelopment authorities. Concerns with instances of local corruption and incompetence have led to increased oversight, but subsequent concerns with too much bureaucratic rigidity have led to relaxation of federal control. HUD has also oscillated between serving the interests of the poor and serving the interests of local officials and their allies in the private sector. By acquiescing to local desires to displace and segregate the poor, HUD contributed to its reputation for failing to create decent housing and neighborhoods in which the poor could live. By getting too cozy with private developers, the department became associated with various scandals that tarnished its reputation. However, the overwhelming national need for affordable housing has kept HUD programs alive, despite frequent criticism. Its budget was drastically curtailed in the 1980s and has remained low ever since, but efforts to abolish it have been unsuccessful. It continues to provide much-needed community development assistance, it provides a number of programs to address homelessness, and its vouchers provide desperately needed reductions in housing costs to those households lucky enough to make it to the top of lengthy waiting lists.

R. Allen Hays

See also: Community Development; Homelessness; Housing Policy; Racial Segregation; Tenant Organizing; Urban Renewal

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U.S. Department of Labor

On March 4, 1913, the day of Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, President William Howard Taft signed a bill into law establishing a cabinet-level Department of Labor designed, according to the act creating the department, "to foster, promote and develop the welfare of working people, to improve their working conditions, and to enhance their opportunities for profitable employment" (Grossman 1973, 3). The new department combined four existing bureaus (the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of Immigration, the Bureau of Naturalization, and the Children's Bureau) with the newly formed U.S. Conciliation Service. Through its long, varied, and often controversial career, the Department of Labor has functioned as an investigator, regulator, mediator, and law enforcer.

President Woodrow Wilson nominated William Wilson (no relation)—a congressman and a member of the United Mine Workers union who had been one of the chief advocates for the new department—as the first secretary of the Department of Labor. During the Wilson administration, the department assumed an active role. Labor conflicts and the need to retool industry for war led to a dramatic assertion of wartime federal government power in labor relations. In April 1918, Secretary Wilson's Department of Labor established the War Labor Administration, whose strongest component was the War Labor Board (WLB). The WLB frequently injected itself into controversial labor conflicts, often siding with workers and labor organizations. Also during World War I, the Women in Industry Service (the predecessor to the Women's Bureau) and the Division of Negro Economics emerged as venues for investigations that focused on women and Black workers, who were entering the industrial workforce in unprecedented numbers.

In contrast to the vigorous World War I years, the 1920s were grim years for the Department of Labor. Congress slashed the department's funding, and James J. Davis replaced Wilson as secretary of labor. Davis had little of Secretary Wilson's willingness to insert the department into controversial aspects of the ever-changing labor question. Vigorous demands by worker and reform organizations, however, led to the formation of the Women's Bureau within the Department of Labor. Advocates of a permanent bureau to investigate the condition of Black workers had less success in institutionalizing the Division of Negro Economics, which disappeared in 1921.

Between World War I and 1940, a majority of the department's resources were devoted to immigration and naturalization issues. Secretary Davis's administration vigilantly enforced the dramatic restrictions on immigration promulgated in the Immigration Act of 1921. According to Department of Labor historian Jonathon Grossman, Davis created a border patrol "trained in law, investigation techniques, fingerprinting, jiujitsu, the use of firearms, and tracking and trailing" to stop illegal immigrants from entering the United States. In 1930 alone, the patrol "caught 269 smugglers of aliens and 20,815 aliens" (Grossman 1973, 25). In the late 1930s and early 1940s, much of the responsibility for immigration issues was transferred to the Department of Justice.

In 1947, however, President Harry S Truman transferred control of the Bracero Program—a World War II executive agreement between the United States and Mexico that allowed the U.S. government to recruit, screen, and transport to the United States temporary agricultural workers—from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Labor. Following the war, the Bracero Program increasingly came under attack as a farm subsidy that exploited Mexican farmworkers. In 1948, the federal government transferred the costs of recruitment and transportation of temporary workers to the farmers who employed the workers. In 1950, the President's Commission on Migratory Labor, chaired by Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell, concluded that Bracero farmworkers lived in "virtual peonage." The Bracero Program survived mounting criticism until 1964, when Congress terminated it.

The Great Depression and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal reinvigorated the Department of Labor. To fill the secretary's position, FDR nominated Frances Perkins, who became the first woman to hold a cabinet-level office. After reorganizing the Bureau of Immigration, Perkins led the effort to establish the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), one of the more ambitious efforts in the "relief" phase of the New Deal. Perkins also chaired the administration's Committee on Economic Security and Unemployment Insurance, which developed and promoted FDR's most ambitious New Deal policies. Within the CCC structure, the department assumed responsibility for the recruitment of the urban unemployed to work on a variety of conservation projects. By the time the program ended in 1942, the CCC had employed some 3 million workers. The department played a key role in a number of other New Deal employment policies. In 1933, Congress passed the Wagner-Peyser Act establishing the U.S. Employment Services (USES) within the Department of Labor. The USES functioned as a national employment agency aimed at connecting workers with jobs. Another Department of Labor–administered policy during the New Deal was the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938), which established a minimum wage and a forty-hour workweek for manufacturing workers.

When FDR died in April 1945, Perkins resigned from the department in order to direct the Civil Service Commission. Lewis B. Schwellenbach replaced Perkins at a time of dramatic labor unrest and institutional reorganization within the Department of Labor and the federal government. The Bureau of Employment Security (formerly the U.S. Employment Service) and the Apprentice-Training Service became permanent agencies within the department, while the Children's Bureau moved out of the department. With the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, the U.S. Conciliation Service moved out of the department and became the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Labor Standards Division, the Women's Bureau, and the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division maintained their stations within the department, but often with drastic cuts in funding. Schwellenbach passed away suddenly in August 1948 and was replaced by Massachusetts governor Maurice J. Tobin, whose connections to organized labor and influence in Massachusetts immediately bolstered Truman's waning election hopes. Between 1948 and 1952, the department regained much of the funding it had lost in the backlash against labor unrest following World War II.

As part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, the department under Secretary W. Willard Wirtz and succeeding secretaries established a dizzying array of employment and training bureaus and services to help retrain workers whose skills had become obsolete and to train poor workers for jobs where there was work. Many of these programs focused on urban neighborhoods with historically high unemployment or little industry. The most prominent, expensive, and controversial of them, the Job Corps, was established in 1967 with the aim of removing "at-risk" urban youth from their communities and placing them in a residential training center for at least six months. By 1968, nearly 33,000 young people were enrolled in the Job Corps.

In the 1970s, in a trend toward increasing its regulatory power, the department's purview expanded to include the health, safety, and retirement plans of the nation's workers. In 1970, with the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Congress gave the department the power to establish and enforce the act. To take on this new and ambitious task, the department established the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which enforced the law in states that did not develop OSHA-approved plans. In 1974, Congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) authorizing the Department of Labor to regulate pension and retirement plans.

G. Mark Hendrickson

See also: Employment Policy; Great Depression and New Deal; Progressive Era and 1920s; Welfare State

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V

Vagrancy Laws/ Settlement Laws/ Residency Requirements

Poor people have historically been subject to various criminal and regulatory measures restricting their freedom of movement and eligibility for public assistance. Vagrancy laws have imposed criminal sanctions for a range of loosely defined conduct, such as idleness and moving from place to place without a visible means of support. Settlement laws have tied receipt of public assistance, or "poor relief," to membership in a local community and have authorized the removal of indigent outsiders. Residency requirements, a successor to settlement laws, have similarly made assistance conditional on an established period of residency but have not authorized the forced removal of those ineligible for relief.

Vagrancy laws were first enacted in England after the Black Plague epidemic of the fourteenth century to address the severe labor shortages caused by the collapse of feudal estates. These statutes prohibited increases in wages and restricted the movement of workers to ensure a supply of cheap labor. Wandering became a crime, as did begging. As social and economic changes led to the displacement of large segments of the population during the next several centuries, the emphasis of vagrancy laws shifted from requiring individuals to work in a fixed place to protecting the countryside against financial strain, social unrest, and criminal activity. Vagrancy laws became increasingly punitive and served as the criminal law component of the Elizabethan poor laws, enforcing restrictions on movement by those without a visible means of support, requiring the able-bodied poor to work, and outlawing begging.

Vagrancy laws were adopted in colonial America to regulate the effects of poverty, to prevent crime, and to protect communities against perceived threats to the moral order. In a society where poor relief was a local responsibility, vagrancy laws restricted the availability of assistance. Vagrancy laws required the able-bodied to work, discouraged idleness, and prohibited begging. Vagrants could receive a range of penalties, including corporal punishment, imprisonment, confinement in a workhouse, and involuntary indenture. Vagrancy laws thus illustrate the ways that criminal justice overlapped with the poor laws.

The vagueness of vagrancy laws has made them an effective form of social control. During the nineteenth century, vagrancy laws were used against hoboes, tramps, and the unemployed. The police also employed vagrancy laws to restrict the activities of undesirable types, such as gamblers and prostitutes, and to make preventive arrests based on suspicion. In the South, vagrancy laws helped enforce the repressive

Black Codes intended to control former slaves after the Civil War. In a recent incarnation of vagrancy laws, police employed an antiloitering statute to target members of urban street gangs.

As American society became increasingly urbanized, local governments relied on vagrancy laws not only to prevent criminal conduct but also to "clean up" skid row and commercial areas of cities, to institutionalize mentally ill people, and to abate nuisances. As late as the 1960s, most states still punished vagrancy, and vagrancy laws accounted for a large percentage of criminal arrests. Vagrants were generally tried summarily, without a formal indictment or the right to a jury trial.

During the 1960s, several developments began to undermine vagrancy laws. There was a growing recognition that vagrancy laws were being used as a tool against minority communities and civil rights activists. The U.S. Supreme Court's 1963 decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright* (372 U.S. 335) guaranteeing legal representation for indigent individuals helped make possible legal challenges to vagrancy statutes. Several state and federal court decisions invalidated vagrancy laws as unlawful discrimination against the poor. In its 1972 decision in *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville* (405 U.S. 156), the Court struck down a local vagrancy ordinance as an overly broad prohibition of seemingly innocent conduct. In a subsequent decision, the Court invalidated a California loitering statute requiring any person wandering the street to produce credible identification upon request by a police officer.

Despite these decisions, however, state and local governments continued to address poverty, mental illness, drug addiction, and other social problems through criminal laws. Vagrancy laws have taken on new forms. For example, cities have increasingly focused on "quality of life" offenses to stem urban crime and neighborhood decay. Prominent social scientists compared vagrants to broken windows in a building: Though harmless when viewed individually, together they can destroy.

The outbreak of modern mass homelessness during the 1980s and 1990s contributed to the revival of vagrancy laws in cities throughout the country. Numerous measures essentially criminalized homelessness by restricting the right of individuals to use public spaces like parks or to solicit money in public, either through broad bans or through narrower rules prohibiting begging at transportation hubs. Cities also increased their efforts to expel homeless people by conducting sweep operations that led to arrests for offenses like camping on public land or sleeping in public. Although legal challenges to these antihomeless activities have been brought on the grounds that they violate the right to equal protection under the law, the prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment, and the right to travel, the challenges have had mixed success. Given their protean nature, vagrancy laws have proven to be among the most enduring legacies of the English poor law system.

Like vagrancy laws, settlement laws also originated in England. The Act of Settlement of 1662 authorized local justices of the peace to remove any person from a parish who had arrived within the preceding forty days and who was determined either to need relief or possibly to need relief in the future. If removed, the person was returned to his or her place of settlement (his or her last place of residence or place of birth). To establish settlement in a parish, an individual needed to own or rent property and pay taxes. Settlement laws reflected a punitive attitude toward the poor, led to the removal of thousands of people each year, and sharply limited geographic mobility and economic opportunity.

Settlement laws were adopted by the American colonies. As in England, they provided that individuals could receive relief only in their place of legal settlement and authorized removal of the nonsettled poor. Settlement laws, however, varied considerably in their organization and structure. Colonies in New England adopted "warning out" systems in which local officials authorized the removal of individuals who lacked settlement and threatened to become a financial burden on the town. Other colonies, such as New York, adopted a "passing on" system in which nonsettled indigents were conveyed by constables from one town to the next until they reached their place of settlement. Those who returned after being expelled could be prosecuted as vagabonds and interned in workhouses or houses of correction. In some colonies, individuals could obtain settlement by remaining in the town for a specified period of time without being ordered removed; in others, they could obtain settlement by vote of the town or by holding a public office. As the number of transients grew, settlement laws became an increasingly important means of social control and significantly limited geographic mobility. Together with vagrancy laws, settlement laws restricted the class of people eligible for relief and limited the financial obligations of towns in a system where poor relief was a local responsibility.

During the nineteenth century, states assumed greater responsibility for the cost and administration of poor relief. A new class started to emerge of poor people who were the financial obligation of the state rather than of the locality. State control over poor relief increased with the growth of immigration during the 1830s and 1840s as immigrants who were barred from relief in towns under the settlement laws turned to the state for assistance. Settlement laws also imposed significant administrative burdens. These laws became increasingly complex and led to frequent—and costly—litigation between local governments over support obligations. In addition, settlement laws were undermined by increasing moral opposition to their cruelest features, such as the removal of old and sick paupers in the middle of winter. Furthermore, the growing movement to place poor people in institutions like poorhouses and workhouses rather than providing them relief in their homes (which was known as "outdoor relief") undercut the settlement law system.

The Great Depression witnessed a resurgence of the practice of excluding and removing poor people as a dramatic increase in interstate migration prompted a backlash among states fearful of their ability to absorb an influx of migrants. Although most displaced farmers and factory workers migrated in search of employment rather than public assistance, states were concerned about increasing demands on their poor-relief systems. Many states sought to prevent the entry of poor migrants and to return them to their last place of residence. Twenty-seven states enacted statutes creating "border patrols." Some went further, attempting to criminalize the knowing importation of paupers into their jurisdiction. The effort by states like California to exclude "Okies" and other migrants gained notoriety in works like John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.

The Depression, however, also prompted successful legal challenges to the restrictions. In its 1941 decision in *Edwards v. California* (314 U.S. 160), the Supreme Court invalidated a California statute prohibiting the importation of paupers into the state, noting that under the U.S. Constitution's commerce clause, California could not isolate itself from the impact of the Depression. More broadly, the decision reflected a rejection of the idea that welfare was a local matter and a reconsideration of the link between poverty and immorality. The "theory of the Elizabethan poor laws," the Court stated, "no longer fits the facts." After *Edwards*, states largely ceased relying on exclusion or removal to restrict migration and instead resorted to rules that made assistance conditional on the fulfillment of durational residency requirements.

These residency requirements, however, also eventually came under attack. In 1969, the U.S. Supreme Court declared unconstitutional several state statutes that made welfare benefits contingent upon the satisfaction of durational residency requirements. Such restrictions, the Court stated in *Shapiro v. Thompson* (394 U.S. 618), violated poor people's constitutional right to travel freely among the states. The Court, however, never said that *every* restriction would violate that right, and more modest waiting periods, including up to sixty days, remain in force in some states.

Recent welfare reforms signal a return to the punitive and exclusionary practices of the past. Like the English poor laws of 400 years ago, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) employs coercive tactics to force the able-bodied poor to work and devolves power to local governments and officials. Poor people must now comply with strict work requirements to receive welfare benefits, unless they fall within certain narrow exceptions. Although refusal or failure to work is no longer enforced through criminal vagrancy laws, punitive measures are still employed, ranging from conditions on the receipt of benefits to the outright denial or termination of assistance. PRWORA has also attempted to revive residency requirements by authorizing states to limit a family's welfare payments to the amount received in another state if the family has resided in the new state for less than one year. Although the Supreme Court declared such a limitation unconstitutional in its 1999 decision in *Saenz v. Roe* (526 U.S. 489), attempts to limit benefits through residency requirements still retain political and popular support and will probably continue given the increasing decentralization of the country's welfare system. Finally, by restricting receipt of various benefits by certain groups of immigrants, PRWORA echoes the settlement laws' restrictions on assistance to strangers and outsiders.

Jonathan L. Hafetz

See also: Crime Policy; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Dust Bowl Migration; *The Grapes of Wrath;* Homelessness; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Poverty Law; Relief; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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The Vanishing Black Family: Crisis in Black America, *Bill Moyers*

The Vanishing Black Family is a controversial documentary made by journalist Bill Moyers in 1986 that helped revive and give an aura of liberal respectability to once-discredited ideas about a deviant, self-perpetuating "culture of poverty" gripping African American inner-city neighborhoods.

Bill Moyers, a domestic policy adviser to President Lyndon B. Johnson in the 1960s and since then a prominent TV documentarian, was considered sympathetic to the plight of the downtrodden in the mid-1980s when his film exploring the causes and consequences of Black poverty appeared. *The Vanishing Black Family* invited viewers to go where most had never gone before—the inner city—which Moyers explained was a polite term for the ghetto. The film became extremely influential partly because it incorporated a number of perspectives that many white Americans recognized and believed. These included providing a middle-class white man to conduct a kind of tourist curriculum in the folkways of poor people of color and promoting an explanation for poverty based solely on observations of poor people's behavior. The documentary completely eclipsed larger social, economic, and political causes of poverty in the United States.

Most prominently, *The Vanishing Black Family* built on and updated Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 1965 report *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*. Over the course of the TV documentary, Bill Moyers asked again and again, "Why is this happening?" Why are young African American men unemployed and irresponsible? Why are young African American women having babies, one after the other, long before they are prepared to be mothers? And most important, why are these young people avoiding marriage? Throughout the film, Moyers presented the institution of marriage as the key to prosperity; without marriage, according to Moyers, these young people were doomed to lives of misbehavior and poverty.

In Moynihan's 1965 version of the Negro (the prevailing term at the time) family, young men were passive and defeated, robbed of their masculinity by overaggressive "matriarchs." In Moyers's update, the males were portrayed as "predators" and "hustlers." The girl-mothers appeared as madonnas, filled with love, devotion, and fear for their children, struggling day after day through lives sanctified by maternity.

At the end of the documentary, Moyers asked community "elders" why this was happening, and the documentarian featured answers that focus on individual failure. Elders suggested that African American youth misbehaved because they lacked religious values, because their psychological profile was missing the capacity for guilt, because the welfare system sapped personal initiative, because they indulged in too much sex.

Overall, Moyers depicted a perverse world where middle-class rituals sanctifying family had been ruined: Mother's Day in the ghetto was the depraved celebration of the arrival of welfare checks. Father's Day marked the birth of a hustling father's third son, a child he would never support.

As Moynihan had twenty years earlier, Moyers explicitly denied and implicitly ignored racism, job loss associated with deindustrialization, race-specific unemployment rates and wage rates, substandard educational opportunities and housing, and lack of day care—all characteristics of mid-1980s Newark, New Jersey, the hometown of the young people in the film—when he assigned blame for poverty. Each young man in the documentary was described as "killing time." Each young woman recognized that having a baby was the only accomplishment she could expect in this world. Moyers never explored how and why public policies and employment practices consigned young African Americans to these lives.

Rickie Solinger

See also: *Losing Ground;* Moynihan Report; Picturing Poverty (II); Racism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Veterans' Assistance

Veterans' assistance encompasses the varied array of pension, health, educational, and other social welfare benefits accorded to war veterans and their family members.

The history of U.S. social provision is one of classifying individuals and groups into categories of those "deserving" and "undeserving" of government benefits. Veterans' assistance is not just an important example of this; it is the precedent for all federal entitlement programs. Although it is commonly assumed that veterans have always held a special, privileged position in U.S. policy, historically this is not true. Veterans' benefits have varied widely. Veterans of some wars have been treated poorly; those of others, very well. World War II veterans' benefits were uniquely generous and comprehensive.

The first federal U.S. entitlements, passed in 1818, were pensions for disabled or indigent veterans of the Revolutionary War. (Before this, the Continental Congress had enacted pensions and land grants only for disabled veterans, leaving funding to the states [Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 2].) With the establishment of the 1818 pensions, which included financial need as a criterion for being eligible for benefits, Congress gave individuals a right to public assistance. As Laura Jensen has pointed out, "these benefits foreshadowed the future of U.S. social provisioning by establishing highly discretionary, *selective* entitlements as the distinct *form* of policy solution that would be utilized to address the nation's wide variety of issues of personal socioeconomic well-being." The system created "legal categories of citizens based upon their possession of chosen—not intrinsic—criteria of 'deservingness'" (Jensen 1996, 386).

These benefits were passed only after great debate and conflict. Some, including President James Monroe, argued for life pensions just for service; others argued against the idea that military status should confer any special government recognition. The Continental Congress had favored officers as a strategy to keep the army together, but this was in opposition to the egalitarian ideals of the war. Opponents argued for a break with the European tradition of a military whose leadership was drawn from the aristocracy, in favor of the citizen-soldier ideal. The dissent against pensions was a reaction against the idea of establishing a system in which some citizens would be privileged over others (Jensen 1996, 366–369, 370, 372–379). Later, in 1832, pensions were expanded to include not just disabled or indigent veterans but other veterans of the Revolution and of the Indian wars and the War of 1812 as well. In 1836, pensions were extended to those veterans' widows (Jensen 1996, 386).

Civil War benefits were more generous than those of earlier wars, but not initially. The 1862 General Pension Act provided for veterans of the Union Army and for their widows, children, and dependents. The primary benefit took the form of disability payments. In addition, veterans were given priority in the Homestead Act for land in the West. Homes were opened to care for disabled and indigent veterans, regardless of whether their disabilities had been incurred in the war. Initially, payments were distributed according to rank and disability. In 1873, this was changed to payments based only upon disability. Benefits were further broadened in 1890, with the Dependent Pension Act, which gave pensions to veterans unable to perform manual labor. Any Union veteran who had served honorably for ninety days was eligible, even if his disability was not related to the war. The Sherman Act of 1912 granted pensions to all Union veterans of the Civil War and the Mexican War, regardless of disability, once they reached age sixty-two. Confederate disabled and indigent veterans and their widows were given pensions by their states (Department of Veterans Affairs 1977, 3–6; Skocpol 1992, 110, 139).

As Theda Skocpol has noted, Civil War pensions, initially a limited system for veterans disabled in war and for their dependents or widows, became "an open ended system of disability, old-age, and survivors' benefits for anyone who could claim minimal service time on the northern side of the Civil War." It resulted in a "social security system for those U.S. citizens of a certain generation and region who were deemed morally worthy of enjoying generous and honorable public aid" (Skocpol 1992, 102).

World War I benefits focused on rehabilitating disabled veterans and on making discharge payments. Those unable to work at all were eligible for ongoing payments. In 1924, the World War Adjusted Compensation Act (1924), commonly known as the Bonus Act, provided for payments for service, depending upon the number of days a veteran had served. The larger bonuses, for those serving more than fifty days, were in the form of insurance certificates scheduled to be paid in 1945. In 1931, a new law enabled veterans to borrow up to 50 percent of the value of the certificates. The unemployment and poverty of the Great Depression motivated some veterans to form a mass movement that became known as the Bonus Army to seek earlier payment of the promised bonuses. In 1932, between 15,000 and 40,000 men marched on Washington to call attention to their plight and to demand payment. They were met with hostility, and after spending months encamped in tent cities just across the Anacostia River from the Capitol, they were violently forced to disperse by the U.S. Army. It was not until 1936 that Congress authorized payment (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 6–11).

The benefits for veterans of World War II conferred by the federal government in the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the G.I. Bill of Rights or the G.I. Bill, were very generous and comprehensive, in stark contrast to those for veterans of earlier wars. The bill was broadly inclusive. Anyone who had served in the military for ninety days and who had been discharged honorably was eligible, whether or not he or she had been in combat. At the same time, the distribution of benefits reflected the exclusions and restrictions in the military and in the broader society. For example, the number of African Americans in the military was limited to 10 percent of the total, reflecting their representation in the U.S. population, and the proportion of women in the military, 2.1 percent, was far lower than their proportion in the nation.

Benefits under the G.I. Bill were unprecedented in scope and included fifty-two weeks of unemployment compensation; tuition grants for four years of postsecondary or vocational education with stipends for living expenses (grants were higher for those with dependents); access to free health care; access to investment capital, including a housing ownership program that provided government-guaranteed mortgages with no required down payment; and a similar loan program for a farm or business (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 13–16, 32). Additional lifetime stipends were established for those who had service-related injuries, regardless of financial need. Also, the federal government and many states and municipalities established hiring preferences for veterans.

As of 1956, half of World War II veterans—almost 8 million—had used the education and training benefit. Of these, 2.23 million went to college, 3.48 million went to other schools, 1.4 million took on-the-job training, and 690,000 were trained in farming. In 1947, veterans made up 49 percent of all college enrollment. In addition, 5.32 million veterans used the unemployment allowance, and 3.78 million used the loan benefit. As a result, many stayed out of the labor force, at a time when high unemployment was feared, and were then better prepared to enter the workforce later (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 14; Ross 1969, 124).

A congressional cost-benefit analysis of just the college benefits estimated that for each dollar spent, the economic benefit to the nation (in terms of economic output) was between $5 and $12.50. Furthermore, the increased taxes veterans paid, due to higher earnings during their lifetimes, more than paid for the program. In addition, Veterans Administration surveys have shown that only 35.7 percent of veterans questioned reported that they could have purchased a home without the G.I. Bill; of those who used the benefit, 41.6 percent were white and 37.8 percent were Black (Veterans Administration 1980, 54). These are impressive figures, especially considering that Blacks were limited to 10 percent of the military and often experienced discrimination in real estate and banking.

Authors and groups disagree about the origins of the unprecedented—and unrepeated—generosity of the G.I. Bill. The Roosevelt administration, members of Congress, and the American Legion were deeply worried about a postwar return to the Great Depression; the prospect of 16 million unemployed veterans raised concerns that there might be civil unrest and even revolt (Olson 1974, 20–21). Some scholars credit the G.I. Bill to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's planning agency, the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB), which proposed postwar benefits for the whole population (Merriam 1944; Ross 1969, 123). The American Legion, organized by a group of World War I veterans, claims credit for the G.I. Bill (other veterans' groups sought more limited assistance), and some authors agree, emphasizing their very well-organized lobbying and public relations campaign (Skocpol 1997, 106; Bennett 1996). The Legion also lobbied successfully to vest control of all benefits in a single agency, the Veterans Administration. Some proposals included benefits for all; some, only for veterans and war production workers. The bill that passed provided benefits only for those in the military. Veterans of subsequent wars received less generous benefits than did World War II veterans.

The 6.8 million Korean War veterans received benefits similar to but more limited than those of their World War II counterparts. The education allowance did not completely cover the cost of education; it paid up to three years of a stipend, but no longer paid tuition to schools. This benefit was used by 2.4 million veterans. The home, farm, and business loan program continued and was used by 1.8 million people. This time, the states, rather than the federal government, administered the unemployment allowance (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 17, 20).

The benefits Vietnam War veterans received were even less generous. Of the 9.2 million persons in the military, 3.1 million had been deployed to Southeast Asia; as a group, their needs were great. A larger percentage of Vietnam survivors had disabilities, compared to those of earlier wars. In addition, Vietnam veterans returning home in the 1970s faced rising unemployment, inflation, and recessionary conditions that paralleled the unemployment problems that veterans of World War I had experienced. Nevertheless, education benefits were much less generous than those offered to World War II or Korean War veterans. One month of assistance in exchange for each month served was given to those who had served 180 days on active duty. Of those eligible, 5.5 million veterans used the benefit. Home loan programs continued, and severely disabled veterans could apply for mortgage insurance to cover loans to modify their houses. Exposure to Agent Orange (dioxin) resulted in a number of health problems for those who had been in Vietnam. The Veterans Administration denied this at first and gave no assistance. Later, in 1978 and 1981, additional access to care was established. Finally, in 1991, the number of illnesses that were presumed to be related to exposure to Agent Orange was broadened, expanding eligibility for service-related disability payments (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 20, 22; Severo and Milford 1990).

In the 1980s, while the country was not at war and was operating with an all-volunteer military, a shift in veterans' assistance took place. Previously, benefits had been enacted for the particular veterans of each war. Now, although not as generous as in the past, some benefits were created as enlistment enticements. For the unemployed veteran, job-training assistance was transformed into reimbursements to employers for a training period, and the education benefit became a contributory program. The 1984 Montgomery G.I. Bill provided $300 per month for up to thirty-six months in exchange for three years of active duty and reduced pay for the first year of service (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 27).

Persian Gulf veterans' benefits, passed in 1991, granted educational assistance, medical care, housing loans, and unemployment compensation. Following considerable controversy, those with chronic illnesses thought to be related to exposure to toxic agents during the Gulf War, after 1993, could receive care at special Veterans Administration Gulf War referral centers and, after 1994, could receive compensation (Department of Veterans Affairs 1997, 31–32).

Although the level and inclusiveness of veterans' assistance have varied from war to war, some general themes have affected what veterans are granted. First, there was ideological struggle over whether veterans should have any status different from other citizens. This conflict continued from the Revolutionary War through the 1930s. Later, a prominent issue was how returning veterans would affect the country, which depends both on how large a proportion of the population was in the military and on the economic state of the country after the war. This was obvious in the case of World War II benefits and was further illustrated by the lesser benefits received by Korean War and Vietnam War veterans. In addition, the prevailing attitude toward government spending in a given period affects benefits. A good contrast is World War I veterans, who struggled during a time of fiscal conservatism, and World War II veterans, who returned during a period of Keynesian economic thinking, when government spending was seen as a positive influence on the economy. In the twentieth century, the popularity of a given war also may have influenced assistance for its veterans.

Ann M. Robbart

See also: Bonus Army; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; G.I. Bill

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Vocational Education

Vocational education encompasses a variety of educational experiences aimed at preparing students for paid and unpaid work by focusing on practical and applied study. Since the 1860s, the U.S. government has sought to fund vocational education programs in order to meet a number of social and economic goals.

The first federal legislation embracing the concept of vocational education was the Morrill Act of 1862, which created the first land-grant institutions of higher education in response to the growing perception in the country that the demands of the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy were beyond the capacity of the students of the time. Land-grant schools did not offer merely skills-oriented apprenticeship-type programs; rather, they sought to combine a broad educational foundation for their students with a focus on the skills necessary to solve the problems relevant to agriculture and industry more broadly. Their purposes overall were to educate future farmers and agricultural technicians in methods to expand agricultural productivity; to teach future homemakers the necessary skills for improved nutrition, child care, and the other "domestic arts"; and to prepare future engineers and technicians to meet the demands of the rapidly growing industrial economy. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 set in place the principle that the national government would bear half the responsibility for financing vocational education at the postsecondary level, usually through matching grants between the state and national governments.

It was the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, however, that made vocational education a national program common in many public secondary schools across the country. This act represented a new assertiveness by the national government over the content of public education and was, in many ways, a product of the Progressives' demands for reforms to both improve the lives of American citizens and imbue them with "American" values and habits. These reformers were concerned that the large immigrant populations living in and entering the country were failing to adopt the "superior" health, hygienic, and homemaking practices that many Progressives saw as vital to the creation of a strong American public. In light of this, they sought to use new vocational education programs to combine the previous economic aims of the land-grant system with social and cultural engineering goals: teaching male immigrants to become more skilled in areas of manual labor, molding female immigrants into proper American homemakers, and "Americanizing" all immigrant groups. These reformers were also responding to the very real problems of inadequacies in the public education available to both immigrant and nonimmigrant communities, the stark disparities in spending on education along gender lines (with much less money being dedicated to home economics than to the "manly" sciences), and persistent illiteracy and poor health in

Standing at a stove, a student chef prepares soups in the kitchen as part of vocational training at Lane Community College. Eugene, Oregon. (Bohemian Nomad Picturemakers/Corbis)

recent immigrant communities. By teaching children—and through them, if not directly, teaching their parents—the basics of nutrition and child rearing, these reformers believed they were serving humanitarian purposes as well as engaging in cultural reform. The Smith-Hughes Act required states to establish boards for vocational education and institutionalized the separation of vocational education from other areas and approaches to education.

In the 1960s, vocational education took on new life with the Vocational Education Act of 1963, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and with a series of related acts throughout the 1960s and 1970s designed to expand and improve vocational education programs in light of the changing demands of the labor market and the needs and wishes of those in search of employment. Vocational education was now made available to a much larger population, including high school students, the unemployed and underemployed, nontraditional students, and students with special needs. Increased attention was given to the demands of minorities, the emotionally and physically challenged, and the incarcerated population, among other groups. By the 1980s, major efforts had been made to reform vocational education in order to minimize its earlier cultural and gender biases, to refocus programs to include technology and the new skills important to the contemporary economy, and to move more control of these programs into the orbit of the states or local educational agencies—and their budgets. Reforms in the 1980s, on the other hand, were spurred primarily by a sense that the U.S. labor force was performing poorly compared to that of other countries and that this lack of competitiveness stemmed from low standards and poor delivery of educational services. Stricter requirements for student performance and a prioritization of national standards for assessing educational programs were the watchwords of the day.

In the 1990s, several new pieces of legislation shaped the evolution of vocational education. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 was the first piece of legislation to attempt to reintegrate vocational and academic education, thereby emphasizing the education of well-rounded individuals. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, on the other hand, emphasized cooperative relationships between vocational education and employers. Businesses often invest directly in vocational education programs, and students often spend part of their schooling working at actual employment sites. Finally, changes to the nature and structure of welfare programs in the United States in 1996 meant that nearly all welfare recipients were required to find employment after two years, thereby pushing issues of vocational education, retraining programs, and labor flexibility to the fore.

The vocational education programs of today are very different from those of 1917. "Home economics" has been replaced by "family and consumer sciences," courses in which both male and female students (though still fewer males than females) learn about managing household accounts and develop parenting skills built on modern models. The "mechanic arts" of a century ago have been replaced with "trade and industrial education" classes that emphasize familiarity with new technologies, workplace skills, and business practices. Agricultural education has, since the 1960s, included study of agribusiness and agriscience as well as of the primary issues of production. Outside of family and consumer sciences, men are still overrepresented in vocational education programs. And while much of the prejudiced social-engineering aspect of early vocational education has been eliminated, some argue that the focus on meeting employers' labor force requirements has taken precedence over the value of education in its own right. Some fear, too, that vocational education programs tend to keep certain groups trapped in lower-paying employment tracks. These questions will remain important as the institution of American vocational education continues to evolve in the decades to come. In the meantime, it continues to expand the opportunities of many Americans by giving them the skills and training necessary for better-paying jobs and therefore higher standards of living.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: Education Policies; Employment and Training; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Workfare

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Voluntarism

Voluntarism is the principle that services should be provided not by the government but by private efforts that are not motivated by the pursuit of profit. Self-help, charity, and benevolence are all examples of voluntarism in the field of social welfare. Although civic participation and volunteering are often celebrated as central to American society, the history of social provision documents a more complex and shifting mix of government, for-profit, and voluntary provision of care. Early almshouses and institutions for the poor were typically established by governments, usually state, county, or local. Voluntary or charitable efforts were also an important component of the mix of social provision, but they were often targeted at specific groups defined by religion, ethnicity, or local residence. Such arrangements posed problems of "philanthropic particularism," the provision of charitable care to some populations and not others. When charity was extended across class lines or ethnoreligious differences, conflicts might arise from the perceived condescension of "benevolent ladies" or "friendly visitors" as well as from fear that charity would be used to encourage religious conversion or cultural assimilation. To the present, however, many voluntary activities have remained entwined with public social provision.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, American social provision was embedded in a complex network of public agencies and voluntary organizations. Public funds for health care and orphans often took the form of subsidies to private charitable organizations, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish between the "voluntary" and "public" elements of social provision. Nevertheless, fraternal orders and ethnic associations were significant providers of health care, insurance, and charity prior to the establishment of large-scale public programs for the care of the needy and dependent. Orphanages, homes for the aged, and hospitals were often established and maintained through the efforts of voluntary organizations.

The New Deal programs of Social Security and Aid to Dependent Children consolidated the ascendance of public spending and social service professionals over volunteers and charitable organizations. But this shift to government provision was far from complete. During the 1960s, the creation of community action agencies and the mandate for "maximum feasible participation of the poor" created new opportunities for cooperation between government and nonprofit agencies. Since the 1970s, a range of policy initiatives—from decentralization to "faith-based" service provision—have increased the potential for voluntarism to reestablish its once-central place in the web of American social provision. These programs have also created opportunities for members of disadvantaged communities to establish careers in activism or to gain skills for other forms of paid labor through participation in community activities (Naples 1998; Warren 2001). In fields such as child protective services, public agencies may depend on volunteers to fill the lower rungs of the labor force; these experiences or internships, in turn, facilitate acceptance into professional training programs that may lead to paid employment in those same public agencies. Such quasi-voluntaristic programs of community development both deliver services directly and provide opportunities for employment and skill development within disadvantaged communities.

Given these combinations of public funding and community organization, individual volunteers must obviously be distinguished from voluntary organizations. Although "voluntary organization" is often used loosely to indicate a wide range of charitable, membership, or mutual organizations, many of those working in these organizations receive wages and therefore are not "volunteers" in the strict sense. The contemporary nonprofit sector depends on both forms of labor; estimates for the United States in the 1980s indicate that nonprofit organizations received labor equivalent to that of 6 million full-time workers from volunteers, which amounted to between 60 and 70 percent of the total full-time equivalents working in the sector (Weisbrod 1988, 132). Until recently, it has been necessary to estimate these numbers because the U.S. government has not systematically tracked volunteer labor; as of 2002, however, the Current Population Survey (CPS) included volunteer labor in its household survey and found that 59 million persons over sixteen years old had volunteered "through or for organizations" in the preceding year. This amounted to 27.6 percent of the civilian population outside of institutions. Survey results on volunteering vary widely (many are considerably higher than the CPS results), with some including informal help to others or using lists of associations or activities to prompt responses.

Despite the varying estimates of the quantity of volunteering, research has illuminated the question of who volunteers (Wilson 2000). Individuals with more education are more likely to volunteer. Volunteering has a more complex relationship with work. People outside the labor force—the unemployed and homemakers—volunteer at lower rates; work, it appears, is an important context in which people encounter opportunities or invitations to volunteer. Among workers, however, there are complex relationships between income or occupational status and the rate or hours of volunteering. More extensive social networks—including the ties of marriage and parenthood—also increase the rate of volunteering. Patterns of volunteering vary by age (falling in young adulthood, peaking in middle age), gender (women are slightly more likely to volunteer), and race (although many of these differences disappear when income is taken into account). Economists have also addressed the question of whether public programs "crowd out" charitable donations and volunteering, but the results are mixed (Weisbrod 1988).

Other debates focus on why Americans engage in voluntary activities and with what consequences (Skocpol and Fiorina 1999). Starting with Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (based on his visit in the 1830s), associations have been understood as central to American society and politics. Voluntary activities—whether charitable or not—are believed to both expand sympathy for or understanding of others and cultivate organizational skills that support participation in formal politics. Consequently, changing patterns of membership in voluntary organizations—particularly the decline of the large fraternal orders and civic organizations that were prominent from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries—have been taken as symptoms of a dangerous change in the political engagement of American citizens. This contention has been hotly contested, and other scholars (Wuthnow 1998) have documented changes in the character if not the quantity of volunteer participation. Volunteers are now less likely to make durable commitments to a single organization and more likely to participate on a project basis that is more compatible with patterns of work and family that include dual-earner families, highly scheduled children, and frequent commuting or residential mobility.

Elisabeth S. Clemens

See also: Charitable Choice; Charity; Citizenship; Community-Based Organizations; Community Chests; Mutual Aid; Nonprofit Sector; Philanthropy; Privatization

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Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) is one of three major projects that fall under AmeriCorps, one of the most important national service organizations in the United States. Over 100,000 individuals have served impoverished communities through VISTA's full-time, one-year programs by working through nonprofit organizations to address the many needs of low-income areas and their residents. In exchange, participants receive an education award to pay back student loans or to fund future college education and are sometimes granted a small stipend and benefits.

A proposal for a domestic service program originally put forward by President John F. Kennedy shortly after the creation of the Peace Corps was defeated by Congress, but VISTA was finally created in 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty and the Economic Opportunity Act. During the 1960s, VISTA participants helped establish the nation's first Head Start and Job Corps programs and were active in the migrant worker camps of California, the poorest regions of the Appalachians, and various inner cities. During the 1970s, VISTA was reorganized as part of the new ACTION agency, which also included the Peace Corps and the senior service programs. VISTA also began to focus on recruiting trained professionals, including architects, lawyers, and doctors, to expand their services into new areas, such as renovation of low-income housing, advocacy of legislative reforms, and the provision of community health service. In the 1980s, that focus changed: Community self-help and citizen participation now formed the backbone of VISTA projects. In 1986, the VISTA Literacy Corps was established to promote adult education; since that time, literacy has become one of VISTA's main efforts, with over one-fourth of all VISTA members working in literacy programs (Potee and Zelson).

The 1990s also saw major changes for VISTA. In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the National Service Trust Act, which reorganized VISTA once again, this time as part of the new AmeriCorps program, thereby creating the new AmeriCorps*VISTA program. AmeriCorps is part of the Corporation for National Service, which also oversees Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps. AmeriCorps*VISTA has continued VISTA's dedication to impoverished communities and boasted approximately 6,000 volunteers serving in over 2,000 different local programs in 2001. In fiscal year 2002, the program had a budget of \$85 million, with over \$5 million donated by local sponsors. New projects include the Entrepreneur Corps, established in 2002, which attempts to match volunteers with business experience with low-income populations to develop financial skills and establish small businesses.

Rebecca K. Root

See also: AmeriCorps; Peace Corps; Voluntarism; War on Poverty

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Voting Rights Act, 1965

Although the Fifteenth Amendment prohibits race-based deprivation of the right to vote, southern states had erected barriers to voting such as poll taxes and literacy tests that served as proxies for race-based disenfranchisement. The seminal Voting Rights Act of 1965 sought to end all means and manner of racial disenfranchisement and to ensure that democratic representation would be available to all. The Voting Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 6, 1965. Because of legal challenges, it gained a quick review by the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld its constitutionality in 1966 in the *South Carolina v. Katzenbach* (383 U.S. 301) decision. Since its initial adoption, the act's provisions have been extended in 1970, 1975, and 1982. Further, its Section 2 provisions on vote dilution and Section 5 provisions on preclearance were significantly amended in 1982. The act, one of the legislative accomplishments of the civil rights movement, is widely credited with politically empowering racial and linguistic minorities, many of them among the poor, so that their political representation is much closer to parity than it was in any period preceding the law.

The Voting Rights Act followed by one year the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act, which included voting access in some of its provisions (Titles I and VIII). The weaker 1957 and 1960 Civil Rights Acts also had voting protections, as does the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution. To overcome southern resistance to earlier efforts to ensure the right to vote, the Voting Rights Act explicitly stated that "no voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, or practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right . . . to vote on account of race or color" (Section 2:a). Section 2 has been most used to fight against such election structures as multimember and at-large districts, which tend to dilute the effects of minority voting.

At the time the Voting Rights Act was passed, numerous discriminatory voter registration and election procedures were in effect. In addition to literacy tests, poll taxes, and at-large districts, some southern states gave registrars discretion to require certain voter applicants to pass "understanding tests" showing their reading comprehension of the state constitution, and some states imposed long residency requirements and required personal voter registration at county courthouses that were both intimidating venues and far from home. These practices had been occurring for over a century, despite numerous federal court decisions on the illegality of such similar practices as white primaries and grandfather clauses (U.S. Department of Justice 2001, 1). States responded to findings that certain procedures were illegal by replacing those procedures with equally discriminatory alternative ones. The selective application of such procedures by white election officials resulted in significant Black disenfranchisement.

The Voting Rights Act initially put all or parts of seven southern states, among other jurisdictions, under its coverage and made these

African American men fill out their ballots and drop them in ballot boxes in Alabama after enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. (Flip Schulke/Corbis)

jurisdictions subject to Department of Justice enforcement because of past discriminatory practices. A ban on voting practices that discriminated against language minorities was added to Section 2 with the 1975 amendments, along with bilingual assistance requirements. This amendment expanded the coverage of the act to include additional southern states (Texas and parts of Florida) as well as states in the West and Southwest (Arizona, California, parts of Colorado, and South Dakota) and Alaska (Grofman, Handley, and Niemi 1992, 21).

Two of the immediate results of the Voting Rights Act were the introduction of federal voting examiners to oversee the registration process and the suspension of literacy tests in the South. Under Section 3, federal voting examiners or federal observers could be sent to any state or jurisdiction to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment. Literacy or other tests or devices were eliminated in Section 4 in seven southern states (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia) and the parts of North Carolina that used them. After Section 2's prohibition of practices intended to dilute minority votes, the most important part of the act in terms of its muscle and impact is Section 5, enforcement. Section 5's preclearance requirement mandated that no voting changes could be implemented in covered jurisdictions without federal approval. Section 5 preclearance approval would only be granted to jurisdictions showing their changes were not discriminatory in intent or impact. From 1965 to 1982, 815 of 35,000 submitted changes were ruled objectionable (Davidson 1984, 16). Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act was last renewed for twenty-five years in 1982 and will be up for reauthorization in 2007. Parts of twenty-two states have been covered since 1975 by the law's "triggering" formula based on where racial and language-minority voting discrimination has existed in the past (Days and Guinier 1984, 173). Other noteworthy parts of the act include Section 10's prohibition of the poll tax "as a precondition to voting" and Section 12's monetary and criminal sanctions for violations of sections of the act.

In March 1965, only 36 percent of voting-age Blacks in the South, compared to 73 percent of voting-age whites in the South, were registered to vote (Grofman, Handley, and Niemi 1992, 21). As a result of the Voting Rights Act, Black and Latino voters have made huge gains in registration and turnout, as well as in the election of minority local, state, and federal officials, though they are still significantly underrepresented in many covered jurisdictions (Davidson 1984, 10–15; Grofman, Handley, and Niemi 1992, 23–26). Illustratively, the number of Blacks holding political office nationwide grew from 1,500 in 1970 to 7,300 in 1990, a 400 percent increase (Pildes 1994). However, the number of

Black elected officials has remained stagnant at slightly less than 2 percent of all elected officials since the 1990s, and they are concentrated primarily at the municipal level (Joint Center of Political and Economic Studies 2000). Given the persistent gap between poor people's registration and voting rates and those of the nonpoor, social, geographic, and political impediments to full participation by the poor remain, even as legal barriers have been torn down. In 2000, those earning under $15,000 lagged more than 20 percentage points behind the 66 percent and 57 percent, respectively, registration and voting rates reported for all Americans (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). Poor people's underparticipation in the electoral process undoubtedly has an impact on the quality of representation they receive. And given the racial distribution of poverty, the informal disenfranchisement of the poor disproportionately constrains the electoral participation of people of color.

Cheryl M. Miller

See also: Civil Rights Acts, 1964 and 1991; Civil Rights Movement; Racial Segregation; Racism; Slavery

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W

Wages

See Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Family Wage; Labor Markets; Minimum Wage; "Working Poor"

Wagner Act

On July 5, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Wagner Act (also referred to as the National Labor Relations Act [NLRA]) establishing the institutional and legal framework for collective bargaining that endured through the twentieth century. Senator Robert Wagner (D–New York) sponsored the NLRA as a replacement for the National Industrial Recovery Act, which the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled unconstitutional. In a dramatic shift away from federal government opposition to unions, the act explicitly outlawed "unfair labor practices" such as company unions and yellow dog contracts, forced employers to recognize and bargain in good faith with duly elected organizations representing workers (though it did not force the parties to agree to a contract), and, at least on the surface, protected workers engaged in union organizing from employer retaliation.

According to historian Michael Katz, FDR's labor legislation provided the major alternative to the "patchy, inadequate social insurance policies" that made up the New Deal's "semiwelfare state" (Katz 1986, 250). For many workers, this incomplete welfare system worked. The skyrocketing number of employees who joined unions pushed union and nonunion wages higher and slightly redistributed the burden of economic risk in the employee-employer relationship. Between 1933 and 1945, the number of workers represented by unions increased from 3 million to 14 million, approximately 30 percent of the workforce. These gains for labor were concentrated in manufacturing industries, where, by 1947, nearly two-thirds of the workforce was covered by union contracts.

Not surprisingly, business groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce strenuously objected to the Wagner Act. However, opposition came from other corners as well. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League feared that the Wagner Act's move toward union-only shops would limit employment options for African American workers by codifying craft unions' existing exclusionary practices. The act could have legally remedied this problem, but according to New Deal historian David Kennedy, "Senator Wagner and the act's other sponsors . . . failed to accept suggested amendments that would have defined racial discrimination by

In the first test of the Wagner Act, officials from the National Labor Relations Board watch as workers of the Jones and Laughlin steel mill vote whether the Steel Workers Organizing Committee will be their sole bargaining agency. (Bettmann/Corbis)

unions as an 'unfair labor practice'" (Kennedy 1999, 307). In practice, however, increased rates of unionization benefited the increasing number of African American industrial workers who, largely because of organizing by the newly formed Congress of Industrial Organizations in the steel and automobile industries, gained a measure of economic security. The Wagner Act did much less for workers in domestic and agricultural occupations that employed a high percentage of Black and Latino workers. As they did with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Social Security Act of 1935, southern legislators excluded domestic and agricultural occupations from coverage under the Wagner Act.

The Wagner Act transformed the government's role in labor-management relations. To determine the proper and exclusive bargaining unit to represent workers, the Wagner Act established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). With the formation of the NLRB, the Wagner Act created a system by which workers could choose and the state could certify an organization to represent employees in negotiations with employers. The board immediately came under attack from employers, who challenged the legality of federal regulation of relations between employees and privately held companies. In *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (301 U.S. 1 [1937]), the U.S. Supreme Court found that the "refusal to confer and negotiate has been one of the most prolific causes of strife." According to the Court, the Wagner Act's framers had aimed to minimize industrial strife. For the majority, Chief Justice Charles E. Hughes wrote, "The theory of the act is that free opportunity for negotiation with accredited representatives of employees is likely to promote industrial peace." By portraying unions as vehicles for industrial peace, the Court dramatically reversed its previous characterization of unions as institutions that by their very nature threatened to interfere with the flow of commerce. Though the Wagner Act contributed to organized labor's important gains, many unionists protested that this emphasis on stability inhibited workers' ability to organize for more fundamental changes in the American workplace.

From the outset, the board was a political institution subject to significant change in direction and membership. In 1939 and 1940, under protest from both employers and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the board underwent significant congressional scrutiny that resulted in the removal of important board members and the reorganization of the board under the leadership of William Leiserson, who helped to craft long-standing board policies and procedures. With the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, Congress further reorganized the board by transferring its prosecution and investigation responsibilities to the newly created General Counsel, an independent body not part of the NLRB and appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate. Currently, the board has five seats, each appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate to a five-year term.

Since its passage, the number of workers covered under the Wagner Act has been subject to constant judicial review and legislative amendment. For example, in the early 1970s, the Supreme Court expanded the NLRB's jurisdiction to include government and health care workers. Rulings that narrowly defined workers to exclude wide categories of employees who were designated as managers and supervisors, however, dramatically limited the number of workers eligible to join unions.

G. Mark Hendrickson

See also: Agricultural and Farm Labor Organizing; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Service and Domestic Workers; Trade/Industrial Unions

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War on Poverty

Begun officially in 1964, the War on Poverty was an ambitious governmental effort launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration to address the problem of persistent poverty in the United States. Over the next decade, the federal government—in conjunction with state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and grassroots groups—created a new institutional base for antipoverty and civil rights action and, in the process, highlighted growing racial and ideological tensions in American politics and society. Marked by moments of controversy and consensus, the War on Poverty defined a new era for American liberalism and, along with other initiatives encompassed within Johnson's Great

Society, added new layers to the American welfare state. Legislatively, the first two years were the most active. Between Johnson's State of the Union address in 1964—when he declared "unconditional war on poverty"—and the liberal setbacks suffered in the congressional elections of 1966, the Johnson administration pushed through an unprecedented amount of antipoverty legislation. The Economic Opportunity Act (1964) provided the legislative basis for the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the new federal agency dedicated to fighting poverty, as well as for a host of new antipoverty programs, including the Job Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Upward Bound, Head Start, Legal Services, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, the Community Action Program, the college work-study program, Neighborhood Development Centers, small-business loan programs, rural programs, migrant worker programs, remedial education projects, local health care centers, and others. The antipoverty effort, however, did not stop there. It encompassed a range of Great Society legislation far broader than the Economic Opportunity Act alone. Other important measures with antipoverty functions included an $11 billion tax cut (Revenue Act of 1964), the Civil Rights Act (1964), the Food Stamp Act (1964), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), the Higher Education Act (1965), the Social Security amendments creating Medicare and Medicaid (1965), the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (1965), the Voting Rights Act (1965), the Model Cities Act (1966), the Fair Housing Act (1968), several job-training programs, and various urban renewal–related projects.

The War on Poverty was complex in its origins, its implementation, and its impact. Its programs and philosophies were born out of the political discomfort caused by the persistence of poverty amid the abundance of post–World War II America, the vexing questions of citizenship raised by the civil rights movement, and decades of social scientific thought about poverty and social reform. With the War on Poverty, American liberalism's insistent optimism and deep faith in expertise encountered a domestic crisis of race, social order, and political economy comparable in scope only to the Civil War and the Great Depression. The administrations of Presidents John F. Kennedy and his successor Lyndon B. Johnson became the primary organizers of the government's response to that crisis. To deal with concern that poverty threatened American progress, these administrations pushed hard for economic growth that could create full employment and for social reform that could enable the poor to gain access to what President Johnson called "the good life."

The political will necessary for a major antipoverty initiative intensified in the early 1960s. Part of that intensification came from the moral and organizational groundswell of the civil rights movement. Another part grew from the so-called rediscovery by policymakers and the mainstream media of poverty as an urgent social and political issue. Leading the rediscovery were several exposés by journalists and social reformers. President Kennedy was reportedly moved by Homer Bigart's 1963 *New York Times* series on Appalachian poverty and a review, published in *The New Yorker,* of Michael Harrington's searing book *The Other America* (1962). Harrington's book offered a stunning portrait of an allegedly separate, forgotten America populated by an estimated 50 million poor Americans. For Kennedy, those works probably compounded a concern about poverty that had been roused during a 1960 campaign visit to depressed coal regions in West Virginia. Whatever motivated Kennedy, his administration put in motion a process that became the foundation for Johnson's War on Poverty.

During President Kennedy's lifetime, however, that process yielded scant benefits for the poor. Like his administration's involvement with civil rights, the efforts against poverty were piecemeal, hesitating, and limited to relatively safe political terrain. The Area Redevelopment Act (1961) mainly provided infrastructure and job-training assistance in economically "depressed" regions. Kennedy established a slightly more substantial record through wage policies, an experimental food stamp program, and the Manpower Development and Training Act (1962). The longest-lasting efforts came in the background work for a tax cut that stimulated economic growth and the work of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime (PCJD). The PCJD embraced several ideas and developed important strategies that guided much of the later War on Poverty. Its leaders, who included Robert F. Kennedy, Kennedy's close friend David Hackett, and several influential academics and social reformers, were especially captivated by the concept of community action, which maintained that poor people, especially in urban neighborhoods, should be organized and empowered in the struggle against poverty to demand the services, education, jobs, and, most controversially, political representation they needed for access to opportunity and full citizenship. In formulating this idea, they drew heavily on sometimes conflicting strands of social thought: on the one hand, sociological and anthropological theories that emphasized the internal "disorganization" and lack of "competence" in poor communities and the culturally reinforced "cycle of poverty" that poor people found themselves in; on the other, the "opportunity theory" associated with sociologists Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin that focused on the structural economic and political barriers poor people faced. Community action proponents also drew on influential demonstration projects such as the multilayered attack on poverty and juvenile delinquency found in Cloward's Mobilization for Youth project in New York City and the Ford Foundation's Gray Areas project, which funneled resources into target areas in a select number of cities.

The War on Poverty was also influenced by economists based in the Kennedy/Johnson Council of Economic Advisors (CEA). Schooled in the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes, they were convinced that the key to fighting poverty was government-stimulated economic growth and full employment. In 1963, CEA chairman Walter Heller organized a task force to start planning what was initially envisioned as an "attack" on poverty, with an eye toward making this a major theme in the 1964 presidential campaign. After the tragic assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963, Johnson embraced the idea and made it his own. After a series of meetings with Heller and other key economic advisers at his ranch in late December 1963, Johnson decided to escalate and enlarge the antipoverty effort and to make community action one of its centerpieces. Approximately two weeks later, in his 1964 State of the Union address, Johnson made this decision public with his famous metaphorical declaration of "unconditional war." This War on Poverty quickly grew into a multifaceted attempt to attack the intertwined causes of poverty. Wanting to do more than ameliorate the symptoms of poverty, policymakers sought reform in a wide range of areas, including education, housing, health, employment, and civic participation. Antipoverty planners tried to provide poor people access to the American "good life" by offering them a "hand up" rather than a "handout." This required economic measures to stimulate growth and employment opportunities, they thought, but it also required local action and individual initiative. Early antipoverty warriors, especially in the OEO, placed great responsibility on local people and had great hopes of the skills and vision of people at ground level. This expectation encouraged thousands of distinctive battles against poverty throughout America. It also ensured that the War on Poverty would expose far more social, political, and economic problems than it could fix.

In early 1964, the two most pressing priorities of President Johnson's antipoverty agenda involved passing a massive tax cut designed to

8/20/1964—Washington, DC: President Johnson hands a pen, used in signing the $947.5 billion "War on Poverty" bill, to Peace Corps director Sargent Shriver, whom Johnson nominated to head the program. At right, looking on, is Robert Weaver, administrator, Housing and Home Finance Agency, later Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). (Bettmann/Corbis)

stimulate the economy and organizing a task force to shape the War on Poverty. The tax cut passed Congress in February and contributed to a major economic expansion. The task force—headed by R. Sargent Shriver, the director of the highly popular Peace Corps and the brother-in-law of the slain President Kennedy—established the basis for the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) that Johnson signed in August 1964. The EOA was a remarkable piece of social welfare legislation that many contemporaries considered *the* War on Poverty. Premised on improving economic opportunity instead of providing cash transfers or creating a New Deal–style jobs program, the antipoverty legislation created a long list of programs designed to help individu-

State of the Union Address, Lyndon B. Johnson, January 8, 1964

. . . This budget, and this year's legislative program, are designed to help each and every American citizen fulfill his basic hopes—his hopes for a fair chance to make good; his hopes for fair play from the law; his hopes for a full-time job on full-time pay; his hopes for a decent home for his family in a decent community; his hopes for a good school for his children with good teachers; and his hopes for security when faced with sickness or unemployment or old age.

Unfortunately, many Americans live on the outskirts of hope—some because of their poverty, and some because of their color, and all too many because of both. Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity.

This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort.

It will not be a short or easy struggle, no single weapon or strategy will suffice, but we shall not rest until that war is won. The richest Nation on earth can afford to win it. We cannot afford to lose it. One thousand dollars invested in salvaging an unemployable youth today can return $40,000 or more in his lifetime.

Poverty is a national problem, requiring improved national organization and support. But this attack, to be effective, must also be organized at the State and the local level and must be supported and directed by State and local efforts.

For the war against poverty will not be won here in Washington. It must be won in the field, in every private home, in every public office, from the courthouse to the White House.

The program I shall propose will emphasize this cooperative approach to help that one-fifth of all American families with incomes too small to even meet their basic needs.

Our chief weapons in a more pinpointed attack will be better schools, and better health, and better homes, and better training, and better job opportunities to help more Americans, especially young Americans, escape from squalor and misery and unemployment rolls where other citizens help to carry them.

Very often a lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but the symptom. The cause may lie deeper—in our failure to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities, in a lack of education and training, in a lack of medical care and housing, in a lack of decent communities in which to live and bring up their children.

But whatever the cause, our joint Federal-local effort must pursue poverty, pursue it wherever it exists—in city slums and small towns, in sharecropper shacks or in migrant worker camps, on Indian Reservations, among whites as well as Negroes,

als develop marketable skills, political power, and civic aptitude. The legislation established the OEO, a new bureaucracy under the control of the president that oversaw the Community Action Program, the Job Corps, and VISTA and initiated such programs as Head Start and the federal legal services program. Other EOA programs, such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Adult Basic Education, and rural loan programs, were placed under the control of traditional executive departments.

Other parts of the War on Poverty were located outside the Economic Opportunity Act framework and, in the long term, probably had more impact on the lives of Americans. Those programs and legislation certainly accounted for far more expenditures than did the programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity, which among the young as well as the aged, in the boom towns and in the depressed areas.

Our aim is not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it. No single piece of legislation, however, is going to suffice.

We will launch a special effort in the chronically distressed areas of Appalachia.

We must expand our small but our successful area redevelopment program.

We must enact youth employment legislation to put jobless, aimless, hopeless youngsters to work on useful projects.

We must distribute more food to the needy through a broader food stamp program.

We must create a National Service Corps to help the economically handicapped of our own country as the Peace Corps now helps those abroad.

We must modernize our unemployment insurance and establish a high-level commission on automation. If we have the brain power to invent these machines, we have the brain power to make certain that they are a boon and not a bane to humanity.

We must extend the coverage of our minimum wage laws to more than 2 million workers now lacking this basic protection of purchasing power.

We must, by including special school aid funds as part of our education program, improve the quality of teaching, training, and counseling in our hardest hit areas.

We must build more libraries in every area and more hospitals and nursing homes under the Hill-Burton Act, and train more nurses to staff them.

We must provide hospital insurance for our older citizens financed by every worker and his employer under Social Security, contributing no more than $1 a month during the employee's working career to protect him in his old age in a dignified manner without cost to the Treasury, against the devastating hardship of prolonged or repeated illness.

We must, as a part of a revised housing and urban renewal program, give more help to those displaced by slum clearance, provide more housing for our poor and our elderly, and seek as our ultimate goal in our free enterprise system a decent home for every American family.

We must help obtain more modern mass transit within our communities as well as low-cost transportation between them. Above all, we must release $11 billion of tax reduction into the private spending stream to create new jobs and new markets in every area of this land.

These programs are obviously not for the poor or the underprivileged alone. Every American will benefit by the extension of social security to cover the hospital costs of their aged parents. Every American community will benefit from the construction or modernization of schools, libraries, hospitals, and nursing homes, from the training of more nurses and from the improvement of urban renewal in public transit. And every individual American taxpayer and every corporate taxpayer will benefit from the earliest possible passage of the pending tax bill from both the new investment it will bring and the new jobs that it will create. . . .

received an initial appropriation of slightly less than $1 billion and experienced only marginal increases after that. The food stamp program, for instance, fed hungry Americans and eventually reached almost 10 percent of the population and 60 percent of the poor. Medicare subsidized health care for the elderly (with almost 40 million enrollees in 2000 according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), while Medicaid provided access to health care for the poor. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided money to local school districts, which were supposed to use the funds to help their poor students. The Higher Education Act eased the financial burdens of millions of college students. The Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act empowered the federal government to enforce tough new antidiscrimination measures. The Fair Housing Act established an important base of law to combat housing discrimination.

The program that generated the most intense controversies and came to dominate the politics of the early War on Poverty was the Community Action Program (CAP). Envisioned as a foundation of the War on Poverty in 1964, the CAP offered the most promise for reform but also the most potential for turmoil. The basic idea behind the program was to stimulate the creation of new, community-based agencies to come up with and administer comprehensive antipoverty plans geared to the special needs of local communities. These local agencies, which would apply for federal funding through the OEO, were required by law to provide for the "maximum feasible participation" of poor people in designing and implementing these plans. This requirement was meant to prevent local politicians from dominating and controlling the use of the new antipoverty funds, and OEO officials were initially determined to follow through on this promise. For this reason, and because of the OEO's commitment to shaking up the local status quo, ensuring maximum feasible participation proved to be the most contentious part of the War on Poverty. In theory, and in reality in some places, OEO funding for community action agencies involved the distribution of not only money but power to poor people and their representative organizations, putting them in a position to challenge traditional federal, state, and local bureaucracies. By requiring the "maximum feasible participation of the poor" in community action agencies, the Economic Opportunity Act substantially elevated the role of marginalized people and set off a daring policy experiment. And because so many local power struggles and inequities were bound up with race, community action, like the broader War on Poverty, became inextricably intertwined with the struggle for racial equality.

Almost immediately after the initiation of the Community Action Program in August 1964, the innovative program stirred a storm of protest, particularly from some southern white leaders, who wished to preserve African American subordination, and from entrenched local politicians and social service leaders, who found their power threatened by newly empowered people and organizations. Angered by the turmoil CAP was causing and politically threatened by influential big-city mayors, President Johnson ordered the OEO to reign in the more combative community action agencies and to cooperate with local officials. This was the first of many steps taken to control and contain what some saw as the radicalism of community action but others saw as a matter of basic justice and access to opportunities that were being denied. Added regulations reduced the flexibility envisioned in the original Community Action Program and narrowed the meaning of maximum feasible participation to a concise mathematical formula. Through the Green Amendment of 1967, Congress effectively required that city halls and established civic leaders give their approval to actions of community action agencies. Eventually, preapproved "national emphasis" programs rather than locally generated programs came to dominate the work of community action agencies. Further changes arose from the intensification of urban civil disorder after 1965. Urban unrest narrowed the War on Poverty and turned the OEO and the CAP into major antiriot endeavors. By 1969, over 1,000 community action agencies were in operation, and they offered ready-made organizations capable of dealing with tension on the streets. In that role, according to several studies, the OEO proved relatively effective at calming tensions and reconfiguring attention paid to American ghettos. With modified structures and functions, community action agencies generally became much less controversial and developed into accepted social welfare institutions delivering fairly specific services. In this instance, as in other War on Poverty programs, attacks on the CAP did not kill the entire project. Even after the federal program was eliminated in 1974, it was evident that the CAP had left a lasting and widespread institutional legacy of community-based antipoverty organizations. In 1999, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that 96 percent of all counties in the United States had operating community action agencies or their equivalent.

Despite aggressive attacks on the War on Poverty in the 1968 presidential campaign, the Republican administration of President Richard Nixon continued many of its key programs and actually expanded the welfare state through the liberalization of the food stamp program, the indexing of Social Security to inflation, and the passage of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for disabled and elderly Americans. Politically, however, the Nixon administration did a great deal to undermine the War on Poverty. In 1973, as one of a series of "reorganizations" that had already left the OEO much diminished and much less activist in orientation, Nixon replaced the OEO with the much weaker Community Services Administration and redistributed control over antipoverty programs to more traditional federal bureaucracies—in effect, bringing the formal War on Poverty to an end. The Nixon administration also launched a "New Federalism" initiative, in which the federal government shifted more authority over social welfare to state and local governments. This more decentralized vision for federalism was most fully realized during the administration of President Ronald W. Reagan, which replaced the Community Services Administration with the Community Services Block Grant system, redesigned job training, cut back the food stamp program, and initiated what some scholars have called a "War on Welfare."

The legacies of the Community Action Program and the rest of the War on Poverty remain a subject of contentious debate. Generally, the War on Poverty has been most often remembered for its political controversies and its failure to live up to its own stated goal of ending poverty in the United States. Assessments of its accomplishments and limitations, however, have tended to differ according to the political affiliation and ideological orientation of the interpreter and the spirit of the times. One example is the debate over the reasons for a substantial decline in the Black poverty rate, from 55 percent of all African Americans in 1959 to 33 percent in 1970, and for a drop in the overall U.S. poverty rate, from 22 percent to 12 percent in same time period (in 2000, the rate for African Americans was 22 percent and the overall rate was 11 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau 2003). Critics of the Great Society have tended to credit the decline in poverty to economic growth spurred by American entrepreneurship, while blaming the Great Society for impeding further economic growth. Defenders have tended to argue that the Great Society was crucial for the economic growth and directly helped move people out of poverty. Even those who applaud the many initiatives of the War on Poverty agree, however, that in the broader scheme of things it was more a skirmish than the all-out attack promised in presidential rhetoric. Modestly funded from the very beginning, it quickly fell victim to the artificial austerity imposed by spending demands from the much more rapidly escalating war in Vietnam. Hastily planned programs were subject to corruption and, under the spotlight of constant and intense scrutiny, scandal. Even the most popular programs, such as Head Start, have never been sufficiently funded to reach all who are eligible for their services. There is also some question over whether, given its primary emphasis on services to individuals and communities, the War on Poverty could ever have lived up to its lofty promise: It did not redistribute much wealth or address deep structural problems in the American economy, and those options were not seriously considered, except by those on the fringes. Equally important, the goal of ending poverty was quickly overshadowed, not only by the demands and growing controversy over Vietnam but also by the economic downturn of the 1970s and the political appeal of welfare reform.

In the 1980s and 1990s, disagreements over the legacies of the War on Poverty and the Great Society became especially intense. President Reagan and others on the political right convinced many that the War on Poverty represented a failure of big government. Instead of helping alleviate poverty, they argued, its programs supposedly encouraged sloth, dependency, crime, single parenthood, and unproductive citizenship. Conservative critics, led by Charles Murray in his 1984 book *Losing Ground,* charged that most of the programs were misguided, mismanaged attempts at social engineering in which liberal overspending stifled market-based solutions and covered up for the faults of individuals. Defenders of the Great Society retorted that social programs—despite being fragmented, underfunded, and besieged—had helped lower the poverty rate, reduce disorder, and absorb the shock from baby boomers entering the job market. Those defenders pointed out that most Americans have favored most of the Great Society's programs. In that regard, support for the Great Society's contributions to the welfare state—especially elements with formidable popular backing, such as Medicare, Head Start, Social Security expansion, and education funding—limited the effect of conservative assaults.

Two presidential moments hint at the political distance traveled by the War on Poverty since its inception. In President Johnson's first State of the Union address (1964), the roughhewn Texas Democrat declared an "unconditional war on poverty in America." With eager bravado, he promised not to rest "until that war is won." His audience thundered in ovation. Almost a quarter of a century later, in President Reagan's final State of the Union address (1988), the smooth, good-looking California Republican announced that in America's War on Poverty, "poverty won." His audience rumbled with laughter. The applause and the laughter on all sides may continue until some combination of time, domestic crisis, and movement building generates renewed political will to mount a major antipoverty initiative.

Kent B. Germany

See also: Area Redevelopment Act; Civil Rights Movement; Community Development; Community Organizing; *Economic Report of 1964;* Education Policies; Employment and Training; Federalism; Food Stamps; Health Policy; Housing Policy; Juvenile Delinquency; Legal Aid/Legal Services; *Losing Ground;* New Right; North Carolina Fund; *The Other America;* Peace Corps; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA); Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Wealth

Defined in strictly material terms, wealth is the ownership of assets that generate income or have market value, including land or other forms of real estate; savings; stocks, bonds, and similar financial assets; and tangible capital such as equipment and manufacturing plants. But wealth can also be understood in terms of the social and economic advantages, political power, and cultural values with which it has historically been associated. Thus, although some argue that the definition of wealth should include marketable skills, education, and other aspects of human capital and claims on social insurance benefits, these assets do not carry the same significance in terms of class status and social standing as do property or financial assets. And it is in the power, status, and prestige factors as well as in its material dimensions that wealth—specifically its unequal distribution and concentration—has been of such great consequence to the history of poverty and social welfare in the United States.

The pursuit of wealth has been a powerful, in some ways defining, force in American history and political economy: From the earliest European settlers seeking to aggrandize imperial fortune to succeeding generations of immigrants in search of the "American dream" of opportunity and upward mobility, the notion of America as a land of abundance and comparative economic freedom has been both a significant drawing point and keynote of national identity, reaching an apotheosis in the image of the United States as the "affluent society" in the decades following World War II. But there is an equally characteristic tradition that draws on sometimes overlapping political, ideological, and moral sensibilities to raise fundamental concerns about the dangers of wealth concentration and inequality, and that tradition has fueled efforts to regulate, redistribute, or otherwise democratize wealth holding in the United States and to prevent the wealthy from crystallizing into a political and economic ruling class. The tension between these two impulses has been played out in shifting patterns of wealth distribution; in efforts to regulate its accumulation, distribution, and political power; in debates over the public and private obligations of wealth, as exemplified especially in the emergence of organized philanthropy as an expression of institutionalized wealth stewardship; and in shifting attitudes toward the wealthy and the symbols of wealth accumulation that have become part of the cultural landscape at various times.

American wealth distribution has always been unequal, although the degree, nature, and consequences of inequality have undergone significant transformations over time. Moreover, the full dimensions of wealth inequality cannot be understood apart from the broader social and economic conditions within which it occurs. By most measures—as well as by contemporaneous assessments—wealth in colonial America was more equally distributed than in Europe, and indeed, more than in any subsequent period in U.S. history, with just under 13 percent of wealth concentrated in the hands of the top 1 percent of wealth holders and approximately one-half in the hands of the top 10 percent. Subsequent periods show a far more uneven distributional picture, with sustained periods of rising or persistent inequality followed by briefer periods during which wealth distribution leveled out somewhat. Historical research shows a sharp rise in wealth concentration and inequality through the first half of the nineteenth century. That rise was stemmed during the 1860s by the impact of Civil War and the emancipation of slaves, but it was soon followed by the tremendous accumulation of individual and corporate fortunes that marked the end of the century as the Gilded Age. As a result, in 1912, on the eve of World War I, more than half of the nation's wealth was concentrated among the top 1 percent of wealth holders and an estimated 90 percent among the top 10 percent (Huston 1998, 84).

The closing decades of the twentieth century saw a similarly dramatic rise in measured wealth inequality, which has continued through the early years of the new millennium and stimulated talk of a new Gilded Age. After reaching post–World War II lows of 25–30 percent in

Andrew Jackson, Bank Veto, July 10, 1832

In July 1832, President Andrew Jackson vetoed legislation that would have renewed the Bank of the United States, which was originally chartered in 1791 amid great controversy but subsequently gained acceptance within the political establishment. Nevertheless, as Jackson's veto message indicates, to its opponents the bank had come to symbolize the corrupting influence of large accumulations of wealth. With its explicit appeal to populist and class interests, Jackson's speech has been seen as a democratic manifesto against the looming threat of an aristocratic "money power," wielding undue influence on the political process and threatening to undermine democracy.

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society—the farmers, mechanics, and laborers—who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have right to complain of the injustice of their Government. There are no necessary evils in government. The evils exist only in its abuses. If it would confine itself to equal protection, and, as Heaven does its rains, shower its favors alike on the high and the low, the rich and the poor, it would be an unqualified blessing. In the act before me [to recharter the Bank of the United States] there seems to be a wide and unnecessary departure from these just principles.

Source: Andrew Jackson, Bank Veto, July 10, 1832, in *Andrew Jackson vs. Henry Clay: Democracy and Development in Antebellum America*, ed. Harry L. Watson (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 1998), 187.

the early 1960s, the share of wealth garnered by the rich shot up to 40 percent for the top 1 percent and nearly 85 percent for the top 20 percent of wealth owners (the figures are substantially higher for stock market and investment wealth). These gains at the top occurred even as absolute wealth holdings diminished for the remaining 80 percent of U.S. households and dropped substantially for the bottom two-fifths (Wolff 1998; Keister 2000). Today, in a stark departure from its Revolutionary-era origins, the United States has the dubious honor of boasting the highest rates of wealth (and income) inequality in the industrialized world.

Of course, considering these trends in light of the broader dimensions of inequality deepens and in some ways complicates the picture of wealth inequality while cautioning against the impulse to designate any given period a "golden age" of relative egalitarianism in wealth distribution. Considering the bigger picture also underscores the multiple ways in which the concentration of wealth among the few has historically been linked to the growth and deepening of poverty among the many. Thus, colonial and Revolutionary-era wealth—although less concentrated among a top elite than in other periods—was largely confined to the minority of free white men who were property owners. Women, legally subordinate to and disentitled to wealth ownership apart from their husbands, faced legal as well as social barriers to independent wealth holding until the late nineteenth century. In addition to land, a substantial and growing amount of wealth from the colonial through the Civil War years was in the form of slaveholding (Wright 1986). Both slave labor and the slave trade contributed to the fortunes of individuals and corporations alike. In this and other ways, including the appropriation of Native American land through conquest and other means, wealth was generated from the mass impoverishment of people of color, while wealth distribution was patterned on subordination along the lines of class, race, and gender.

In contrast, the extreme polarization of wealth that has been accelerating since the 1980s has occurred within a context of more widespread overall wealth ownership (for most households, this takes the form of home ownership or savings accounts) and fewer formal, officially sanctioned barriers based on status. Contrary to the claims of those who would defend the status quo, however, this hardly amounts to a democratization of wealth. For one thing, in an economy that requires greater levels of education and training as well as access to consumer markets for basic goods, some form of wealth ownership represents an increasingly necessary point of financial leverage for ensuring basic opportunity and security. For all but those at the very top of the distribution, wealth ownership is less a source of privilege than a basic economic stakehold, a source of security as well as access to educational and related opportunities. Meanwhile, the proportion of households with no measurable assets has been rising since the 1980s, leaving as many as one-quarter of American families locked out of the protections and opportunities accorded on the basis of wealth ownership. Moreover, as even modest wealth ownership has become a requisite of economic and social citizenship, racial and gender gaps remain quite substantial (Keister 2000; Oliver and Shapiro 1995). And important changes in the forms of wealth ownership have put its benefits out of reach for many. Today, wealth is more corporate and globalized and is held in the form of financial assets from investments in the stock market. It is also, as much as ever, reliant on the existence and persistence of low-wage labor, in the United States and around the world.

Although conservative social theorists such as William Graham Sumner and, more recently, George Gilder have justified wealth inequality as a reflection of differences in individual ability and entrepreneurial acuity, scholars have pointed to a range of structural and political factors in explaining patterns of distribution over time. Some analysts point to the role of economic transformation, positing, in variations on the famous hypothesis put forward by economist Simon Kuznets (1955), that such major periods of economic modernization as the Industrial Revolution or the rise of the high-technology information economy create more inequality in their initial stages as part of the normal course of restructuring but eventually level out as more people become positioned to benefit from change. Others, more controversially, argue that wealth inequality is a necessary and desirable spur to economic growth and, conversely, that measures to promote greater equity suppress growth—an argument at odds with the experience of the post–World War II decades, when declining wealth inequality coincided with sustained economic growth. Historians have also emphasized the crucial role played by law and public policy in encouraging wealth accumulation and shaping its form and distribution: On the one hand, for example, are the controversial chartering of the National Bank in 1791 (seen to favor northern mercantile and financial interests), public subsidies that enabled private corporations to generate huge profits from activities such as railroad building, and legal decisions favoring the interests of capital and limiting its regulation. On the other hand are measures to bring land and home ownership within reach of the unmonied masses, such as the Homestead Act of 1862 and the Federal Housing Administration home mortgage provisions initiated in 1934.

But the question that has most consistently preoccupied observers, both as cause and consequence of wealth inequality, is the consolidation of enormous political and economic power in the hands of an identifiable elite devoted to its own aggrandizement and perpetuation. Such a group has been variously embodied in the European landed aristocracy, the colonial-era merchants chartered and under the protectorate of the British monarchy, the primarily northeastern banking and financial "money interest" behind the National Bank, or the fabulously wealthy corporate giants, "robber barons," and bankers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—the John D. Rockefellers, Andrew Carnegies, J. P. Morgans, Andrew Mellons, and others whose financial and business maneuverings earned them Theodore Roosevelt's famous epithet "malefactors of great wealth."

It was largely in response to the persistent but changing face of wealth concentration that reformers, beginning with the Revolutionary generation, first established and later refined the principles guiding provisions for protecting the "general welfare" against the designs of monied elites. From the outset of the new republic, these included prohibitions against European traditions of aristocratic inheritance as well as against centralized "big government" lest it operate in collusion with the rich. Indeed, in an era still charged by memories of the British East India Company (the target of the Boston Tea Party) and in which the "common man" was not a wage worker but a small proprietor, farmer, or independent artisan, limited government, "free enterprise," and "laissez-faire" were embraced as the safeguards of economic independence and democracy.

By the late nineteenth century, the situation was quite the reverse, as reformers increasingly turned to government regulation to rein in the great corporate trusts and monopoly capitalists who were overwhelming smaller competitors while themselves embracing the doctrine of laissez-faire and championing the cause of unregulated market growth. Laissez-faire, in the context of vast and monopolistic enterprises—many of them built with the help of government subsidies—was serving to undermine free enterprise and equal opportunity and weigh the scales in favor of *Wealth against Commonwealth,* as Henry Demarest Lloyd called it in the title of his influential 1894 screed against corruption. Laid bare in the writings of Lloyd, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, Frank Norris, and other muckraking journalists and novelists of the Progressive Era, the power and unethical business and labor practices of wealthy corporate monopolists became the target of congressional hearings and modest antitrust and regulatory legislation beginning in the 1890s. The work of such writers also helped fuel growing popular and political support for the establishment, after decades of struggle, of the progressive federal income tax (by the Sixteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1913) and the permanent federal estate or inheritance tax in 1916.

Although various reform and redistributionist movements met with fierce resistance, they also spawned efforts to put a more beneficent face on wealth. The best-known of these was an essay entitled "Wealth" by steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie, published in the *North American Review* in 1889 and widely reprinted as "The Gospel of Wealth." Referring to the growing gap between rich and poor as "essential for the progress of the race," Carnegie argued that the rich should use their "surplus" wealth—over and above what was necessary for a life of comfort—for social betterment by administering it for "the common good" during their lifetimes (Carnegie 1889, 653, 658). Carnegie carried out his own mandate with highly visible projects such as municipal libraries for "working men"—even as Carnegie-employed Pinkerton detectives were using violence to quash labor organizing in his own steelworks. More significant, along with John D. Rockefeller and Margaret Olivia Sage (wife of railroad millionaire Russell Sage and founder of the philanthropy that bears his name), Carnegie took part in establishing the first generation of large-scale, general-purpose philanthropies. Greeted with skepticism as efforts to shelter large accumulations of capitalist wealth from taxation, these corporate foundations were able to diffuse such criticism with funding for such widely sanctioned endeavors as scientific research, education, and the arts.

If organized philanthropy put a beneficent face on great industrial fortunes, it also helped consolidate and institutionalize the influence of wealth in civil society and in the broader culture. This was increasingly apparent in charity and social work, where philanthropy made a concerted effort to set standards of training and professionalization, but it also extended to education, the arts, social sciences, and other fields. Translating much older ideas of elite stewardship into professional endeavor, philanthropists put their wealth into the business of cultural uplift—for the poor, as well as for the working and middle-class general public—far more than into addressing the roots of economic and social inequality. As self-appointed arbiter of "the common good," philanthropy seemed to lend credence to the idea that the existing system, of highly unequal wealth accumulation and distribution, would ultimately ameliorate disparities between rich and poor.

The post–World War II decades were comparatively complacent regarding problems of wealth and poverty. The disparities of earlier generations had not disappeared, but for several reasons they did diminish somewhat. One was the rising standard of living brought about by the combination of sustained economic growth, rising incomes among middle-class and unionized working-class earners, the expansion of mass consumerism, and the protections against economic insecurity established by the New Deal welfare state. The benefits of economic growth, in an era marked by broadly based wage gains and even modestly redistributive social policies, were more widely shared than in the past. Also significant was the vast expansion of home ownership—and hence, wealth ownership—among white working-class and middle-class households as a result of New Deal–initiated home mortgage guarantees and the benefits for World War II veterans provided by the G.I. Bill. And while these signposts of mass affluence helped paper over the persistence of considerable disparities in wealth and income, Cold War anti-communism played a powerful role in muzzling dissent. Amid the Cold War propaganda battles that pitted American "people's capitalism" against Soviet communism, talk that could be construed as fomenting "class warfare" was labeled subversive or anti-American and suppressed. Indeed, when foundations such as Rockefeller and Carnegie and the recently established Ford Foundation came under attack at the height of Joseph McCarthy's Red Scare, it was not as scheming protectorates of great capitalist fortunes but as hubs of a "liberal establishment" conspiring to foist vaguely socialist ideas of redistribution and "welfare statism" onto an unsuspecting public. In this atmosphere, liberals themselves looked to economic growth and full employment, far more than they did to redistribution, as the answers to enduring economic disparities. Social critics who sought to puncture the idealized vision of the "affluent society" by pointing to powerful networks of corporate wealth or to deep-seated racial disparities in home ownership and the "American Dream" remained on the margins of political debate.

It is against that backdrop—of diminishing wealth inequality in the postwar period and of complacency about enduring disparities—that the late-twentieth-century return to Gilded Age patterns of polarized wealth distribution has been received by some as a shocking and unexpected reversal of fortune and by others as a sign, as Andrew Carnegie might have said, of "the advancement of the race." Indeed, in these polarized reactions to the ever more visible concentrations of wealth among the very rich, a handful of corporate giants, and the globalized networks of first world economies, we can see an important aspect of the trend toward polarization. Shifts in power—away from labor and toward capital, away from locally based independent producers and toward large multinational corporations, away from institutions of democratic governance and toward privatized, market-based mechanisms of distribution—have helped fuel the rise in inequality. Along with these shifts, there has been an accompanying shift in ideological and political alignments that has helped advance an explicitly pro-wealth doctrine and policy agenda (Phillips 2002).

Cultivated within the think tanks, legal institutes, foundations, academic departments, and journals that form the intellectual backbone of the conservative New Right, this pro-wealth agenda is grounded in "supply-side" economics and in what some have described as a new Social Darwinism. It is hostile to government regulation and social provision and to the rights of labor to organize, and it has revived the idea of laissez-faire and free markets as the basis of economic freedom. Its deregulatory policies have encouraged the massive corporate merger wave since the 1980s while severely weakening the political standing of wage earners and consumers alike. And since the 1980s, it has mounted an assault not only on the New Deal/Great Society welfare state but on the very idea of progressive taxation that has infused economic policy with at least a modicum of fairness for nearly a century. In a radical departure from the Revolutionary-era, republican imprimatur against the concentration and dynastic inheritance of wealth, it has orchestrated the elimination of the estate tax—which affects only the very wealthy—by 2011, as well as a major redistribution of the tax burden from the very rich to the vast majority (Gates and Collins 2002).

Save for sporadic outcries over excessive CEO compensation, over the role of big money in politics, and over the cascading array of enormously costly corporate and financial scandals that have continued to unfold since the late 1990s, the broader consequences of wealth inequality have been largely absent from public and political debate. Some regard this as itself a consequence of the influence of wealth in both political parties. However, more popular explanations have pointed to the power of enduring cultural values of individualism, economic entrepreneurship, and self-reliance and, in particular, to the power of a cultural mythology that honors the rags-to-riches stories and the self-made man images that have surrounded those who develop great fortunes, from the immigrants John Jacob Astor and Andrew Carnegie to Microsoft founder Bill Gates. Nevertheless, in the past, those very same values have also been invoked to curb the excesses and overweening, enterprise-quashing power of concentrated wealth, even as the proverbial success story has been made possible by the very public provisions and amenities that the new gospel of wealth now seeks to undermine.

Alice O'Connor

See also: Capitalism; Globalization and Deindustrialization; "Gospel of Wealth"; Income and Wage Inequality; Philanthropy; *Progress and Poverty;* Property; Republicanism; Slavery; Social Darwinism; Wealth, Distribution/Concentration

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Wealth, Distribution/ Concentration

Wealth ownership is concentrated in the hands of a small minority of the U.S. population. Wealth, or net worth, is the value of a person's assets less his or her debts. For a typical family, assets include the home, savings and checking accounts, and other investments. Wealthier families also own stocks, bonds, investment real estate, and business assets. Liabilities typically include mortgage debt as well as student loans, car loans, and other consumer debt. Between the 1960s and 1990s, total household wealth grew from $8 trillion to nearly $24 trillion (all dollar values are 2000 dollars, converted using the Consumer Price Index), and the number of billionaires in the Forbes 400 rose from 85 to 267. Although total wealth has increased, wealth has become more concentrated in recent decades. The implications of severe and growing inequality are apparent when the advantages of wealth ownership are considered. Wealth provides current use value (as in the ownership of a home), generates more wealth when it is invested, provides a buffer during financial emergencies, and can be passed to future generations. Moreover, wealth may increase political influence, educational and occupational opportunities, and social advantages for both current and future generations.

The average wealth owned by American families has grown considerably since the mid-1960s. In 1962, the mean net worth for an American family was $152,000, rising to $223,000 by 1983 and $283,000 by 1998. There were years during those decades in which family wealth did not grow, particularly during the 1970s; however, when measured on average, American families got much richer between the 1960s and 1980s. Yet what according to these measures may appear to be a story of growing affluence masks a more disturbing reality of growing disparity in the distribution of wealth ownership. This disparity can be illustrated by looking at the difference between two different wealth indicators. The first is mean, or average, wealth holdings, which are calculated by dividing total overall wealth by the number of families in the United States. This estimate is relatively high because a small number of extremely large fortunes skew the distribution of wealth and bring the average up. The second indicator is median wealth, which shows the midpoint of wealth ownership for American families. The median value of a family net worth in 1962 was about $41,000, meaning that one-half of American families had more and one-half had less than that amount in wealth. This figure rose to $57,000 in 1983 and to $64,000 in 1998, indicating that a great deal of the substantial growth of average wealth was realized by those at the top. Likewise, growth in the percentage of households with zero or negative net worth suggests that not all families enjoyed increases in their well-being. Indeed, more than one-quarter of all families had no wealth as recently as 1998.

Since the early 1920s, the top 1 percent of wealth holders have consistently owned an average of 30 percent of total family wealth. During economic downturns, the distribution of wealth appears more equal. However, studies of wealth mobility suggest that it is rare for families to move upward in comparative wealth holding and that eras of relative equality reflect deflated asset prices more than improvements in the well-being of the majority of the population. The top 1 percent of wealth owners owned an average of 30 percent of total net worth between 1922 and the early 1950s. During the 1950s, economic prosperity brought with it increased wealth inequality, and by the late 1950s, estimates suggest that the top 1 percent of households owned nearly 35 percent of total wealth. Inequality was not as dramatic during the 1960s and 1970s due to an extended stock market slump and the growth of welfare programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Social Security, but it increased again starting in the 1980s and continued through the 1990s.

Recent trends in wealth inequality are particularly startling. The top 1 percent of wealth owners owned nearly 40 percent of net worth and nearly 50 percent of financial assets in the late 1980s and 1990s. During this period, the top 1 percent enjoyed two-thirds of all increases in financial wealth. Moreover, while wealth inequality was consistently more severe throughout Europe for many decades, by the early 1990s, the United States had surpassed all industrial societies in the extent of family wealth inequality. Perhaps most striking is the decline in the wealth of the poorest 80 percent of households. The wealth of this group decreased by more than 2 percentage points, from 18.7 percent of total wealth in 1983 to 16.4 percent in 1989. Moreover, nearly all growth in real wealth between 1983 and 1989 was accumulated by the top 20 percent of wealth holders, who gained 2.3 percentage points in their total wealth holdings, from 81.3 to 83.6 percent. The Gini coefficient, an indicator of the degree of inequality, increased from 0.85 in 1989 and 1992 to 0.87 in 1995. (The Gini coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating perfect equality and 1 indicating perfect inequality. Conceptually, if a single household owned all the wealth, the Gini would equal one.) These estimates indicate that wealth inequality is extremely severe and that it worsened considerably after 1962.

Racial inequality in wealth ownership is among the most extreme and persistent forms of stratification in the United States. Blacks and Hispanics, in particular, own considerably less wealth than whites. In 1992, while median Black income was about 60 percent of median white income, median net worth for Blacks was only 8 percent of median net worth for whites. In that same year, 25 percent of white families had zero or negative assets, but more than 60 percent of Black families had no wealth. Longitudinal estimates suggest that between 1960 and 1995, whites were twice as likely as were minorities to have more wealth than income and nearly three times as likely to experience wealth mobility. Minorities are also underrepresented among the very wealthy. In 1995, 95 percent of those in the top 1 percent of wealth holders were white, while only 1 percent were Black. The wealth position of other minorities has attracted less attention, but there is evidence that the wealth accumulation of whites also exceeds that of Hispanics and Asians.

Data limitations have made the study of wealth mobility very difficult, but recent data improvements have allowed researchers to provide unprecedented detail in their estimates of wealth ownership. These data have revealed that levels of wealth inequality are so extreme that many people own essentially no wealth, even though assets are one of the most central indicators of well-being. Although wealth inequality remains a fundamental and critical social problem, improved understanding of the problem may help with developing ways to alleviate it.

Lisa A. Keister

See also: Capitalism; Classism; Economic Theories; Economic/Fiscal Policy; Income and Wage Inequality; Wealth

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Welfare Administration

The political history of welfare is one not only of embattled policies but also of embattled administration. Welfare administration has developed unevenly and inconsistently, buffeted by competing impulses toward localism and centralization, public and private provision, professionalization and bureaucratization, simplification and complexity. Caught amid these crosscurrents and an enduring ambivalence about the provision of relief itself, public welfare bureaucracies have often drawn the ire of politicians, taxpayers, and the poor families that rely on them for assistance.

Contemporary arrangements for welfare administration have their roots in the localism and moralism that were distinctive features of the British poor laws and colonial welfare provision. In the United States, care of the poor was largely a secular function of town governments, whose locally appointed "overseers of the poor" dispensed relief. Administrative practices informally established a moral hierarchy for assistance, boarding out widows of higher social standing to homes in the community and sending widows of less exalted standing to work in Houses of Industry and their children to work on farms, where, it was reasoned, they would benefit from the fresh country air. Local administration of relief, reflecting the burden relief placed on the local property tax, utilized strategies to prevent in-migration, for example, "warning out" citizens from other communities who might try to establish residency without adequate economic support.

As industrialization and immigration swelled the ranks of the poor toward the end of the nineteenth century, relief remained both limited and local. Two private forms of welfare—charity organization societies and settlement houses—began to emerge in the gaps of public provision. Both offered aid to the needy, creating a private sphere for "welfare work" and developing practices that combined material assistance with social intervention. Although different in tone and mission, both types of organization anticipated the uneasy mix of "cash and care" that would come to infuse welfare provision as it developed into a major public function.

Mothers' pensions, sometimes heralded as the first great welfare reform of the twentieth century, may be viewed more modestly as an incipient system for providing income support to poor families. Administratively, the program was a bridge from local poor law arrangements to a new form of state-based social insurance. Welfare financing moved up the governmental ladder, with state governments assuming a greater share of welfare costs. This eased somewhat the fiscal constraints created by tying relief to the local property tax. However, local units of government retained administrative authority for relief giving, including the considerable power of administrative gatekeeping. Local boards and commissions continued to make case-by-case decisions on who would receive aid, using moralistic standards similar to those practiced in the nineteenth century to limit support largely to "worthy widows" and to exclude mothers of color and many noncitizen immigrants. In the ten years after mothers' pensions were first established in 1911, forty states passed similar legislation. However, administrative gatekeeping practices minimized the potential impact of these laws. By 1930, less than 3 percent of potentially eligible families received aid. Of those receiving aid, 82 percent were the families of widows, 96 percent of them white.

In the wake of the Great Depression, as economic deprivation spread through much of the nation, poverty briefly lost its stark moral stigma. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal responded, in part, by creating the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program within the Social Security Act of 1935. ADC constituted a marked departure from existing forms of provision, bringing the federal government into the picture, largely in the realm of financing but also in establishing the basic parameters for welfare eligibility. The law provided a subsidy to existing state aid programs, reimbursing them for up to six dollars for payments to one child and four dollars for each additional child. Although the federal program was small at its start, it opened the way to an enlarged federal role over time. In the domain of administration, ADC made a significant concession to past practices, leaving control in the hands of the states.

This element of continuity reflected not only incrementalism at work but also the political sensitivities of the period. ADC sidestepped potentially explosive political issues by permitting states to set their own eligibility and administrative standards, effectively shielding local gatekeeping practices from federal intrusion. State administrative autonomy permitted southern states to prevent most minorities from obtaining access to assistance and enabled all states, northern and southern, to adapt provision to the requirements of local economic interests (for example, suspending aid during harvest seasons and keeping benefits lower than the wages available in the least desirable jobs).

Beginning in the late 1950s, restrictive gatekeeping practices caught the attention of federal officials, undoubtedly made more attentive by the burgeoning civil rights movement. One of the more flagrant state practices was to deem as "unsuitable" those homes in which unmarried women had children. Once a household was designated unsuitable, its welfare benefits could be cut. When the state of Louisiana adopted this tactic, the racial implications were hard to miss: White families made up only 5 percent of the homes the state deemed unsuitable. The federal government blocked this practice, issuing an administrative rule (the Flemming rule, named for then secretary of health, education, and welfare Arthur S. Flemming) prohibiting states from withholding support from children simply because they were "illegitimate." These types of administrative tactics were not limited to southern states. In another infamous case, the small city of Newburgh, New York, used its administrative discretion to block access to welfare by requiring adult welfare recipients to "muster" at the local police station for their welfare checks and by threatening to investigate applicants' home environment and to remove children from homes found unsuitable.

Federal officials were troubled by blatantly restrictive and racially skewed state practices and were broadly concerned about the professional adequacy of state welfare bureaucracies. Social workers and their professional associations joined with the antipoverty warriors of President John F. Kennedy's administration to make the case that fighting poverty required more than the provision of income. They argued that fighting poverty required social services that could prevent families from becoming poor and could rehabilitate others who were mired in poverty. In effect, they reintroduced the notion that "cash" should be coupled with "care," an approach practiced in the old settlement houses and charity organization societies. The way to reduce welfare caseloads, they argued, was to expand social services and to professionalize state welfare staff.

These views informed the Social Security Act Amendments of 1962, under which the federal government provided grants to states to reform welfare administration and build professional service capacity. States quickly took advantage of the grant program, using it to channel public funds to private social service providers (an early form of privatization). However, they also found loopholes in the grant language that allowed them to substitute federal funds for preexisting state administrative activities. Consequently, millions of federal grant dollars poured into states, but with no discernible effect either on the professional stature of the bureaucracy or on rapidly rising caseloads. In 1967, the services strategy was pronounced a failure, and the grant program was terminated.

Nevertheless, the issue of professionalism in service provision remained on the agenda, pursued in the form of a narrower federal initiative encouraging states to separate social service and public assistance functions. In effect, this created a new domain for the social work profession in the specialized field of child welfare services, while leaving to generalists and nonprofessionals the increasingly bureaucratized functions of administering the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program (formerly ADC).

When the much-remarked "welfare explosion" hit in the late 1960s and early 1970s, state welfare administration came under renewed political attack. Rising caseloads were viewed as a political problem, although they might have been taken to indicate that poor families long excluded from welfare were finally gaining access to support. Rising caseloads were also viewed as indicating a failure in state gatekeeping practices, now seen as insufficiently restrictive. As welfare became available to a growing population of African Americans and female-headed households, state welfare provision was widely decried as "a mess" and "a nightmare" overwhelmed by "waste, fraud, and abuse."

Growing state caseloads created a drain on the federal treasury because AFDC provided states an open-ended federal subsidy for state benefit expenditures. As costs mounted, the federal government began to search for ways to assert control. President Richard M. Nixon's administration proposed a Family Assistance Plan that would have controlled the outflow of federal dollars by providing a fixed amount of support for state welfare payments. It also would have simplified welfare administration, emphasizing cash transfers and streamlining the terms of assistance.

In the wake of the plan's defeat in the early 1970s, the administration turned to administrative reform as a way to stem the growth of welfare, initiating a federal audit system called "quality control" to crack down on sloppy state practices and on what the administration believed to be overly generous welfare provision. Quality control audits seemed to indicate that millions of dollars in cash assistance were being paid out improperly. However, the error rate was both overestimated and skewed. It treated all paperwork mistakes as if they produced payment errors, although many of them involved only missing documents that did not change a family's actual eligibility for aid. The error rate also counted only excess payments; it did not record underpayments or failure to pay benefits to eligible families.

Quality control provided an instrument for federal intrusion in state welfare administration, using the threat of fiscal penalties to prod states to tighten up gatekeeping practices in order to reduce error rates that had reached double digits in some states. Under pressure to bring error rates down to 4 percent by 1982, states erected new process-driven gatekeeping practices. These practices replaced the overtly moralistic and race-based restrictions of previous eras, making procedural compliance the new mark of a virtuous client. Those who had difficulty navigating complex new procedural demands were deemed "uncooperative" and denied benefits.

Administrative reform modestly helped control caseload growth. Perhaps more significantly, it advanced processes of deprofessionalization and bureaucratization initiated earlier as part of the separation of service functions from income transfer functions. Although error rates dropped, administrative reform was not sufficient to insulate state welfare agencies from an emergent new critique in the 1980s. Both welfare policy and administrative practices were blamed for continued welfare use (often referred to as "dependency"). Some critics even caricatured the reformed welfare bureaucracy as too streamlined, toeing the line on procedural rules but still making welfare too readily available. The conservative version of this critique called on welfare agencies to intervene more actively in the lives of the poor to dissuade them from using welfare for income support and to demand work in return for aid. The liberal version of this critique called for a return to a services strategy, this time focused on supporting work as an alternative to welfare.

These critiques were embedded in a broader political challenge to welfare, which precipitated a series of incremental changes, eventually culminating in a complete overhaul of welfare policy. Beginning in the 1980s, the federal government gave states authority to change aspects of policy and practice in order to promote work. The Work Incentive (WIN) Program demonstrations, the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) provisions of the Family Support Act of 1988, and a variety of work-oriented programs operated under waivers from federal rules. Implicit in these initiatives was a vague notion of a newly reformed style of administration that expanded state authority, eschewed the bureaucratization of the previous era, and focused on achieving behavioral change through an unspecified mix of social services, persuasion, and strongly enforced work requirements.

These piecemeal efforts to transform state welfare administration were codified into federal law in 1996 with the replacement of AFDC by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF explicitly redirected authority from the federal level to the states and emphasized work requirements over income assistance. Under the banner of devolution, states received federal financing through flexible block grants and were accorded wide discretion over the dispensation of assistance and the imposition of work rules.

However, the degree of state-level autonomy should not be overstated. Like prior federal legislation, TANF used federal fiscal incentives and disincentives to direct state administrative practices toward meeting specific objectives. The strongest fiscal incentives were attached to the objectives of caseload reduction and enforcement of work requirements. To a more modest degree, federal law also prodded state agencies to discourage childbearing and to encourage marriage by welfare recipients, a reminder of the "morality work" of early-twentieth-century welfare provision. In short, after decades of efforts to reform administration by simplifying the rules and reducing bureaucratic discretion, TANF reintroduced complexity and expanded discretion in welfare administration.

Devolution has made it difficult to characterize contemporary administration in any coherent way. TANF allowed states to vary widely in their administrative practices. Although targeted fiscal incentives, in effect, held states accountable for meeting caseload and "work activity" quotas, they did not hold states accountable for how they met them. In some states and counties, administration continued largely under the auspices of the same public agencies—and indeed, the same agency staff—that had previously administered welfare under AFDC. In other instances, TANF spurred privatization, for the first time turning many public welfare functions—case processing and work-related services—over to for-profit enterprises. Private, nonprofit agencies also expanded their role in many states, especially in the operation of welfare-to-work programs. Although some advocates championed privatization as a way to bring more professional expertise to welfare administration, there has been little consistency in the standards states have required of private providers. In addition, in some states, the fragmentation of provision among a growing number of public and private agencies has produced instability in institutional arrangements, with contracted providers moving in and out of the public welfare system. Privatization has also raised new problems of coordination, accountability, and equity in administration.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the mission and methods of welfare administration remain a work in progress. The complexity of the administrative task reflects its functional and political ambiguities: Welfare administration is part dispenser of income, part dispenser of morality, and part dispenser of social services. It is in this context that welfare provision has developed an uneven history and faces an uncertain future.

Evelyn Z. Brodkin

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Federalism; Hull House; Maternalist Policy; Settlement Houses; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare State

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Welfare Capitalism

"Welfare capitalism" is a term that must be defined on two levels. First, it refers to social welfare benefits and health, safety, or leisure programs offered in the private sector through the workplace. These are programs established and directed by employers in market-based economies. More broadly, welfare capitalism must also be seen as a continuing management strategy for negotiating political and economic demands from workers and the regulatory state. In the United States, welfare capitalism has historically expanded when government has extended its involvement in labor and social welfare matters. Thus, when it comes to the unique mix of private and public social welfare benefits in the United States, business and government cannot be thought of as inversely proportional, with one sector expanding as the other contracts. Private welfare schemes have historically developed, expanded, and contracted in tandem with public ones.

In the early twentieth century, American business managers in large-scale corporate enterprises, racked by two decades of labor strife, began preaching a new industrial relations doctrine. Liberal business leaders called on firms to strive for a harmony of interests between capital and labor and to address the source of workers' anxiety or frustration: economic insecurity. Leading industrialists believed that the best way to achieve a new class accord was not through collective representation for workers but through the assumption by each firm of some obligation for its own workers' well-being, either inside or outside the workplace. Known as "welfare work," this rather broadly and loosely defined program relied on employee benefits that ranged from company cafeterias and lunch plans to athletic activities, picnics, English-language and home economics classes, company housing, and company doctors. Some employers offered pecuniary forms of welfare work—loans, savings plans, profit-sharing plans, or accident relief funds. Some company owners, such as George Pullman, established entire towns, complete with company housing, stores, churches, and athletic teams. Companies offered different benefit mixes and approached welfare work with a variety of motivations and expectations. Some executives believed that welfare work improved productive efficiency, that these programs would inspire the employee to become a better worker, whether more efficient, healthier, or more loyal. Others sought to avoid labor upheaval and to discourage unionization; still others hoped to attract and keep skilled workers. In all cases, however, welfare work was a strategy to retain complete managerial control over the terms of employment.

Although ostensibly a means of alleviating workers' economic distress, welfare capitalism prior to the New Deal emphasized workforce efficiency more than individual economic security. Often, company welfare benefits were meant to be the carrot that would convince workers to accept the stick of faster, mechanized production systems, such as the assembly line. Qualifying for Henry Ford's famed five-dollar-a-day compensation or for profit-sharing bonuses entailed conforming to proper social and deferential behavior both inside and outside the workplace. Pension consultants and welfare capitalist proponents urged firms to adopt company-provided old-age pensions as a means to move older workers out of the workplace, thereby eliminating less fit employees who could not run the machinery as fast as younger workers. Moreover, until the 1930s, firms with industrial pension programs almost always provided their own in-house plans rather than using actuarially based and funded insurance policies or annuities. Whether small or large, the majority of companies failed to make any systematic effort to put monies aside for the purpose of paying benefits. The firm could then decide at the moment of a worker's retirement how much he or she would receive or whether he or she would receive any benefits at all. Management could and did base these decisions on personal characteristics, such as work performance, cooperation with foremen, absentee and tardiness records, participation in labor disturbances, or even conduct outside the workplace. Company plans rarely included any surviving spouse's benefits. The case of old-age pensions points to a broader pattern: Rather than being a real source of economic security for workers, welfare capitalism functioned as a program of nonwage incentives used to compel workers to conform to greater mechanization and automation and to a much faster pace of work. Moreover, this tendency to think in terms of managerial rewards and gratuities rather than employment rights became a permanent part of corporate employers' and commercial insurers' view of industrial relations and social welfare.

The work of historian Andrea Tone has revealed the gender politics inherent in welfare capitalism. In the early twentieth century, state legislatures passed new laws that circumscribed employers' authority and protected workers, including maximum-hours laws, minimum-wage laws, and certain occupational safety laws. However, thanks in part to U.S. Supreme Court rulings overturning more generalized protective laws (*Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45 [1905]) while upholding them when targeted on women (*Muller v. Oregon*, 208 U.S. 412 [1908]), these laws applied exclusively to women workers. Some states also had new widows' pensions, potentially removing women from the workforce. In response, and in efforts to contain the threat of further regulations, employers offered "welfare capitalism as an alternative to welfare statism" (Tone 1997) and sought to regain their prerogatives and control over employment rules by presenting themselves as protectors of female workers and caretakers of their welfare. In contradiction to reformers' claims that the industrial workplace harmed women's health, employers offered the industrial workplace as a site of female uplift and reform, establishing washrooms, cafeterias and hot lunches, toilet facilities, home economics classes, and physical exercise for women workers. Conversely, claiming that public regulation and welfare provision robbed male workers of their manly virtue, independence, and breadwinning role, employers offered male workers savings and loan plans, profit-sharing plans, athletic teams, and housing loans. In neither case, however, did these programs ensure job security or living wages. Male and female workers continued to experience regular periods of unemployment, underemployment, indebtedness, and the need for public relief.

In the 1920s, welfare capitalist employers shifted their emphasis toward pecuniary welfare benefits. One of the most effective and long-lasting of these benefit programs was group insurance, a new type of private social insurance policy that would become the basis of the modern employee benefits system. Insurance companies originally devised group insurance for employers to provide life insurance coverage for a large group of employees under one group risk factor; individual employees did not have to pass a medical examination to be included in the plan. Like other welfare capitalist measures, group life insurance was promoted as a measure that would improve relations between capital and labor. Insurers and employers presented such private social insurance as a solution to economic insecurity that was apolitical, rational, and organized. "Expert" managers and actuaries could make the decisions on behalf of working people but without the interference of the masses. Group insurance did indeed respond to a real need, bringing life insurance and funeral benefits to many workers who did not have any life insurance or who could not maintain their own policies over a number of years. At the time, over 40 percent of wage earners had no life insurance policies, and many industrial workers could not obtain individual coverage because industrial diseases, occupational injuries, and poor health prevented them from passing the necessary medical exams. Life insurance companies categorically denied individual policies to workers in designated hazardous industries. More generally, until the advent of employer-based group insurance, low-wage industrial workers were considered "uninsurable risks" by the major insurance companies. This designation served as a form of racial as well as class exclusion and was routinely applied to African Americans, Asians, and Mexicans regardless of the jobs they held.

And yet employer-provided group insurance was partial at best, extending principally to white male workers, who were more likely than nonwhites to work in companies that made some effort to regularize employment and stabilize production. By extending "insurability" to only one category of workers, namely white, urban workers, group insurance deepened the cleavages of class and race already built into insurance underwriting and the labor market.

These cleavages in welfare capitalism extended to gender as well. Both group insurance and company pensions rested on long-term employment and uninterrupted employment. Thus, women workers were far less likely to qualify for insurance benefits, since they worked in part-time jobs or in seasonal jobs that regularly laid off workers at particular points in the year. Women periodically removed themselves from the paid labor market to take care of children or sick relatives. Therefore, as long as insurance remained tied to workforce participation—essentially the rest of the twentieth century—women had a great deal of trouble qualifying for benefits.

By the time Franklin D. Roosevelt took office as president in early 1933, one-quarter of the American working population was unemployed. After three years of despair and passivity—broken sporadically by communist-orchestrated demonstrations—unemployed workers and families without income began actively demanding some governmental support where there was no opportunity to work. In this climate of political upheaval, grassroots political movements—especially movements of the elderly unemployed—and the Roosevelt administration pushed government responsibility for economic security to the center of national politics. And yet, far from disappearing, welfare capitalism persisted as a business strategy for adapting to pressure from workers and from the federal government during the Great Depression and the New Deal era. Insurance companies began to convince employers that, although discontinuing company programs might seem an effective economic response, the most effective political response was to follow through on the promises of welfare capitalism. Although there was an iconoclastic group of corporate executives calling for government social insurance programs, most voices from within the business community believed government solutions could be avoided if business made private options more dependable and realistic.

With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, the grassroots movements and New Dealers generated an ideology of collective economic security and publicly provided social insurance, as well as new policies of government regulation of labor relations. Insurers and welfare capitalist employers quickly adapted to the new welfare state, offering private, company plans as "supplemental social security." In order to promote the idea of supplementation, they had to argue that government pensions were inadequate. Life insurance executives from large and small companies all stressed the utter insufficiency of Social Security retirement pensions, arguing that individual private insurance policies or employee benefits were necessary supplements. Thus, rather than rejecting or fighting the welfare state outright, welfare capitalists helped disseminate the concept, to use Sanford Jacoby's term, of the "basic welfare state": one that provided a minimal, basic level of protection that would not cover all needs and thus left the rest to private institutions (Jacoby 1997, 206–210).

The latter half of the 1930s marked a period of growth and adaptation of private pensions and welfare capitalism. This new wave of industrial pensions helped preserve the notion of the paternalistic employer who cared for his employees' needs beyond the workplace, and it continued to serve the earlier functions of welfare capitalism. Although new employer-provided pensions were more likely to be insured and funded than were pre-Depression pensions, they still retained the one-sided characteristics of their predecessors. Management chose to implement them, chose what the amounts would be, chose the carrier, and retained the right to discontinue them.

Welfare capitalists also had to adapt to the emerging power of organized labor. The New Deal gave the ascendant union movement new legal backing in the 1930s. By the end of World War II, new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions had organized most of the basic industry and transportation sectors. Under the terms of the National Labor Relations Act (1935), employers would have to negotiate with unions and sign labor-management contracts. Yet while business executives of the 1940s and 1950s did have to make decisions about labor policy in a new political and economic context, they chose the old strategy for generating employee loyalty: establishing and expanding their own private welfare state. Indeed, by enhancing company-provided benefits, employers wanted to check any further expansion of the New Deal, especially government intervention in the employment relation. They also wanted to check the growth of the union movement.

For employers, the unilateral purchase of commercial group insurance proved to be the key to containing union power and union political goals. Commercial insurers had now expanded group insurance plans to include hospital insurance, surgical insurance, disability wage compensation, and limited medical insurance. Again, since the employer was the only legal policyholder, employers could control the choice of insurance carrier, the type of policy, the benefits, and the percentage of costs paid by the workers. Insurance companies helped rejuvenate welfare capitalism after World War II by offering to "tailor" health insurance policies to fit the needs of each employer, laying the roots of the current balkanized system of health insurance coverage in the United States. Employers could choose the hospital services that would be covered, the percentage of reimbursement, and the amount of an employee's contribution to the plan. The employer could keep all the dividends on the policy. Indeed, in both unionized sectors and nonunionized sectors, management could make these decisions without input or revision from a union or other group representing employees.

The postwar employee benefits system retained two essential aspects of welfare capitalism. Insurers made no attempt to allow an employee to convert from a group policy to an individual one if she or he left the job. As Equitable Life group insurance policies claimed, "employee privileges on termination of employment" were "none" (quoted in Klein 2003, 228). Thus, employee benefits tied workers to a particular company and made all other family members dependent on the worker. Such a welfare system was inherently patriarchal and unequal. Because they designed health insurance as part of the family wage—a single (usually male) breadwinner and dependent family—insurers forged a health care system in which numerous persons had no direct claim to medical care. Their only claim to medical coverage was through a wage earner. Managers and insurers became partners in defining what constituted health security, shifting its focus away from the New Deal emphasis on national standards and toward a multitude of isolated, firm-specific welfare sites. More than ever, group insurance and welfare capitalist personnel programs, as Jacoby has written, could highlight the difference between security inside the firm and insecurity in the outside labor market (Jacoby 1997).

Although for a generation the employment-based benefits system brought many workers an unprecedented level of economic security and access to health care, it soon widened wage and income disparities among workers rather than closed them. Inequality inhered in coverage for family members, especially if they were not in the waged labor force. Family members usually received lesser benefits than the covered worker, such as fewer days in the hospital and more excluded procedures, and faced stricter rules about preexisting conditions. Even in unionized sectors, coverage for family members varied from place to place. For the vast majority of the American workforce, the lags in family coverage have persisted into the present.

The reliance on private employer benefits as an essential supplement to public provision also generated inequities between different groups of workers. To benefit from the supplemental security system, one had to work in industries covered by both the public and the private social security system. Until the 1970s, the majority of African American women worked in industries that were covered by neither. By the mid-1950s, African American men and some African American women had begun to move into urban manufacturing jobs and under the umbrella of the New Deal social security system. Yet just as Black workers had the possibility to obtain union-negotiated health insurance, life and disability insurance, and pensions, employers undercut these gains with labor strategies of automation and relocation. As major industrial employers pursued automation beginning in the mid-1950s, Black workers bore the brunt of displacement and layoffs. Companies such as General Motors and Ford Motors relocated plants to suburbs and small communities where Blacks could not follow. For African Americans, the limited welfare state and private supplementation would both mirror and solidify unequal patterns of economic opportunity.

Indeed, the patterns of racial and regional inequality inherent in welfare capitalism remained in place throughout the twentieth century. For the most part, the industries that did not offer private welfare benefits prior to World War II still do not. The South still lags behind the Northeast and the West. Nor have benefits ever been fully extended to African Americans or Latinos. By the end of the 1980s, only 47 percent of African Americans had private, employment-related health insurance, and at the end of the twentieth century, employment-based coverage finally reached just 50 percent of African Americans. Throughout the 1990s, the number of uninsured women grew steadily, rising to 21.3 million. About 42 percent of Latinos have employment-based health insurance, but 37 percent have neither public nor private health insurance of any kind (Klein 2003, 267). The distribution of health coverage remained tied to the distribution of good jobs, and the distribution of good jobs has not changed sufficiently for women, African Americans, or Latinos. As long as labor markets remain segmented, private employment-based social welfare will not compensate for those inequalities; it reinforces them.

The degree to which private employer benefits adequately supplement public social welfare has also been contingent upon the power of organized labor, both at the bargaining table and in garnering political support for regulatory legislation. During the two decades following World War II, this power—albeit limited—was at its height. With each round of bargaining in the 1950s and 1960s, employers granted enumerated increases—adding on a few more surgical procedures, additional hospital days, physician's office visits, maybe coverage for eyeglasses and root canals—within a limited framework that foreclosed labor's capacity to challenge any existing economic relationships, whether in industrial relations or in the delivery of health care. Thus, as long as business executives faced a countervailing weight—unions or the state—the incentive to bargain upward remained. In the 1970s, the tables turned, and bargaining started going in the other direction; "bargaining for security" became a downward spiral of concessions and losses.

Similarly, for two generations the public and the private welfare systems grew in tandem, offering a greater level of benefits to millions of Americans. After 1979, this trend would reverse, and the number of Americans covered by private pensions and health insurance began a steady, uninterrupted decline. After dropping to 38 percent of the private-sector workforce in 1980, private pension coverage fell to 31 percent by 1987 and below 30 percent in the 1990s. This trend toward diminished employer coverage occurred during a time of cutbacks and retrenchment in the public-sector safety net as well. Thus, as the New Deal state is dismantled, less than one-third of Americans receive private old-age pensions from their employers. In private-sector employment, only 25 percent of women workers participate in a pension plan. Minimum-age requirements and service requirements still hinder most women from ever actually qualifying for benefits. They receive only 22 percent of total private pension income (Ghilarducci 1992, 12; Witkowski, Castro, and Song 2002).

Proponents of social welfare privatization have argued that if the role of the government in social welfare provision is reduced or eliminated, business will fill the gap. This conclusion ignores history. In fact, business firms increased their commitment to corporate social welfare programs when government itself expanded its social welfare and labor intervention roles.

Fragmentation and inequality became just as characteristic of the private welfare system as of the public one. The public Social Security old-age pensions, however, have become universal. Still, most of the public policies enacted since the late 1970s have been aimed at propping up or patching up the leaky private welfare system. Yet neither private health insurance nor private pensions have moved any closer to universal coverage; nor will they. Health insurance coverage has never covered more than 69.6 percent of the workforce. The historical and ideological legacy of the American public-private welfare state—that of the basic welfare state, contained and limited, with all other needs met by private sources—continues to dominate policy proposals and legislation.

Jennifer Klein

See also: Capitalism; Privatization; Social Security; Social Security Act of 1935; Trade/Industrial Unions; Wagner Act; Welfare State

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Welfare Law Center

The Welfare Law Center is a not-for-profit, public interest law firm that advocates for the right to adequate income support to meet basic human needs and to foster healthy human and family development. The center, which is based in New York City, engages in litigation and policy advocacy on behalf of applicants for and recipients of public benefits throughout the United States. It also provides support to grassroots organizations concerned with welfare issues and to legal services organizations and other lawyers for the poor. The center's work focuses on food stamps, Medicaid, and child care as well as on programs providing direct cash assistance. The center concentrates on removing unlawful substantive and procedural barriers to access to benefits created by the federal, state, and local governments. Henry A. Freedman has directed the center since 1971.

Known for its first thirty-one years as the Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law, the center was founded in 1965 by Edward V. Sparer, one of the founders of modern poverty law. Sparer envisioned the Welfare Law Center as a "backup" center that, in conjunction with the National Welfare Rights Organization, would coordinate and organize a national litigation strategy to effectuate welfare rights. Originally affiliated with the Columbia University School of Social Work, the center received funding from the Legal Services Program of the Office of Economic Opportunity. The Welfare Law Center served as the model for a network of over a dozen other backup centers funded by the Legal Services Program dealing with particular issue areas.

The Welfare Law Center played a major role in most of the Supreme Court cases that established welfare rights as a legal concept. Center director Lee Albert, who succeeded Sparer, argued the landmark case of *Goldberg v. Kelly* (397 U.S. 254 [1970]), which established that welfare benefits are a form of "property" under the due process clause of the Constitution. The center was also deeply involved in such cases as *King v. Smith* (392 U.S. 309 [1968]), striking down state "substitute father" rules that rendered families ineligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) if the mother cohabited with a man, and *Shapiro v. Thompson* (394 U.S. 618 [1969]), in which the Court held that state durational residency requirements in the AFDC program violated the constitutional right to travel. After a period of initial success, however, decisions of the Supreme Court on welfare issues took a more negative turn for recipients. The center was on the losing end in decisions in *Dandridge v. Williams* (397 U.S. 471 [1970]), which upheld a household cap on AFDC benefits, and *Jefferson v. Hackney* (397 U.S. 821 [1972]), which rejected a challenge to disparities in assistance provided to the elderly and to families with children. In 1979, however, the center won a significant victory in *Califano v. Westcott* (443 U.S. 76 [1979]), in which the Supreme Court held unconstitutional a statutory provision limiting AFDC eligibility for two-parent households to situations where the father, but not the mother, was recently unemployed.

As the idea of a coordinated litigation strategy to establish a constitutional right to welfare benefits appeared increasingly unrealistic, the center redirected its efforts at enforcing rights to procedural fairness and challenging restrictive state eligibility standards that violated federal statutory law. The center also increasingly focused on providing training and support to legal services lawyers around the country.

The Welfare Law Center severed its affiliation with Columbia University in 1971. In 1995, as part of the dramatic cuts and restrictions in legal services funding that followed the shift to Republican control of Congress, the Welfare Law Center lost the federal funding that it had received through the Legal Services Corporation. As a result, the center is now wholly funded through donations, grants, and attorneys' fee awards.

Matthew Diller

See also: Legal Aid/Legal Services; New Property; Poverty Law; Welfare Rights Movement

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Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, *Public Law 104-193, 1996*

Title I—Block Grants for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Sec. 101. <42 USC 601 note> Findings.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Marriage is the foundation of a successful society.

(2) Marriage is an essential institution of a successful society which promotes the interests of children.

(3) Promotion of responsible fatherhood and motherhood is integral to successful child rearing and the well-being of children.

(4) In 1992, only 54 percent of single-parent families with children had a child support order established and, of that 54 percent, only about one-half received the full amount due. Of the cases enforced through the public child support enforcement system, only 18 percent of the caseload has a collection.

(5) The number of individuals receiving aid to families with dependent children (in this section referred to as "AFDC") has more than tripled since 1965. More than two-thirds of these recipients are children. Eighty-nine percent of children receiving AFDC benefits now live in homes in which no father is present.

(A)(i) The average monthly number of children receiving AFDC benefits—

(I) was 3,300,000 in 1965;
(II) was 6,200,000 in 1970;
(III) was 7,400,000 in 1980; and
(IV) was 9,300,000 in 1992.

(ii) While the number of children receiving AFDC benefits increased nearly threefold between 1965 and 1992, the total number of children in the United States aged 0 to 18 has declined by 5.5 percent.

(B) The Department of Health and Human Services has estimated that 12,000,000 children will receive AFDC benefits within 10 years.

(C) The increase in the number of children receiving public assistance is closely related to the increase in births to unmarried women. Between 1970 and 1991, the percentage of live births to unmarried women increased nearly threefold, from 10.7 percent to 29.5 percent.

(6) The increase of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and births is well documented as follows:

(A) It is estimated that the rate of nonmarital teen pregnancy rose 23 percent from 54 pregnancies per 1,000 unmarried teenagers in 1976 to 66.7 pregnancies in 1991. The overall rate of nonmarital pregnancy rose 14 percent from 90.8 pregnancies per 1,000 unmarried women in 1980 to 103 in both 1991 and 1992. In contrast, the overall pregnancy rate for married couples decreased 7.3 percent between 1980 and 1991, from 126.9 pregnancies per 1,000 married women in 1980 to 117.6 pregnancies in 1991.

(B) The total of all out-of-wedlock births between 1970 and 1991 has risen from 10.7 percent to 29.5 percent and [**2112] if the current trend continues, 50 percent of all births by the year 2015 will be out-of-wedlock.

(7) An effective strategy to combat teenage pregnancy must address the issue of male responsibility, including statutory rape culpability and prevention. The increase of teenage pregnancies among the youngest girls is particularly severe and is linked to predatory sexual practices by men who are significantly older.

(A) It is estimated that in the late 1980's, the rate for girls age 14 and under giving birth increased 26 percent.

(B) Data indicates that at least half of the children born to teenage mothers are fathered by adult men. Available data suggests that almost 70 percent of births to teenage girls are fathered by men over age 20.

(C) Surveys of teen mothers have revealed that a majority of such mothers have histories of sexual and physical abuse, primarily with older adult men.

(8) The negative consequences of an out-of-wedlock birth on the mother, the child, the family, and society are well documented as follows:

(A) Young women 17 and under who give birth outside of marriage are more likely to go on public assistance and to spend more years on welfare once enrolled. These combined effects of "younger and longer" increase total AFDC costs per household by 25 percent to 30 percent for 17-year-olds.

(B) Children born out-of-wedlock have a substantially higher risk of being born at a very low or moderately low birth weight.

[**2112] (C) Children born out-of-wedlock are more likely to experience low verbal cognitive attainment, as well as more child abuse, and neglect.

(D) Children born out-of-wedlock were more likely to have lower cognitive scores, lower educational aspirations, and a greater likelihood of becoming teenage parents themselves.

(E) Being born out-of-wedlock significantly reduces the chances of the child growing up to have an intact marriage.

(F) Children born out-of-wedlock are 3 times more likely to be on welfare when they grow up.

(9) Currently 35 percent of children in single-parent homes were born out-of-wedlock, nearly the same percentage as that of children in single-parent homes whose parents are divorced (37 percent). While many parents find themselves, through divorce or tragic circumstances beyond their control, facing the difficult task of raising children alone, nevertheless, the negative consequences of raising children in single-parent homes are well documented as follows:

(A) Only 9 percent of married-couple families with children under 18 years of age have income below the national poverty level. In contrast, 46 percent of female-headed households with chil-

continues

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (*continued*)

dren under 18 years of age are below the national poverty level.

(B) Among single-parent families, nearly 1/2 of the mothers who never married received AFDC while only 1/5 of divorced mothers received AFDC.

(C) Children born into families receiving welfare assistance are 3 times more likely to be on welfare when they reach adulthood than children not born into families receiving welfare.

(D) Mothers under 20 years of age are at the greatest risk of bearing low birth weight babies.

(E) The younger the single-parent mother, the less likely she is to finish high school.

(F) Young women who have children before finishing high school are more likely to receive welfare assistance for a longer period of time.

(G) Between 1985 and 1990, the public cost of births to teenage mothers under the aid to families with dependent children program, the food stamp program, and the medicaid program has been estimated at $120,000,000,000.

(H) The absence of a father in the life of a child has a negative effect on school performance and peer adjustment.

(I) Children of teenage single parents have lower cognitive scores, lower educational aspirations, and a greater likelihood of becoming teenage parents themselves.

(J) Children of single-parent homes are 3 times more likely to fail and repeat a year in grade school than are children from intact 2-parent families.

(K) Children from single-parent homes are almost 4 times more likely to be expelled or suspended from school.

(L) Neighborhoods with larger percentages of youth aged 12 through 20 and areas with higher percentages of single-parent households have higher rates of violent crime.

(M) Of those youth held for criminal offenses within the State juvenile justice system, only 29.8 percent lived primarily in a home with both parents. In contrast to these incarcerated youth, 73.9 percent of the 62,800,000 children in the Nation's resident population were living with both parents.

(10) Therefore, in light of this demonstration of the crisis in our Nation, it is the sense of the Congress that prevention of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and reduction in out-of-wedlock birth are very important Government interests and the policy contained in part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (as amended by section 103(a) of this Act) is intended to address the crisis.

Welfare Policy/ Welfare Reform

The history of welfare in the United States includes the story of local relief and charity practices during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as the provision of in-kind benefits such as food stamps during the late twentieth century. But what we've come to call "welfare" refers to a twentieth-century policy innovation designed for poor mothers and children in families without fathers. State and local mothers' pensions enacted during the Progressive Era were the first welfare policies; they were later nationalized in the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program of the New Deal, expanded in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program during the 1960s, and replaced by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program of the 1990s.

At its inception, welfare's focus on children and child-raising by mothers distinguished it from ordinary relief. According to the poor law tradition and the U.S. preference for individual self-help, relief for people who were considered "employable" was a temporary gesture and not intended as an alternative to participation in the labor market. Able-bodied aid recipients were understood to be capable of earning a living through wages. Such persons might need aid because their wages were too low to survive on them; or they might need aid due to economic depression or other causes of unemployment that were beyond the individual's control. But even if recipients' need could be explained by economics, most able-bodied poor were believed, in the end, to be morally responsible for their own poverty and their own support. Hence relief generally was stingy, so as not to encourage malingering; and it was disciplinary, so as not to encourage dependency.

In contrast, welfare was designed to keep (primarily) widowed mothers out of the labor market so that they could devote themselves to raising their children. The economic dependency of single mothers and children was assumed and approved; the problem was not that they were dependent, but that without a breadwinner in the home, single mothers and children had no one to depend on.

Nevertheless, many of the negative assumptions about the poor that powered the politics and policy of relief also powered the politics and policy of welfare, both at its origins and in the present day. A core assumption has been the idea that the poor fall easily into immorality and improvidence. It followed that welfare should discriminate between mothers who were virtuous or deserving and those who were not. It further followed that the home lives of recipients should be monitored for moral lapses and that recipients should receive guidance in managing family matters.

Promoted by the National Congress of Mothers as well as by upper-middle-class women reformers such as Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and sisters Grace and Edith Abbott, mothers' pensions were first enacted by state governments during the second decade of the twentieth century and were implemented by localities. An alternative to the established practice of warehousing half-orphans in institutions, mothers' pensions affirmed the view that the mother-care of children was the best form of care.

Although states' policies varied, most shared common purposes, assumptions, and contradictions. Recognizing that many single mothers could not both provide care for children and earn an income to support them, state pension policies—at least in theory—made it possible for mothers to meet their caregiving responsibilities by providing a surrogate for a husband's income. In practice, however, states were stingy in setting benefit levels and most mothers were not able to support their families on pensions alone. Nor were all mothers who needed pensions invited to receive them. Pensions provided economic support only to "the best" mothers, even so regulating their dietary, kinship, and other cultural conditions to ensure their continued worthiness as mothers. Pension policies thus recognized the value of care only when mothers met certain cultural, racial, and moral standards.

Mothers' pension initiatives yielded two enduring legacies. One was that while all mothers performed the work of caregiving, the value of that work depended on the culture, race, and morality of the caregiver. The other was that even mothers who enjoyed social approbation and support had to earn and defend it by submitting to social controls. The Aid to Dependent Children program of the New Deal inherited these legacies.

Created by the Social Security Act of 1935, ADC (later renamed Aid to Families with

Dependent Children, or AFDC) nationalized mothers' pension policies by providing for joint federal-state funding of welfare benefits and by requiring states to hew to certain administrative rules in exchange for federal dollars. Though the welfare measure—Title IV of the Social Security Act—did not specify moral criteria for welfare participation, it gave states the opportunity to impose such criteria by delegating administration and management to them. States took old rules from mothers' pension statutes—rules against nonmarital motherhood and heterosexual cohabitation, for example—and folded them into the new federal policy.

The welfare system set up in the 1930s was hardly an ideal system. For one thing, not all mothers who needed welfare were permitted to receive it, as states retained the discretion that had characterized mothers' pension programs under the new federal arrangement. As a result, even mothers who qualified for assistance had to suffer surveillance and interference in their lives as a condition of aid. Still, at the end of the 1930s, the prevailing image of recipients was that they *did* deserve their benefits.

Amendments to the Social Security Act in 1939 changed the profile of welfare. Under the amendments, widowed mothers with minor children who had been in durable marriages to men who qualified for the Social Security insurance system were placed in a different kind of welfare program—Survivors' Insurance. Benefits under the program were national, regular, automatic—and far more generous than welfare. Moreover, widowed beneficiaries and their minor children did not have to convince welfare agencies that they deserved their benefits; they just *did,* by virtue of their status as survivors of socially insured fathers.

Creation of the Survivors' Insurance program removed widows, especially white widows, from the welfare system. Gradually, welfare became a program for mothers who were divorced, had never married, or had been married to the wrong men: By 1961, only 7.7 percent of welfare mothers were widows. When the pitiful but blameless white widow left welfare for Survivors' Insurance, the stigma of welfare began to congeal.

By the end of the 1940s, the subject of welfare assistance had become sharply and explicitly politicized. On one side were those who focused on the needs of poor mothers and their children—and on how ADC could address those needs. On the other were people who focused first on the bad behavior of ADC recipients and potential recipients and then on ways to make sure that ADC payments were reserved for the "worthy poor."

At the beginning of the decade, the Aid to Dependent Children program appeared well defined, well funded, and stable. Federal administrators collaborated with state officials to oversee an assistance program that provided sustenance to a population of "helpless" poor mothers and their children. Many of the first generation of welfare administrators and policy experts believed through the 1940s that the Social Security Act had established welfare assistance as a statutory right of the poor. They understood welfare assistance as a combination of money payments and services.

Most important to the first generation of federal-level experts was the idea that poor mothers had a "right to choose aid" if taking a job might cause their children to be neglected or cared for inadequately. Even after the beginning of World War II, when many single mothers of young children responded to their own economic needs and to the wartime labor shortage by entering the workforce, the War Manpower Commission endorsed this "mothers' right." Also during the war, the Federal Bureau of Public Assistance was critical of local welfare agencies that put pressure on poor mothers of young children to go to work. Federal officials argued that welfare benefits should be high enough so that these mothers could stay home with their children. One welfare expert in the early 1940s observed that a mother's application for day care services for her children was a sign that she may need ADC so that she could remain at home to care for them. Another expert disapproved of programs that hired poor mothers to take care of the children of other mothers working outside of their homes: "It would have been much more useful to pay them to take care of their own children," social welfare pioneer Grace Abbott wrote. At the end of World War II, ADC was still serving a population that resembled its original target. Only 10 percent of the recipients were unwed mothers; almost 80 percent were white.

Endorsing the goals of the 1939 Social Security Act Amendments, President Franklin Roosevelt referred in his 1944 State of the Union address to an economic "bill of rights" for the American people, a guarantee of "security and prosperity for all—regardless of station, race, or creed." In the spirit of this vision of democracy, the Bureau of Public Assistance worked throughout the 1940s to increase the proportion of nonwhite recipients on the welfare rolls; between 1942 and 1948 the proportion rose from 21 percent to 30 percent. People of color were much more likely in the forties to receive welfare benefits in northern states than in the South. For example, in Illinois, 173 out of 1,000 Blacks were ADC recipients. In North Carolina, despite near-complete impoverishment of the Black population, only 14 out of 1,000 Blacks received benefits.

The presence of new recipients-of-color on the rolls and occasional federal pressure on the states to extend ADC to people of color stimulated some states to intensify their efforts to keep the welfare rolls as white as possible. During the 1940s, states gradually crafted and formalized exclusionary criteria for participation in ADC. Many southern states used work rules to restrict participation of African Americans. A field supervisor in one state wrote, "The number of Negro cases is few due to the unanimous feeling on the part of the staff and board [of the welfare agency] that there are more work opportunities for Negro women and to their intense desire not to interfere with local labor conditions. The attitude that they have always gotten along and that 'all they'll do is have more children' is definite." In 1943 in Louisiana, the state welfare agency adopted a formal rule requiring that no ADC applicant would be granted assistance as long as she was needed in the cotton field; this rule included children as young as seven years old.

States also adopted rules governing the intimate lives of recipients, which gave the local welfare agencies additional grounds for excluding certain populations. In Michigan, ADC mothers had to sign an affidavit promising, "I will not have any male callers coming to my home nor meeting me elsewhere under improper conditions." In states around the country, various forms of "suitable home" laws cropped up—rules that excluded from welfare eligibility women who had children outside of marriage, or were suspected of having sexual relations while on welfare, or any of a number of other "nonconforming" behaviors.

Recognizing the trend in many states toward targeting specific populations with exclusionary rules, the Federal Bureau of Public Assistance sent state welfare agencies a cautionary letter in 1945, strongly recommending that the states repeal "suitable home" eligibility conditions. Most state officials ignored the suggestion, preferring instead to apply the rules to contain the increasing number of nonwhite recipients, as well as the rise in absent-father, unwed-mother-headed households and in the number of "illegitimate" children receiving welfare. A number of state legislatures and welfare officials also resisted federal interference with their political and policy preferences ("states' rights")—a position that preserved white southern control of the local racial order.

Notwithstanding various state efforts to curtail certain mothers' participation in welfare, in 1950 Congress added a caregiver/mother benefit to the ADC payment. That same year, Congress also gestured its concern about single-mother families. As part of a child support amendment, Congress mandated welfare agencies to "provide prompt notice to appropriate law enforcement officials of the furnishing of aid to dependent children in respect of a child who has been deserted or abandoned by a parent." In 1951, Congress focused sharply on the welfare confidentiality policy that since 1939 had promised that agencies would not publicize the identities of recipients. Democratic and Republican governors around the country supported ending this protection, and Representative Burr V. Harrison of Virginia spoke for many of his colleagues when he claimed that "criminals, illegitimate children, prostitutes and Cadillac owners are receiving welfare payments in some states because of the Federal ban on publication of the relief rolls." In a development that demonstrated how politicized and stigmatized welfare had become, Congress revoked recipients' confidentiality guarantee in a measure promising states that the federal welfare contribution would not be withheld if a state opened its rolls to public scrutiny, as long as the list of names disclosed was not used for commercial or political purposes.

Although Congress invented new federal stipulations regarding welfare during the 1950s, it also expanded welfare eligibility and allocations—beginning with the addition of the grant for mothers. Congress was responding to studies that showed increased need because of population growth, rising incidence of divorce and births outside of marriage, and inflation, among other factors. In 1954, federal eligibility rules opened ADC up to 10 million previously excluded agricultural and domestic workers. As a result, the number of families receiving ADC increased year by year. Many of the new families were African American, not surprising since for much of the 1950s, the unemployment rate for Blacks was twice the rate for whites.

Over the course of the 1950s, the states, the Congress, the federal welfare bureaucracy, and local welfare agencies carved out strong positions on welfare eligibility. By the 1960s, federal-state, Black-white tensions over welfare provision and administration intertwined with the national conflict between civil rights and states' rights.

In 1960, Louisiana governor Jimmie Davis, facing school desegregation orders in New Orleans, signed legislation that disqualified 23,000 "illegitimate" children from public assistance in one day. This act made welfare a national issue. Welfare opponents condemned "undeserving" African American women and their families; others questioned the heartlessness of legislatures willing to starve little children. The Louisiana situation even brought international attention to the welfare problem in the United States; a group of women in England arranged for an airlift of food and supplies to disqualified families in the state.

The Louisiana statute drew criticism from the Federal Bureau of Public Assistance and the secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. But because the federal government was unwilling to stand staunchly against this assertion of states' rights, states continued to regulate the number of Blacks on welfare rolls by approving variants of illegitimacy statutes and suitable home laws.

The next year, 1961, national attention was drawn north when the city manager of Newburgh, New York, issued thirteen rules designed to exclude Blacks from public assistance rolls in that small mid-Hudson city—despite the fact that most Newburgh recipients were white and the fact that the city was actually spending much less than its welfare budget. In Louisiana, Newburgh, and in every region of the country in the early 1960s, politicians railed against illegitimate children and women who gave birth to ever more of them. Yet at this time, 4 percent of all children in the United States were "illegitimate," and only one-half of 1 percent were illegitimate and receiving welfare.

The federal government responded to the increasingly racialized politics of welfare (renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC) in the states by shifting the gaze of national policy to remedying the shortcomings of individuals and addressing family problems. The 1961 legislation creating the AFDC-UP (Unemployed Parent) option affirmed the heteronormative two-parent family headed by a male breadwinner. AFDC-UP made benefits available to households headed by able-bodied men who could not meet their breadwinner duties due to unemployment. (By the end of the decade, twenty-five states had adopted the program but, altogether, fewer than 100,000 families received benefits from this program.)

The 1962 Social Security Amendments are remembered for having stressed "rehabilitation" of poor families through services provided by welfare agencies. For the first time, welfare policy suggested that benefits would assist mothers only temporarily, while they prepared for jobs. In concert with this idea, the 1962 amendments provided $5 million for day care centers for the children of low-income working mothers. Katherine Oettinger of the federal Children's Bureau calculated that this allocation represented $1.25 for each of the 4 million under-six children of working mothers.

The 1962 federal legislation experimented with the idea that poor women could be trained to support their families through employment, but many state and local welfare regulations in the early 1960s were predicated on the notion that women were and ought to be *dependent* persons. For example, a Washington, D.C., regulation indicated that if a woman's need for assistance was a result of her unwillingness to be with her husband, the welfare department would not accept her claim of neediness.

Further indicating the tension between purported federal principles and state practices, the 1962 Social Security Amendments wrote into law the federal government's willingness to continue federal funds even for states that had suitable home laws of which the government disapproved, as long as the state provided for adequate care and assistance for the children involved. Thus, an "illegitimate" child could not be cut off assistance, but could be treated differently from a "legitimate" child.

Between 1950 and 1964, the number of persons covered by ADC almost doubled, from 2.2 million to 4.3 million. The increase was due to the addition of the caregiver benefit in 1950, escalating rates of divorce and desertion, growing numbers of woman-headed households, and other demographic trends. By the end of the 1950s, African Americans accounted for well over a third of welfare enrollments, while women of all races composed the vast majority of adult recipients. The contradiction between poverty and personhood for most mothers on welfare made welfare policy an important women's issue. But in this moment of national struggle between white supremacy and racial justice, welfare was dragooned into racist, not gender, politics.

Taking cues from politicians while also giving cues to the electorate, the media began to portray the poor primarily through pictures of African Americans, and to pair African American images with the most negative aspects of poverty. One scholar has found that this trend began in 1964, and by 1967, 72 percent of the time, illustrations of the poor in newspapers and magazines pictured Blacks, while Blacks, in fact, made up only 30 percent of the poor in the United States. These media practices fueled white racism and stoked hostility toward welfare expenditures and against paying taxes that supported ever-larger welfare rolls.

Talk of a "welfare crisis" during the mid-1960s fed off popular stereotypes of the welfare system and of welfare recipients. This dynamic was reinforced by ostensibly social scientific research done by Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan, which attributed poverty in Black communities to Black family culture. The Moynihan Report, published in 1965, blamed matriarchy in African American communities for a "tangle of pathology" that included poverty and dependence on welfare.

Although it had no explicit policy recommendations, the Moynihan Report was used to support the idea that welfare undermined the normative two-parent, male-headed family and that stringent behavioral and moral stipulations were needed in welfare policy—both to reform recipients and to secure the program for the "worthy" poor.

During this period, welfare recipients began to mobilize around a claim for welfare rights. Frustrated by the tortures of the welfare system and by the stigma others stamped on them for needing economic assistance, welfare recipients all over the country organized grassroots groups under the auspices of the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). These groups worked on local, state, and national levels to improve welfare benefits, housing, employment opportunities, the public image of poor mothers on public assistance, and other conditions of life. At the same time, activist lawyers began to pursue litigation to establish the rights of poor people to receive public assistance and to be treated with dignity, even though they were welfare recipients.

In 1965, Edward Sparer, one of the most important of these welfare rights lawyers, proposed a bill of rights for recipients to guarantee (1) the right to privacy and protection from illegal search; (2) the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence; (3) the right to choose one's own standard of morality; and (4) the right to freedom to refuse work relief without suffering penal or other improper consequences. In order for recipients to be able to claim these rights, Sparer and his colleagues determined, they would have to successfully challenge state statutes and local practices controlling the lives of welfare recipients. They would have to challenge the legitimacy of residency laws, "man in the house" rules, midnight raids, work-relief practices, inadequate money grants, and the absence of due process protection. In 1968, welfare rights lawyers argued *King v. Smith* (392 U.S. 309)—an ultimately successful effort to overturn the Alabama "man in the house" rule—all the way to the Supreme Court; this was the first time a welfare case had been heard by the highest court in the land. A number of welfare cases followed, a crucial few of which established national constitutional standards for recipients and restrained the discretion of state-run welfare programs.

In tandem with Supreme Court decisions recognizing certain welfare rights, the electoral and legislative politics of "welfare reform" caught hold. In the context of the civil rights movement and the welfare rights movement, and in reaction against the expansion of welfare funding and participation, "welfare reform" meant welfare without rights, restricted participation, and states' rights.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a number of legislative campaigns to make discretionary state policies, then under challenge in the courts, part of the federal policy mandate. In 1967, public welfare amendments introduced a new emphasis on biological fathers' financial responsibility for families with a provision calling upon states to establish paternity for all AFDC families. Vowing to "make papa pay," this provision was aimed against welfare "matriarchs," against welfare's so-called disincentives to marriage, and against "illegitimacy." The 1967 amendments also introduced the Work Incentive (WIN) program to encourage adult recipients' movement into the labor market. Although the WIN program gave job training and placement priority to men, not mothers, its adoption marked the beginning of a thirty-year effort to force mothers to leave welfare for the labor market.

The popularity of welfare reform was not lost on Richard Nixon, who became president in January 1969. A Republican who regularly criticized federal solutions to local problems, Nixon nonetheless proposed the centralized Family Assistance Plan (FAP) as an alternative to the established AFDC program. At the heart of the proposal was a national minimum income that would apply to all families but that was primarily aimed at aiding low-wage, male-headed, two-parent families. Nixon calculated that large numbers of workers—11 or 12 million of whom were not covered by minimum-wage regulations in 1970—might be courted into the Republican Party with FAP's minimum-income promise. At the same time, FAP would deflect income assistance policy from allegedly undeserving single mothers to the presumably more deserving "working poor," thereby accomplishing a watershed welfare reform. Ultimately, a collection of strange bedfellows—southern conservatives (who saw that FAP income supplements would undermine cheap local labor markets), northern liberals, and the National Welfare Rights Organization, among others—killed the Family Assistance Plan.

This legislative failure, combined with widespread negative assessments of many features of welfare policy, encouraged many Americans to believe that the situation could never be salvaged. Policymakers and recipients alike judged the Work Incentive program a failure. Of several million recipients eligible for WIN services, ultimately only a tiny percentage were placed in jobs, and many of those had to work in dead-end jobs for salaries below minimum wage. In California, women brought a class-action suit against the program because men were given priority in WIN training programs.

Also, many policymakers claimed that the "income disregard" provision (which allowed recipients to set aside a small portion of their earned income in determining benefits) created by the 1967 Social Security Amendments was a failure because it provided an opportunity for many poor women to elevate their incomes above women with full-time jobs and no assistance. Congress made little headway in funding adequate child care, and President Nixon ultimately vetoed the comprehensive child care bill passed by Congress in 1971. Many politicians found themselves in the awkward position of simultaneously demanding that poor mothers enter the workforce, condemning publicly funded day care schemes, and praising middle-class mothers who stayed home with their young children.

By the second Nixon administration (1973–1974), policy discussions focused on cost cutting, work requirements, stricter eligibility rules, and the need for substantial allocations of resources for antifraud initiatives. In 1975, Congress fundamentally altered welfare by making a mother's cooperation in the establishment of paternity a condition of receiving a welfare benefit.

Despite the popularity of promises to reform welfare, especially among candidates for high office, the mandatory establishment-of-paternity provision was the only major change to welfare during the 1970s. Perhaps the American public's ambivalence was a major obstacle. A 1977 *New York Times*/CBS News poll indicated that almost 60 percent of Americans disapproved of government-sponsored welfare programs. But when it came to evaluating specific programs—food stamps, AFDC, health care—four-fifths of those polled, both the liberals and the conservatives, wanted these forms of assistance to continue. Not until the presidential candidacy and election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 did antiwelfare politics fully congeal.

Indeed, the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980 propelled antiwelfare forces into ascendancy for the rest of the century. A longtime foe of welfare as governor of California, Reagan established himself as a national antiwelfare leader when he fought President Nixon's Family Assistance Plan by arguing that it would make welfare profitable for the poor. As an aspiring presidential candidate in 1976, Reagan expanded his antiwelfare repertoire when he propagated the myth of a Chicago "welfare queen" who had allegedly scammed $150,000 from the welfare system using multiple aliases, addresses, and Social Security cards and claiming four dead husbands. Although numerous politicians had played the welfare card since the 1960s, Reagan's victory over Democrat

Jimmy Carter in 1980 was the first time an antiwelfare reformer had won the White House.

Reagan's prescriptions for welfare reform were most notable for their emphases on reducing federal social spending, eliminating welfare fraud, requiring labor market work, and restoring states' rights. But his presidency also opened political space for antiwelfare punditry about the values, behavior, and reproductive decisions of the poor.

Reagan's main legislative initiative in welfare policy came in 1981, when the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) he pushed through Congress changed the way resources and earned income were counted in determining recipients' eligibility and benefits—to their disadvantage. OBRA also contained provisions authorizing states to stiffen work requirements and to promote workfare.

In addition to these legislative revisions of AFDC, Reagan advanced right-wing plans to make welfare the template for its "family values" agenda. By the mid-1980s, right-wing intellectuals, think tanks, and Christian fundamentalists had given coherence and prominence to the view that welfare fostered welfare dependency by encouraging recipients to avoid work and to continue having "illegitimate" babies as a way to get benefits. "Family values" proponents enjoyed an official imprimatur when President Reagan convened the White House Working Group on the Family and appointed Gary Bauer, then undersecretary of education and later president of the Family Research Council, as its chair. They also claimed social scientific authority for their claims—despite the preponderance of evidence to the contrary—in antiwelfare polemics such as Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* (1984) and in a steady stream of policy briefs from conservative think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation.

Over the course of the 1980s, the idea that the need for welfare was a measure of the poor moral choices of recipients circulated widely, priming the antiwelfare consciousness of policymakers and voters. By the late 1980s, restrictive welfare rules and incentives gained currency as states took advantage of Reagan administration proposals that welfare policy should regulate the behavior of the poor. To facilitate initiatives by the states, the Reagan administration, which favored devolution to the state and local levels, expanded and expedited waivers that allowed states to deviate from federal AFDC eligibility criteria and to conduct so-called experiments to find ways of moving people off the rolls. Among the most popular state initiatives was the "family cap," which withheld welfare benefits from a child conceived or born to a mother while she was on welfare.

Whether because of the insidious osmotic power of the Moynihan Report or because of the logical prowess of Charles Murray in his *Losing Ground*, the specter of "illegitimacy" aroused interest in correcting welfare's "perverse incentives" among Democrats as well as Republicans. In addition, the fact that increasing numbers of women were working outside the home, at least part-time, led many Democrats—including feminists—to argue that welfare mothers *should* do so. For both Republicans and Democrats, arguments about reproduction, work, and welfare were loaded with racially drawn gender expectations and judgments about who should have babies under what conditions and about which women were workers first and which women could be mothers on their own terms.

In 1988, bipartisan interests in welfare reform came together in the Family Support Act (FSA), which was shepherded through Congress by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D–New York), who had been a central figure in welfare politics since the publication of his infamous report. The act amended AFDC by adding stiffened work requirements, job-training provisions, work supports, and stronger child support enforcement mechanisms. Under the act, states were supposed to match federal expenditures for services and supports as well as for benefits. Success of this reform accordingly would depend in part on the states' willingness to invest in each recipient's transition from welfare to work. It also would depend on the willingness of the labor market to pay living wages and to accommodate the family needs of parents, especially single mothers, as well as on the willingness of government to deliver promised social supports such as child care.

The Family Support Act was a major welfare reform, as it broadened and deepened the employment goals of welfare policy. Despite the major changes it portended, however, the FSA did not end the war on welfare. The precarious and regressive economic recovery of the 1980s gave way to recession by the beginning of the 1990s. Welfare participation reached new highs, which in turn fueled taxpayer resentment against recipients and generally churned racist politics against the poor. By 1992, many voters would again be receptive to a presidential candidate's pledge to overhaul welfare.

After twelve years of Republican control of the White House, Democrat Bill Clinton won the presidency in 1992. Feminists, civil rights activists, other progressives, and mainline Democrats all cheered the election for ending the long conservative siege of government and democracy. The Democrats' return to the presidency did not place liberal or progressive goals high on the national agenda, however. Clinton was a "New Democrat" with roots in the conservative wing of the Democratic Party. In addition, he brought into national government the biases he had developed as governor of Arkansas: a frustration with national rules governing welfare programs, confidence in local control, and a commitment to state flexibility.

As president, Clinton did promote the appointment and election of unprecedented numbers of people of color to high governmental office and he did defend basic abortion rights for women, two causes associated with liberal Democrats. But in language more familiar to Republicans than to Democrats, he declared an end to "big government" and "welfare as we know it." Rather than produce a sharp policy and political turn away from the antiwelfare demonology of the 1980s, Clinton's election raised the attack on welfare and on mothers who need it to a shrill pitch. Clinton's own plans to reform welfare did differ in some important ways from the Republican approach: Clinton favored job training and social supports to "make work pay." But Clinton and the Republicans were in agreement that existing welfare policy was a behavioral and moral hazard, that welfare policy should engineer the lives of the poor, and that states could do a better job than the federal government had done in setting strict and disciplinary terms for welfare participation. The election of a Republican majority in Congress in 1994 ensured that the most punitive imaginable version of welfare reform would prevail. But it was Clinton's election in 1992 that began the end of welfare.

The crescendo to end welfare in the 1990s reflected more than conservative party politics. Some progressives criticized AFDC for being too stingy and cumbersome, as well as for failing to provide promised transitional supports to mothers who sought participation in the labor market. Although few progressives actually called for the end of welfare, some—including some feminists—agreed with the antiwelfare mantra that mothers should "move from welfare to work." Although criticisms of welfare came from diverse political quarters and carried very different policy implications, the breadth of criticism meant that it would be difficult to rescue welfare from the bipartisan pincers of punitive welfare reform.

Antipoverty advocates for women and children did try, as did grassroots welfare rights activists. A few feminists also mobilized in opposition to punitive welfare reform, some among them defending welfare as essential economic recognition and support for the important work of caregiving. These points of view were not salient in the national discussion about welfare reform, however. Welfare rights activists were shunted to the margins of policy discussion, and those feminist groups that mobilized did not succeed in gaining the attention of the media or even garner much support from the feminist rank and file.

Racism entered the debate both tacitly and overtly, usually intersecting with moralistic discourse regarding gender behavior and the roots of poverty. Much of welfare reform's racial politics played out around the icon of the Black single mother, said to be immoral in her own right as well as the cause of numerous social ills. Thus, for example, the same conservative politicians who pressed for stringent work requirements for welfare recipients (stereotyped Black) also insisted that "family values" dictated that middle-class married mothers (stereotyped white) ought to leave paying jobs to stay home to care for their young children. This argument drew from a racially bifurcated gender expectation that Black women would support their families through wage work at low-paying jobs (including caring for other women's children) while privileged white women would rely on husbands for their income (and in some cases on Black nannies to help raise their children). Racist ideas also stoked the war on "illegitimacy" and fueled the campaign to exclude noncitizen immigrants from receiving welfare and other social supports.

Even though "work" was the ostensible goal of welfare reform, pervasive concerns about "illegitimacy" and disdain for poor single motherhood placed marriage, reproduction, and family formation at the center of the welfare debate. The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which replaced AFDC with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, codified the view that welfare policy should reward and punish the intimate decisions and behavior of poor single mothers.

President Clinton signed the PRWORA into law in August 1996. In addition to promoting marriage and requiring financial relationships between biological parents, the new legislation eliminated the federal entitlement to assistance to those who qualified, imposed a five-year lifetime time limit on participation in the federal TANF program, severely restricted the eligibility of noncitizen immigrants to receive benefits, and required labor market "work activities" of adult recipients. Education and training can satisfy the work requirement only in restricted circumstances, while caregiving work for one's own children does not count as work at all. In fact, under the PRWORA, the only welfare mothers who may work inside the home raising children are married mothers.

Although the PRWORA established harsh national rules regarding work participation, paternity establishment and child support enforcement, and the eligibility of immigrants, the new law also created fifty separate welfare programs when it replaced the AFDC funding structure with block grants to states. Within states, welfare programs can be further decentralized, as in California and Colorado, where counties define their own programs. The consequences of this decentralization spill over into other social welfare programs. For example, many local welfare agencies do not ensure continued Medicaid and food stamp benefits to recipients who leave welfare or who never make it onto welfare because they are "diverted" from it. In addition, sanction policies (punishments) vary widely: Some counties or states remove families from welfare the first time they violate a rule while other counties and states stage their sanctions or do not sanction the same violations. Further, workfare participants receive varied degrees and quality of training depending on where they live, and welfare-to-work participants in some states are routed through churches while those in other states are routed through corporations.

The scale of devolution and differentiation in the new welfare system makes monitoring it a considerable challenge. Although it is possible to measure aggregate caseload reduction—50 percent since the mid-1990s—comprehensive data that would tell us the fate of recipients and former recipients are more difficult to come by. This is one reason why official pronouncements that welfare reform is a "success" have been accepted at face value. As a result, few policymakers have contested the fundamental structure and principles of TANF. Although some policymakers are concerned that TANF has not cured poverty among current and former welfare recipients, few argue that it is the TANF program itself that perpetuates poverty.

The 1996 TANF legislation required that the program be reauthorized in 2002. In 2002 and then again in 2003, the Bush administration piggybacked additional welfare reforms onto TANF reauthorization bills. If enacted, the Bush proposal would ratchet up the work requirement by increasing the number of weekly hours a recipient must engage in work activities, by increasing the percentage of the caseload a state must enroll in work activities, and by requiring states to develop work plans for all recipients. These new requirements will weigh harshly on single mothers, who already have a hard time juggling wage work and care work under the current work requirement, especially given inadequate provision of child care. In contrast, married mothers (and fathers) will not be expected to wholly abandon children for the labor market. Under the Bush plan, married families and single-mother families will be subject to the same hourly work requirement (now a proposed family work requirement), and, as under the 1996 law, only one parent in a married family will need to engage in work activities.

This preference for married families marks another radical shift in welfare, which began as a program to support independent mothers. Currently contemplated policy goes beyond favoring married families to actively promoting marriage itself. The second major element of the Bush proposal for TANF reauthorization is "marriage promotion." Current law already promotes marriage by making it a goal of TANF. Proposals put forth by the Bush administration in 2002 and 2003 aim to accomplish that goal by offering states $1.8 billion over five years to promote marriage and by requiring that states develop plans for doing so.

Feminists, welfare rights activists, and other progressives have mobilized against this patriarchal tide. Although some progressives primarily are interested in reforming the TANF framework so as to improve job training, education, and job supports for recipients so that they can leave welfare for family-supporting wages, welfare rights activists and some feminists have been working also to reconsider the TANF framework altogether. From their point of view, the welfare system not only ought to improve poor mothers' choices and prospects in the labor market but also ought to support mothers' caregiving work in their own families. Recognition and support for caregiving would advance mothers' economic security and, in turn, their capacity to make independent choices about wage work, about personal safety, and about intimate life. Without such support, poor mothers are punished for parenting alone, for having children while unmarried, and for being poor. Their children, meanwhile, are punished for being born to the wrong mothers.

Gwendolyn Mink and Rickie Solinger

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See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Maternalism; Maternalist Policy; Poor Laws; Poverty Law; Welfare Administration; Welfare Rights Movement; Welfare State; Workfare; see also the extracts from the following court cases (in sidebars to the entry Poverty Law): *King v. Smith* (1968); *Shapiro, Commissioner of Welfare of Connecticut, v. Thompson* (1969); *Goldberg v. Kelly* (1970); *Dandridge v. Williams* (1970); *Saenz v. Roe* (1999)

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Welfare Rights Movement

I am not ashamed of being on welfare and fighting for my right to be helped as a human being. My reasons are too important to make me feel the least bit ashamed. I am fighting for the right to an education and for the future of my children. But shame on those rich people who get tax breaks. Shame on those corporations that get welfare money but they call it grants and subsidies. Shame on those politicians who get thousands of dollars of free money to pay their debts, while at the same time taking money away from America's poor children. . . . And shame on those who pass laws that affect the lives of people they couldn't even imagine being in the place of.

—Cathy Ortega, Boston welfare rights activist

Poverty is particularly a "women's issue." Obviously, it is a men's issue too, but the nature of the economy and the structure of the U.S. polity mean that women are especially vulnerable to poverty due to their culturally assigned (and often desired) roles as primary caregivers for children and for sick, disabled, or elderly relatives. This means that simple employment strategies to alleviate poverty, such as increasing wages and benefits, are often inadequate to address women's economic and social needs. Because of this special relation to poverty, many women from a variety of backgrounds have historically joined together to fight poverty and to demand "welfare rights" as a means to fully address their needs as women.

The National Welfare Rights Organization

The National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) was the first group to make a claim specifically for "welfare rights." The NWRO was a direct outgrowth of the African American civil rights movement and arose from efforts of the broader movement to expand democracy at home and to end the U.S. war in Vietnam. The organizing efforts of George Wiley, Johnnie Tillmon, Faith Evans, and many Black and (some) white women created an organization that fought to expand the economic and social rights of poor families. The NWRO struggled on many fronts—through grassroots protests, through legislative advocacy, and through litigation that would win basic constitutional protections for welfare recipients.

Beginning in 1966 and for approximately ten years, the NWRO established a presence in most major urban areas, including Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Newark, New York City, Philadelphia, Trenton, and Saint Louis. Nationally and locally, it received funds from a variety of sources, including church-based sources, private foundations, and even some federally funded local Community Action Programs. Different groups in different regions employed differing organizing models, most but not all under the auspices of the NWRO.

Over time, several parallel and evolving arguments emerged from local welfare rights organizing efforts and at NWRO national meetings. One line of analysis asserted civil rights claims to fair treatment by and equal access to welfare. Another line of analysis emphasized the role of welfare in manipulating the low-wage labor supply. A third line of analysis argued that welfare mothers should be supported as caregivers for their own children. Together these analyses produced a "welfare rights" strategy that demanded improved access to and democratic influence over state welfare systems, as well as higher and more reliable benefits.

Four major circumstances provided the context and justification for welfare rights organizing, which the leaders explicitly presented as a legitimate part of the ever-widening movement for democratic rights and social justice that characterized the period. First, poverty in the North was concentrated in urban neighborhoods, where poor people commonly endured the abuses and inadequacies of public services.

Second, the interconnections among public housing, public health, public schools, and the welfare systems led to an understanding of the interrelatedness of issues affecting poor people. This was especially true for women in the movement, since mothers were already the ones dealing with the housing authorities, the welfare workers, the teachers, and the social service workers. Shared experience, anger, and sophistication made local organizing feasible.

A third context for welfare rights organizing was the problem of racism in the welfare system. Black women, in particular, organized to fight exclusion and discrimination but also to make real alliances with those poor white women who were in the system with them. As Guida West (1987) and Jackie Pope (1989) both document well, Black women were often treated worse by welfare workers than were white women and were often denied options that were available to white women. At the same time, since the system was inadequate, punitive, and invasive toward all participants, wider coalitions could be forged for economic justice for families Black and white.

A fourth condition for the welfare rights movement was provided by the simultaneous growth of the Community Action and Model Cities programs, along with local responses to the urban rebellions and police riots of the late 1960s. These brought a range of new, activist social agencies and young activists into urban neighborhoods across the country. Poverty programs pursuing their mandate for "maximum feasible participation" by poor constituents provided a critical base of resources and recruitment for the emerging welfare rights movement.

For many who were a part of it, the welfare rights movement was a life-changing experience. Local, state, and national meetings provided a heady mix of stories of injustice, examples of incredibly brave and creative organizing efforts, and intense strategy and policy debates. Local efforts were usually focused on finding and enrolling members, naming abuses, identifying allies, and finding ways for welfare mothers to get more benefits and stop abuse by the system. State and national meetings tried to spread the word and coordinate strategy. Allied litigation soon won from the U.S. Supreme Court constitutional assurances of due process and certain basic liberties for recipients and judicial recognition that welfare was an entitlement due to all individuals who met the program's income requirements. By the early 1970s, policy and organizing initiatives could imagine the possibility of a national guaranteed income, with a mandated federal structure for recipient input.

The effort to achieve a guaranteed income in the early 1970s, while initially supported by a wide coalition of social justice groups, devolved into a predictably conflicted effort over how much to compromise and what to demand. Allies, advocates, and welfare rights leaders disagreed over what to do about President Richard M. Nixon's surprise proposal for a Family Assistance Plan (FAP). The FAP would have created a national floor under family benefits, but one that was extremely low and that was attached to a work requirement. Twice the proposal failed in Congress, due in part to opposition from liberals influenced by NWRO demands for more adequate benefits, work opportunities rather than work requirements, and more adequate representation for welfare recipients in the system. By 1974, the issue was essentially dead, as Watergate loomed and advocates moved on to other issues.

Activists and advocates offer many explanations for the demise of the NWRO and related organizations, including the lack of a sustained national focus after the defeat of FAP and an ensuing lack of resources. Some simply blame the general collapse of radicalism and of liberal allies in the labor movement and the Democratic

Party. Although Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership in a Poor People's Campaign and march in 1968 has been seen as a validation of the welfare rights approach, his death and the strategic confusions that resulted from the campaign weakened the focus of the NWRO. Gender- and class-based struggles over leadership also played a part in the decline of the organization, as Guida West (1987) observed in her important study of the welfare rights movement. Finally, the untimely death of an already-discouraged Wiley helped seal the fate of the national movement, even though he had already stepped down from official leadership.

Still, welfare rights organizations and local and statewide organizing efforts did not die out completely after the mid-1970s. Many small local groups maintained themselves with support from local antipoverty organizations, churches, or the public colleges that many welfare recipients attended. Individual leaders stayed involved or moved to other local antipoverty initiatives, so the issue of welfare itself seldom disappeared. But the welfare rights movement as such was never a powerful national force after the end of NWRO. The major later effort to revive it with a National Welfare Rights Union in 1987, while important, was unable to achieve the national level of attention or progressive support of the earlier movement. Although a welfare rights movement of the proportions of the movement of the 1960s and 1970s has not emerged in recent years, by the late 1990s, a solid network of local organizations had developed, greatly enhanced by the ability to organize electronically. Responding to the 1996 welfare law, organizations such as the Welfare Made a Difference Campaign and Montana's Working for Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL)—and many others—have kept welfare rights issues alive.

Antipoverty Activism since the 1980s

Although the welfare rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s did not win a right to welfare or income security, through a combination of litigation and protest, it did secure certain rights for recipients and did make welfare more accessible to people who needed it. But these successes were not inexorable. By the late 1980s, the victories of the earlier movement were in jeopardy. Antipoverty activists were unable to defeat or defang successive waves of federal welfare reform, immigration reform, child welfare reform, and criminal justice reform that took away rights and worsened the everyday conditions of poor people. Punitive policies, at both federal and state levels, pushed antipoverty advocates into defensive postures, fighting to preserve programs tainted by racist stereotypes of their recipients' "dependency," by growing heteronormative moralism, and by attacks on "big government." In such a climate, almost all the actors became unsure about what strategic and tactical goals could have any likelihood of success, however success was defined.

Traditional professional antipoverty advocacy continued through such organizations as the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Social Workers. Such liberal advocacy groups have tried to address family and child poverty via lobbying and professional education. Joined by national legal advocacy groups, most notably the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), these groups perfected a style of information dissemination, teleconferencing, and targeted lobbying that kept those concerned about policy issues well informed.

During the campaign to reform welfare in 1995–1996, some mainstream women's organizations tried to speak out on issues related to women's poverty, although many were unable to arouse interest from their rank-and-file contributors or members. The NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (NOW-LDEF) played a key role in education and advocacy, while national leadership of the National Organization for Women protested punitive proposals. Women's research organizations also participated in the welfare debate, conducting and

At "Shirts Off Our Backs Day" in Upper Senate Park on Capitol Hill, the Welfare Made a Difference Campaign displayed shirts on which poor mothers had written of their experiences in poverty and on welfare. Recipients and former recipients read the shirts to demonstrate their opposition to Republican proposals to make welfare more restrictive, meager, and disciplinary, October 27, 2003. (Photo courtesy of Gwendolyn Mink)

publishing studies that debunked stereotypes and exposed how bad the situation was for low-income women. Beginning in 1995, a group of feminist scholars and social welfare advocates mobilized in the Women's Committee of 100, the only feminist group specifically devoted to fighting for welfare justice and against punitive welfare reform. Grassroots groups, such as Jedi Women, Welfare Warriors, and the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, actively campaigned against proposals to end welfare.

These efforts failed, and in 1996 the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program was replaced by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. As new welfare provisions took effect following enactment of the 1996 welfare law, groups have mobilized around efforts to secure rights, opportunities, and protections for TANF participants. For example, NOW-LDEF organized and administered the Building Opportunities Beyond Welfare Reform (BOB) Coalition, which has aided communication among antipoverty advocates, some unions, some religious groups, domestic violence activists, child care advocates, immigrant rights groups, and others. Supported by most participants in the BOB Coalition, NOW-LDEF worked with the Welfare Made a Difference Campaign and the Women's Committee of 100 in 2001 to help draft progressive welfare legislation (H.R. 3113, 107th Congress, 1st sess.) as an alternative to the Bush administration's proposal to make the 1996 welfare law even more restrictive and disciplinary.

Grassroots welfare rights groups abounded in the late 1990s as individual recipients engaged the harsh new welfare system established by the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. More established groups, such as the Kensington Welfare Rights Union and the Welfare Warriors, continued their work, as did national networks such as the Every Mother Is a Working Mother group. New regional organizations such as Grassroots Organizing for Welfare Leadership (GROWL) and the Western Regional Organizing Coalition (WROC) mobilized a strong presence in national policy discussion about how to pursue welfare justice in the new legislative environment. In addition, antipoverty activism remained prominent in related policy arenas: child care, job training and employment flexibility, and meaningful health care. These issues emerged as part of poor women's agendas at countless conferences and meetings where advocacy strategies and organizing tensions were the source of both dialogue and struggle.

Welfare advocacy in the early twenty-first century is not popular. Media interest and opportunities have waned, yielding the floor to the antiwelfare cause. Internet communication through organizations such as the Welfare Law Center's LINC Project tries to counter media bias, though the LINC Project cannot make up for poor people's lack of access to the media. But the LINC Project does allow groups to share information on legislation, litigation, and events across state and county lines.

One of the few remaining independent, national antipoverty media sources is *Survival News, the National Welfare Rights Newspaper*, the official newspaper of the National Welfare Rights Union, still published twice a year. *Survival News* provides welfare rights groups an avenue to inform recipients about their rights and supply them with survival tips, to compare welfare policies, to document their activities, and to honor their leaders. Welfare rights groups are encouraged to write articles and poems and to send pictures describing the situation in their home states. However, each year fewer groups are able to submit the desired free-flowing and detailed articles due to limited funding, staffing, and time. In addition, *Survival News* itself constantly struggles to maintain adequate funding. Although it is a collective staffed by volunteers and does not maintain office space, funding to purchase and maintain the necessary equipment and supplies and to sponsor special projects is constantly sparse. Yet in spite of the numerous mounting challenges, the newspaper has gained international recognition among grassroots activists and their allies.

The economic downturn at the beginning of the twenty-first century and the perception that welfare reform "worked" have severely limited the funding resources for all types of direct welfare rights organizing. Many welfare rights groups have folded due to lack of funding and to the increasing work requirements for their members—rules that impede women's ability to attend meetings and organize. Few organizations still have paid staff to train and assist members. As national organizations that have traditionally been allies experience diminishing returns from their funding sources, their ability and willingness to fund low-income women's attendance at conferences and symposiums have fallen off dramatically. As a result, welfare rights groups across the country have had their ability to share organizing strategies and experiences seriously limited.

Beyond the resource limitation, however, the most discouraging aspect of the post–welfare reform era has been the lack of willingness of liberal and left allies to argue for welfare rights as a basic part of the fight against poverty and as an essential element of a socially secure society. The struggle for welfare rights has historically rested on the recognition that without worker organizing and governmental intervention in the market, jobs in a capitalist society will never offer family wages; that caregiving is socially valuable work; and that there is a public obligation to provide economic support to women for undertaking what many often see as their primary obligations as parents. But these facts and commitments have been obscured by the assertion by many in the antipoverty community that an employment-based strategy is the only feasible way to win economic assistance for families. From this point of view, welfare should be a wage supplement for labor-market workers rather than income support for family caregivers.

Although the future of welfare rights may be precarious, the history of the welfare rights movement is an impressive and shining example of what has been possible despite the limits of democracy and capitalism in the United States. Knowing the history is vital to any continued organizing efforts because history reveals that poor women working together can make a difference. The courageous leaders who asserted their right to be treated with respect challenged the system and worked with allies effectively enough to allow a campaign for a guaranteed income to be seen as a feasible strategy. And the welfare rights activists of the 1960s paved the way for improved income benefits, along with such programs and services as food stamps, Medicaid, and fuel assistance. Still, in the first decade of the new century, welfare rights groups struggle just to survive, to document their experiences, and to share strategies and tactics with one another. Members become discouraged with low attendance at protest demonstrations and rallies, which produce scant media attention and little political influence. Many poor women drift away as the struggle to survive overtakes them, and they search for other ways to be more effective. At the same time, few advocates or political leaders dare speak of welfare rights, and almost none seems willing to argue for mothers' rights to choose the kind of work they do, whether inside or outside of their family, as a basic aspect of social security.

Ann Withorn and Diane Dujon

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Capitalism; Civil Rights Movement; Family Structure; Feminisms; New Property; NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund; Poverty Law; Racism; Sexism; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; see also the extracts from the following court cases (in sidebars to the entry Poverty Law): *King v. Smith* (1968); *Shapiro, Commissioner of Welfare of Connecticut, v. Thompson* (1969); *Goldberg v. Kelly* (1970); *Dandridge v. Williams* (1970); *Saenz v. Roe* (1999)

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Welfare State

Welfare states are a primary apparatus of rule in capitalist democracies. Welfare states provide cash and in-kind benefits, such as Social Security and food stamps. They provide subsidies for housing, education and training, and low-wage work. They regulate wages and labor standards. They also provide, subsidize, or regulate services related to people's well-being, such as medical care, child support enforcement, legal advice, discrimination and abuse prevention and remediation, and job training. Some welfare states serve as the employer of last resort. During economic downturns, as part of countercyclical government spending to stimulate the economy, public works programs can be important aspects of the antipoverty programs of welfare states. Military expenditures are additional means some welfare states use to manage capitalist economic development. Politicians and administrators generally build and support welfare states in the wake of crises in employment and profitability that shake the middle and working classes, in response to calls for a safety net for the poor, out of fear of massive social unrest or revolution, and in response to international threats to domestic security. As a result, the extent and generosity of welfare benefits depend at least as much on politics and demands from social movements as on economics and the level of resources available to "provide for the common welfare."

Welfare states are contradictory. The primary contradiction is that welfare states are economic hostages to capitalist enterprise. Welfare states depend for revenue on capitalism, yet capitalism generates, or at least aggravates, the inequality, poverty, and alienation that welfare states are supposed to remedy. Welfare states are vulnerable to political backlash if they enable large numbers of people to subsist without engaging in wage work. Because they are beholden to capital, welfare states can seldom risk implementing policies—such as generous benefits for the long-term unemployed or for women caring for significant people in their lives—that undermine work discipline, capitalist profitability, and the social control functions of providing for the poor.

Another contradiction of the welfare state is the fact that people of all classes and income levels potentially benefit from social provision, redistribution, regulation, subsidies, domestic and international security, and services. The more universal the benefits, the broader the political appeal of welfare programs. Welfare programs are politically vulnerable to the degree that they narrowly target benefits to "the truly needy"—often stigmatized segments of the population. Welfare states also face a contradiction between rights and relief, between entitlement (based on citizenship) and eligibility (based on work effort, marriage, or other evidence of docile compliance with the status quo). Moreover, the basis of demands—that is, a living wage as a right versus poor relief to prevent riots—may place conflicting pressures on administrators and politicians in welfare states. Thus, although politicians respond most to insistent demands, policymakers prefer to reward conformist rather than disruptive people and social movements.

The apparatus of rule known as welfare states consists of *institutions*, *capacities*, and *ideologies*. The *institutions* of welfare states generally include legislatures, courts, administrative bureaucracies, prisons, armed services and police, schools, and public health services. Welfare states vary in their juridical, administrative, military and paramilitary, and therapeutic *capacities*. All seek to impose specific ways of making and enforcing law and legal decisions, to determine crime and punishment, to monopolize war making and regulate firearms, to protect private property, and to manage local and global interests in territory and commerce. Welfare states also define and protect public health and rehabilitation, determine who is sick or crazy, and license experts with the power and authority to diagnose, treat, and quarantine. In welfare states, the characteristic *ideologies*, or sets of ideas and ways of talking about how politics and power operate, typically include distinctions between the worthy and unworthy poor, notions of entitlement and need, implicit or explicit social contracts between providers and beneficiaries or recipients of transfers and services, and assumptions about the relative value of military service, wage work, and care work.

The United States has had a conspicuously meager and punitive set of programs for the poor. Historically, the United States has been a laggard builder and a precocious reformer and dismantler of welfare state programs. The U.S. welfare state started officially in 1935 with the passage of the Social Security Act, a central plank of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's platform for the New Deal. The major predecessors of the U.S. welfare state were pensions for Civil War veterans and state-level mothers' aid programs, both of which were considered public compensation for having sacrificed earnings ability for dutiful service to country or family.

The benefits called "welfare" in the United States have been consistently and closely targeted at the people at greatest risk of poverty: the old, the young, people with temporary or permanent illness or disability, the unemployed, and unmarried mothers. This targeting has made it easy for U.S. politicians and taxpayers to vilify both welfare recipients and welfare programs. Following in the footsteps of Republican President Ronald Reagan, who ran up record government deficits and blamed them on Cadillac-driving "welfare queens," Democratic president Bill Clinton signed the law that "ended welfare as we [knew] it" in 1996. In so doing, Clinton eliminated the cheapest but most politically vulnerable part of the U.S. welfare state: the entitlement to cash benefits for unmarried mothers and their children. Thus concluded sixty years of modest U.S. policy efforts to mitigate inequality and poverty for mothers and children, the people whose relationships to the labor market are the most precarious.

Nonwelfare programs based on the principle of social insurance, or worker contributions to benefits that will be drawn later, have been less vulnerable to attack. Politicians routinely if begrudgingly extend unemployment insurance during hard times. Medicare expansion, not contraction, engages serious policy debate in the early twenty-first century. And national politicians can talk about universalizing health coverage without being hooted off the stage. The different political status accorded programs the public believes have been earned by participants marks the degree of stratification in the welfare state. Nevertheless, antigovernment, neoliberal proposals that would undermine the more protected programs of the welfare state do enjoy serious consideration. Proposals to privatize Social Security are high on Republican agendas, for example, precisely because privatization would destroy the core program of the U.S. welfare state.

Scholars debate the extent to which welfare states seek to ameliorate poverty because they can afford it, because reformers consider it morally correct, because social provision is an effective means of social control, because politicians sometimes cannot afford *not* to, or for some combination of these reasons. In order to understand the late rise and relatively weak character of the U.S. welfare state and the recent efforts to dismantle it, one must comprehend two complementary dynamics. First is the degree to which U.S. welfare state policies and programs aggravate or ameliorate inequalities of class, race, and gender. Second is the extent to which race, gender, and class organize U.S. welfare state institutions, capacities, and ideologies.

The U.S. welfare state contributes importantly to the social construction of poverty and the poor. Through "needs talk," welfare state administrators, politicians, and social scientists distinguish poor people from everyone else and also distinguish the "worthy" from the "unworthy" poor. For example, in the United States, "worthy" welfare recipients are generally those not expected to be able to earn enough to fulfill their needs. Expectations about "availability for work" and about earnings vary enormously across time and region and by race, gender, and immigration status. Over the span of the twentieth century, for instance, the U.S. welfare state viewed white, native-born children sometimes as earners expected to contribute their wages to the household budget and sometimes as innocent dependents who should not suffer poverty because of the economic or moral failings of their parents.

Furthermore, the professionals who seek simultaneously to serve the poor, promote their own expertise, and reform the welfare state have used eligibility criteria and other everyday bureaucratic practices to maintain racial segregation, reinforce conventional notions of motherhood and fatherhood, enforce work discipline, and otherwise reproduce inequalities of gender, race, birth status, and class. Regulations and program implementation have reproduced racist and sexist assumptions about "work readiness" and sexual respectability for mothers, selectively benefiting some groups, such as native-born, white, celibate widows, at the expense of others. Jobs disproportionately filled by people of color and immigrants (for instance, domestic work and agricultural labor) have been excluded from eligibility for welfare state benefits.

Welfare states contribute to the meaning and consequences of poverty, racism, nativism, and women's subordination. At the same time, race, gender, and class organize welfare states and their approaches to poverty. Divisions of labor, levels of resources, and access to power in welfare state institutions are structured by race and gender, for example, to the extent that racism and sexism organize personnel practices, professional opportunities, and political clout within the welfare state. The U.S. welfare state is divided into two distinct tiers, which further organize welfare by race and gender. The benefits and services associated with masculine citizenship activities—being a soldier or a worker—are relatively generous entitlements. They are administered with minimal intrusion, little stigma, and no requirement that recipients prove need in order to meet eligibility criteria. In sharp contrast, the benefits and services associated with feminine citizenship activities—being a mother or other care provider—are stingy, intrusive, stigmatized, and subject to stringent tests for eligibility. For instance, welfare recipients in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s were subject to late-night searches under a "man in the house" rule that enforced celibacy on poor single mothers. At both tiers, services and benefits reward conformity and punish women and men who stray from race- and class-specific norms. Finally, race, class, and gender difference and dominance inform welfare state ideologies such as the rhetoric of "family values," the notions of rugged individualism that blame poor people for their plight, and categories that distinguish the "truly needy" from "welfare cheats."

Compared to the welfare states in other capitalist democracies, the United States has had only fragmented and weak programs and has been reluctant to address poverty and inequality through systematic political intervention. The U.S. welfare state shares these features with other "liberal" countries in which markets and families are more important sites for obtaining welfare than are states and social programs. Welfare states in some other countries make it easier for people to reconcile their potentially conflicting obligations to meet their needs through market earnings and to provide for the well-being of others through unpaid care work in families. Strong left-labor parties in some countries allow welfare states to maintain more generous benefits in the face of pressure from business interests. In still other countries, coalitions among business, labor, church, and government promote different work and family arrangements through welfare state programs, practices, and policies. Countries vary in the degree to which they emphasize markets, families, voluntary organizations, or states in the overall package of welfare. However, both individual country case studies and comparative analyses show that all welfare states both organize and are organized by class and race. In addition, welfare states seldom include provisions for enhancing women's physical safety, sexual integrity and agency, access to complete reproductive health care, or other markers of genuine commitment to reducing women's dependence on and subordination to men.

Recent reforms of the welfare state in the United States have had two types of impacts. First, they affect the quality of everyday life for poor people. Work requirements and time limits, the central features of the 1996 welfare reforms, can make economic survival more precarious for families and individuals, making it harder to provide food and housing, to pay the bills, to maintain physical and mental health, and to secure women's safety from men's violence and control. Second, welfare reforms change the rules of the game and the material bases of struggles over work, relationships, privilege, and equality. Dismantling welfare shifts the balance of power between workers and employers in favor of business interests. Welfare reforms have racially disparate impacts and systematically reproduce racist notions of worthiness, need, and job-readiness. Increasingly oppressive and exploitative class, race, and gender rules and relations are all "impacts of welfare reform." Poor people and their advocates therefore have to explore new coalitions in order to fight back.

Lisa D. Brush

See also: Domestic Violence; Employment Policy; Federalism; Gender Discrimination in the Labor Market; Health Policy; Liberalism; Maternalist Policy; Privatization; Social Security; Social Security Act of 1935; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform

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Welfare-Made-a-Difference Campaign

See Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare Rights Movement

What Social Classes Owe to Each Other, *William Graham Sumner*

William Graham Sumner, born in 1840, was a prominent proponent of Social Darwinism, the late-nineteenth-century belief that Charles Darwin's theories of natural selection, as translated by Herbert Spencer into the doctrine of "survival of the fittest," applied to human society. A graduate of Yale University, Sumner trained as a minister and became an Episcopal clergyman before joining the faculty of his alma mater as a professor of social science. In his lectures and books, Sumner argued in favor of laissez-faire economics and against government intervention in economics or social welfare. Like other Social Darwinists, he explained the growing social and economic inequality of the period—including the growth of an industrial working class, the development of urban slums, and ever more extreme differences in income—as a reflection of immutable natural laws of social development. Sumner viewed inequality as natural and inevitable, the result of differences in ability and willingness to work. For him, the vast wealth amassed by corporate leaders was the result of their talent as managers of people and capital rather than of the exploitation of underpaid labor. The poor, he believed, were not victims; rather, they were underachievers, held back by their laziness, lack of intelligence, or indulgence in alcohol. Welfare programs, therefore, represented an attempt to remake the natural order of society.

In the passage below, Sumner discusses his view that economic inequality is part of human life, conceding only that members of all classes should have the opportunity to rise above their circumstances.

Sarah Case

See also: Malthusianism; Self-Reliance; Social Darwinism

If words like wise and foolish, thrifty and extravagant, prudent and negligent, have any meaning in language, then it must make some difference how people behave in this world, and the difference will appear in the position they acquire in the body of society, and in relation to the chances of life. They may, then, be classified in reference to these facts. Such classes always will exist; no other social distinctions can endure. If, then, we look to the origins and definition of these classes, we shall find it impossible to deduce any obligations which one of them bears to the other. The class distinctions simply result from the different degrees of success with which men have availed themselves of the chances which were presented to them. Instead of endeavoring to redistribute the acquisitions which have been made between the existing classes, our aim should be to increase, multiply, and extend the chances. . . . The yearning after equality is the offspring of envy and covetousness, and there is no possible plan for satisfying that yearning which can do aught else than rob A to give to B; consequently all such plans nourish some of the meanest vices of human nature, waste capital, and overthrow civilization.

Source: William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1883. Reprint 1920), 167–168.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program

See Hunger; Maternalist Policy; Nutrition and Food Assistance

Work Ethic

The work ethic is a culturally constructed set of norms that refer to one's ideological orientation toward labor. As such, the work ethic can be understood as both an attitude and a set of habitual actions. Those who possess the work ethic are said to be focused, diligent, efficient, responsible, personally accountable, self-disciplined, and self-regulating. Some believe that those who possess the work ethic will be materially self-supporting. Individual failure to manifest the work ethic is understood, particularly by political conservatives, as the root cause of poverty. Those who hold this position also argue that social provision corrupts the recipient's will to work and that the renewal of the work ethic is a solution to poverty and welfare "dependency."

The Western version of the work ethic has its origins in biblical text. Specifically, after the Fall from God's grace, work became a form of punishment for man's sinful nature. Building on this view during the Protestant Reformation, John Calvin and Martin Luther positioned work as a profession of faith and a form of service to God. Work was understood as a calling or vocation, and dutiful work practice as a religious duty.

The Puritan sects that immigrated to North America in the seventeenth century believed strongly in the link between faith and disciplined work practice. Adherence to the work ethic was a key component of Puritan self-understanding. Some of the earliest efforts to instill the work ethic in others date back to Puritan efforts to transform the labor practices of Native Americans living near the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In a widely influential theory, German sociologist Max Weber argued that the Puritan's belief system, which stressed one's duty to work and understood success in work as indicative of salvation, reinforced a set of self-denying habits and ascetic practices that eventually helped foster the rise of industrial capitalism.

The work ethic had its origins in religious belief, and these connections remain visible today in faith-based approaches to social welfare provision. Nevertheless, in the eighteenth century, the American work ethic took a secular turn. This was due in large part to the writings of Benjamin Franklin. Franklin championed thrift, industry, and self-discipline. He saw these values as the first step in the creation of a successful persona that one could use to enter the public sphere of democratic politics. Indeed, it was Franklin who forged the connection between the work ethic and democratic citizenship. In his annually produced *Poor Richard's Almanac* and in his *Autobiography,* Franklin lay the groundwork for a narrative that connects hard work, self-discipline, financial success, class mobility, and full political membership. This narrative remained prominent and can be seen in popular literature of the nineteenth century, especially in such books for children as the McGuffey's Readers and the writings of Horatio Alger. Notably, the secular version of the American work ethic, with its promise of material reward and full citizenship, was being consolidated at the same time that Black chattel slavery, the organization of labor through the systematic use of force and violence, was also being solidified in the United States.

The advent of the Industrial Revolution tested America's adherence to the work ethic and the assumption of a natural link between the work ethic and democratic citizenship. Some argue that work ethic ideology fits fairly well with smallholder agrarian and craft economies. In these economic systems, the worker has some control over work organization, can see the product that is created, and can use leisure time to pursue politics. Thomas Jefferson celebrated the link between preindustrial labor and democratic politics in his depiction of the hardworking yeoman farmer as the ideal democratic citizen. With the advance of industrialization, the combination of harsh working conditions and workers' alienation from the product being produced led intellectuals and labor leaders to doubt that the work ethic as a set of beliefs and practices could be sustained. Yet despite massive technological change and periods of severe economic downturn, the work ethic persisted, principally as a narrative, suggesting that disciplined work behavior would lead to material reward.

Work norms and expectations of financial reward became a narrative shared by a range of immigrant groups, who used it to mark themselves as loyal American citizens. And yet, although for some the work ethic was deployed as a narrative of assimilation, specific ethnic and racial groups have historically been stereotyped and stigmatized as having a poor work ethic or as being lazy—specifically Native Americans, Irish immigrants, and, most persistently, African Americans emancipated from slavery.

Early-twentieth-century social commentators and social reformers linked poverty to a failure of the work ethic. Accordingly, social interventions such as poorhouses, orphanages, and settlement houses were designed in part to alter their subjects' values by teaching the work ethic. These programs were designed to break personal and group norms and instill a sense of individual striving and a desire for class mobility. The view that poverty was rooted in an individual's failure to adhere to the work ethic diminished somewhat in the wake of the massive market failures and unemployment of the Great Depression. With the partial expansion of the welfare state in the 1930s, there was a greater understanding of poverty as a systemic rather than individual failure.

Though the emergence of the welfare state in the early twentieth century disrupted the hegemony of the work ethic narrative to some degree, the notion that the work ethic is the proper way for the individual to relate to the economy and gain material provision has never been fully displaced. The conservative critiques of welfare provision that began circulating in the 1970s and 1980s again argued that the expansion of income supports was due to a failure of work discipline. In this view, cash supports generated "welfare dependency" and a "culture of poverty," which undermined "mainstream" norms of striving and personal responsibility. The work requirement component of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 can be understood as an effort to change recipients' norms and values by mandating work. The assumption driving this component of the law is that engaging in the practice of wage work engenders the acquisition of new work norms, thereby instilling an ideological commitment to the work ethic.

Anne M. Manuel

See also: Americanization Movement; Malthusianism; Poor Laws; Poorhouse/Almshouse; Puritans and Puritanism; Self-Reliance; Social Darwinism; Workfare

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Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation is a state-based system of no-fault insurance for work-related injuries. Established in early-twentieth-century legislation that laid important groundwork for the American welfare state, this system replaced workers' right to sue employers directly for work accidents with an insurance-based model. Although workers' compensation laws vary by state, virtually all require employers to pay for insurance providing injured workers with disability benefits, medical benefits, and death benefits. Traditional theory distinguishes workers' compensation from "welfare" programs by describing it as earned compensation for workers rather than government charity for the poor. Consistent with historical gender and race stratification of American welfare, workers' compensation originally focused on securing the income of industrial workers, who were predominantly (though not exclusively) white men. But despite the favored status of workers' compensation, in practice it has a long history of failing to adequately protect many injured workers. And after a period of benefit expansion, at the end of the twentieth century, most states adopted broad reforms that significantly restricted workers' rights to compensation.

In the typical structure of workers' compensation, state administrative agencies oversee the benefit claims process and resolve disputes. Private commercial companies provide a large portion of workers' compensation insurance, although many large employers self-insure. Some states also offer insurance through public funds, and in a few states these public funds are the exclusive insurers. Although most claims are for medical expenses alone, the most costly claims involve cash disability benefits for lost work time, divided into temporary and permanent benefits. Cash disability and death benefits generally cover about two-thirds of lost wages up to a weekly maximum based on a percentage of the state's average wage. For some permanent injuries, states determine benefit amounts according to a fixed payment schedule regardless of individual income loss.

Workers' compensation developed in response to a crisis in the late-nineteenth-century law governing accidental workplace injury. Injured workers generally could not recover damages from employers in court because of legal rules holding workers responsible for avoiding accidents. But when states began to ease these rules and to increase employers' risk of high damage awards, many business leaders joined some labor advocates and social reformers in supporting a change to a "social insurance" system drawn from European models. Between 1911 and 1920, most states adopted workers' compensation laws that gave employers responsibility for compensating accidental injuries "arising out of and in the course of employment," regardless of fault, and in exchange limited compensation to lost income and medical costs instead of broader damage awards. Proponents argued that this "bargain" would benefit society by reducing wasteful litigation and by spreading the costs of occupational risks to employers and consumers.

Although the new scheme allowed many injured workers (or their survivors) to receive some compensation relatively quickly and easily, from the beginning, state laws failed to cover many workers and many kinds of injuries. For the first several decades after the passage of workers' compensation laws, most states narrowly interpreted the concept of accidental injuries to exclude many gradually developing disabilities and many occupational illnesses. During its early decades, workers' compensation generally did not compensate medical expenses or else restricted benefits to limited and often poor-quality treatment provided by employers or insurers. By the late 1950s, many states had expanded their programs to cover more employees and more injuries and to provide less restrictive medical benefits. But by this time, rising wages had outpaced disability benefit maximums, so benefits typically replaced a much smaller share of workers' lost earnings than they had when workers' compensation began.

These falling benefit levels, along with continuing concern about inadequate workplace safety, spurred political pressure for federal intervention. In the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Congress established a national commission to review state workers' compensation programs, along with a new system for regulating work hazards. Concluding that benefits were inadequate and inequitable, in 1972 this bipartisan commission issued a series of recommendations for more complete coverage of workers and injuries, including occupational illness, and for raising benefit levels. Recognizing that competition among states for business impeded political support for adequate benefits, the commission recommended that the federal government establish a national program if states failed to meet the recommended standards. Although most states did take steps to expand benefits over the next decade, overall these efforts fell significantly short of the recommendations.

By the late 1980s, expanded benefits contributed to steeply rising insurance costs. When employers demanded relief, some states modified their traditional practice of allowing insurance companies (protected from antitrust law) to cooperatively fix prices in a largely self-regulating process. As state regulators began to control insurance prices, insurers complained that their business was unprofitable. States relying on private commercial insurers faced a crisis as these insurers left the market or moved large numbers of employers into special insurance pools structured to temporarily protect individual insurers from high claims costs. Many of these special pools, along with some states' government-run insurance funds, ran up high deficits. In a number of states, many employers turned to alternative insurance sources, including group self-insurance pools and new state funds, some of which controlled costs through innovative programs for safety, reemployment, and claims deterrence. Insurance companies blamed their high deficits on regulatory rate controls and excessive benefits, and they joined with some employer groups in a national campaign for law reforms. This campaign used anecdotal evidence to frame the problem as one of widespread claims fraud, and insurance companies and employers complained that expanded benefits allowed undeserving beneficiaries to substitute "welfare" for work responsibility. By the early 1990s, most states responded to such ongoing political pressure by adopting comprehensive legal changes designed to scrutinize claims more aggressively and to give workers more responsibility for reducing their own injury costs. These reforms often limited covered injuries and illnesses, workers' protections in claims disputes, and disability benefit levels for permanently injured workers. The reforms restored insurers' profits and eased employers' costs but left many seriously injured workers with increased poverty and stigma and made it harder for them to challenge denials of claims.

Martha T. McCluskey

See also: American Association for Labor Legislation; Disability Policy; Social Security; Welfare Capitalism

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Workfare

Workfare is a social policy of mandatory work programs for welfare recipients or, more generically, the process of work-oriented welfare reform. The neologism "workfare," coined in the late 1960s, is the contraction of "work" and "welfare." Workfare has become a powerful signifier of the prevailing method and philosophy of welfare reform in the United States. Work-based or work-enforcing welfare policies have been favored by politicians on the right for some considerable time, bolstered by the perennial concern that welfare entitlements with no strings attached erode the employment habits, job skills, and work ethics of the poor. Support for workfare-style policies widened during the 1980s, however, as centrist liberals became increasingly convinced of the argument for "tough love" approaches to welfare reform. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 would later crystallize this bipartisan commitment, replacing the federal entitlement to welfare with a post–New Deal system of time-limited cash benefits and strict work requirements. Characterized by some as "welfare repeal," the PRWORA could also be regarded as a "workfare settlement" in that it embodies a defining objective of helping and hassling welfare recipients into the job market, offering minimal support for those who fail its work tests. Crucially, the underlying goals of such workfare regimes are no longer focused on straightforward poverty alleviation, since the fate of many of those leaving the welfare rolls has been *working* poverty. Workfare policies are instead addressed to the problem of "welfare dependency," whose solutions are defined in terms of encouraging or enforcing work.

Concretely, the term "workfare" is applied to programs that require welfare recipients to work—in public-sector jobs, in private workplaces, or in community placements—in exchange for benefits. More generally, it has become associated with a wide range of policy measures designed to improve the "employability" and work orientations of welfare recipients, typically through job-training programs and job search assistance. These measures are regarded as "workfarist" when they are used in the context of compulsion or strict benefit conditionality. Beyond these literal meanings, though, workfare is now recognized as a symbol of U.S.-style (or neoliberal) welfare reform. In its most abstract sense, the term "workfare state" denotes an inversion of the principles and practices of the welfare state, as the notion of (social) rights and entitlements gives way to a new emphasis on (personal) responsibility and obligation (Peck 2001). Whereas welfare stood for the principles of needs-based entitlement and standardized treatment, workfare stands for market-based compulsion, selectivity, and local discretion. Whereas welfare stood for passive income support, workfare stands for active labor market inclusion. And whereas welfare constructed its subjects as claimants, workfare reconstitutes them as job seekers.

Reflecting this increasingly generic usage, the reach and resonance of workfare have increased over time. What began as a specific program reform within the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) system during the 1970s acquired a wider significance during the 1980s when President Ronald Reagan's administration made resources available for "demonstration projects," with the intent of propagating workfare-style initiatives. At this time, a distinction was drawn between "hard" and "soft" variants of workfare: The former emphasized strict policies of penalties and a no-nonsense approach; the latter was couched within a more supportive philosophy, seeking to build the human capital of welfare recipients through education and training investments. The Family Support Act (FSA) of 1988 represented a compromise between these two approaches, embedding the general principles of work-oriented welfare in the federal system.

The work program associated with the FSA, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS), achieved no more than mixed results, its implementation being hampered by a slowing economy and growing political impatience on the part of state governors. This was the context for Bill Clinton's presidential campaign pledge to "end welfare as we know it," a fateful slogan that would come to epitomize the workfarist drift in U.S. welfare policy. With the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, the language of welfare reform became more shrill, just as the attendant policy proposals became progressively more radical. In the lexicon of the ascendant Republican Right, "welfare" was associated with unambiguously negative terms like "decay," "failure," and "waste," whereas "workfare" was to be constituted as an "optimistic, positive, governing word" alongside "opportunity," "moral," and "hard work" (Peck 2001).

More than a war of words, the real battle in the mid-1990s was over the content and likely consequences of policy. In the wake of the passage of PRWORA, the responsibility for the new system passed to the fifty states, and most adopted approaches that emphasized rapid "labor force attachment." In the context of generally buoyant job markets, unprecedented numbers of welfare recipients left the welfare rolls in the late 1990s, further bolstering the confidence of workfare advocates and adding to the allure of the "American model" in international policy debates (Lodemel and Trickey 2001). Yet the economic slowdown that began in 2001 raised new questions about the efficacy of an approach that is self-evidently predicated on the ready availability of jobs. Although this faltering performance may have tarnished the image of workfare, the immediate prospects of a shift in policy away from the workfare model remain remote. On the contrary, workfare has apparently become established as a social policy counterpart to labor market "flexibility" policies. In the context of a continuing trend toward short-term, unstable, "contingent" jobs, workfare policies exhibit a primitive logic: They purposefully mobilize workers for (minimum) wage work, holding them close to the labor market in a persistently job-ready state. In a sense, they provide a forced (or "activated") labor supply for the labor market's least desirable, lowest-paid jobs. Although the prosaic reality of workfare may be to replace poverty-on-benefits with poverty-in-work, advocates like Lawrence Mead (1997) continue to insist that a much deeper *social* and moral problem is being tackled: the postindustrial phenomenon of "worklessness."

Jamie Peck

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Contingent Work; New Right; *Regulating the Poor;* Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Welfare State; Work Ethic; "Working Poor"

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"Working Poor"

"Working poor" is a term used in the press, among policy analysts and advocates, and in political debates to refer to people who have below-poverty income despite being employed in the paid labor force. Although the term has frequently been used to draw attention to the persistence of poverty wages and exploitative labor conditions as well as the work ethic of poor people, the "working poor" have also been deployed in contrast to welfare recipients, reinforcing stereotyped imagery of the latter as "dependent," "nonworking," and otherwise "undeserving."

Most people living in poverty are working and do not receive public assistance even when it is available. This has been true throughout the history of welfare provision. Nonetheless, one major anxiety associated with welfare historically is that it will undermine people's commitment to work. Therefore, welfare has most often been structured so as to constrain the degree to which providing aid will diminish work effort. A panoply of practices have evolved over time to buttress the expectation that recipients should take work over welfare as often as possible. These practices have reinforced the tendency to distinguish the "working poor" from the "welfare poor," casting a positive light on the former at the expense of the latter. This invidious distinction fails to take into account the fact that often, throughout the history of welfare, many of the working and nonworking poor were the same people at different points in their struggle to overcome poverty. The distinction has also done much to marginalize mothering by denigrating mothers who stay at home with their children and are not taking paid employment. In particular, single mothers receiving public assistance in order to stay at home with their children have been stigmatized, in no small part because of the historical valorization of the working poor.

The welfare population has always been a minority of those persons living in poverty. Most people who are poor do not rely on public assistance but instead are in families with wage workers. The main sources of poverty for these people historically have been low wages and unemployment. Nonetheless, the dominant welfare policy discourse has de-emphasized wage deficiency and labor market insecurity, focusing instead on welfare as a disincentive to work. As systems of public aid developed to replace almsgiving in the nineteenth century, work requirements were common. "Indoor relief" in the form of the poorhouse where work was required was the most often preferred. "Outdoor relief," provided to families in their homes, was extended reluctantly, and only when labor markets failed seriously and the numbers of destitute families multiplied dramatically. Subject to intense criticism, outdoor relief was eventually seen as something that had to be structured according to the principle of "less eligibility," which held that benefits were to be below the wages for the lowest-paying jobs. As welfare systems developed in the modern era, they became increasingly articulated with the requirements of the labor market and were increasingly structured to limit the extent to which they might undermine work.

When welfare was liberalized, it was often in the name of aiding families who lacked a wage earner. In the early-twentieth-century United States, mothers' pension programs spread across the states to support "widowed" mothers in staying at home with their children. These programs formed the basis of the welfare system codified in the Social Security Act of 1935 and later known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which itself was repealed in 1996 and replaced by the more limited Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The 1996 repeal was driven in part by concern that welfare had come to undermine wage work among single mothers and the fathers of their children. It was also accompanied by inflammatory rhetoric pitting the "working" against the "welfare" poor. Time limits and work requirements were imposed on the receipt of TANF. The goal of aiding single mothers to stay at home to care for their children was de-emphasized in favor of the goal of promoting work.

This retrenchment of public assistance took place even though much available research indicated that welfare's negative effect on work effort was minimal. Most poor families preferred work in the paid labor force over welfare, and most continued to work even when welfare was made more readily and generously available. In addition, much research had indicated that many welfare recipients worked at least part-time and that the distinction between the working and nonworking poor was overdrawn. Nevertheless, the rhetoric of welfare reform had successfully pushed past these nuances to imply, in melodramatic terms, that there was a sharp divide between the working and nonworking poor. Another point lost in the debate as it was structured was that mothering is a form of work that has important value for society and needs to be supported in those cases where families are unable to provide for themselves. The emphasis on work during the reform debates emphasized paid employment outside the home and further marginalized single mothers who stay at home to care for their children.

In the United States, the focus on reducing welfare dependency has led to increased efforts to aid the working poor by enhancing public policies that help "make work pay." In particular, in recent years, there have been dramatic increases in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) that allow low-wage workers to supplement their wages with payments from the federal government. Some states have added to these policies as well. Nonetheless, wage deficiency and unemployment still plague labor markets in the United States and remain the primary sources of poverty. In the face of resistance to raising the minimum wage at the federal level, living-wage campaigns have spread across the country since the 1990s, trying to bring about local policies that will boost pay scales. These campaigns have had some victories, but the poverty stemming from wage inadequacy persists. Most welfare recipients leaving welfare for work under the new policies remain in poverty several years after leaving welfare.

Sanford F. Schram

See also: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADC/AFDC); Dependency; Deserving/Undeserving Poor; Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Living-Wage Campaigns; Relief; Self-Reliance; Welfare Policy/Welfare Reform; Work Ethic

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Works Progress Administration (WPA)

As an alternative to direct relief, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 7034 (1935) created the Works Progress Administration (WPA, renamed the Work Projects Administration in 1939) to distribute funds appropriated by Congress in the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of 1935. The public service work provided by the WPA earned it the support of many unemployed workers, who regained a sense of dignity that had been compromised by the hard times of the Great Depression. Along with other New Deal programs, the WPA contributed to workers' conception of the federal government as a vehicle to advance economic security and workplace justice. New Dealers such as WPA head Harry Hopkins described the WPA as part of a general shift in the organization of the U.S. economy. According to Hopkins, "The time . . . when industry and business can absorb all able-bodied workers seems to grow more distant with improvements in management and technology" (quoted in Kennedy 1999, 375). In its eight-year history, the WPA allocated more than $11 billion and employed some 8.5 million workers. Three-fourths of the WPA's budget went toward funding infrastructure construction; the other quarter was allocated to a range of art, education, and historic-preservation projects. Between 1935 and 1943, WPA workers constructed or repaired some 572,000 miles of roads, 67,000 miles of city streets, 124,000 bridges, 8,000 parks, 125,000 public buildings, and 350 airports.

In its cultivation of art and preservation of folk traditions, stories, and music, the WPA often publicized the economic and social hardships of a wide range of American citizens. The WPA included four often-controversial arts programs that frequently drew attention to social injustice and the impact of the Great Depression on American workers and families. The Federal Art Project commissioned murals, often of working people, in public buildings and hired artists to conduct art classes. The Federal Music Project recorded and preserved regional folk music traditions and sponsored concerts heard by some 50 million Americans. The Federal Theatre Project performed classic and contemporary theater for some 30 million people before Congress abolished it in 1939, accusing it of promoting race mixing and FDR's New Deal agenda. The Federal Writers' Project hired writers for a wide range of tasks, from interviewing former slaves to compiling guidebooks of cities and roads of the United States.

Not surprisingly, given its ambitious and controversial mission, the WPA received considerable criticism from a wide range of conservatives, who thought the program undermined private industry, and worker advocates, who thought it provided insufficient relief to the nation's poor. The struggle over the WPA highlighted long-standing debates in U.S. welfare policy regarding the "deserving" versus the "undeserving" poor and the role of state, local, and federal government in providing relief. Labor advocates, workers, and reformers decried the low wages and inadequate aid the WPA and other New Deal programs provided to unemployed workers and their dependents. For the millions of unemployed who did find work with the WPA, wages, referred to as "security wages," fell somewhere between wages in the private sector and sustenance. Labor union leaders saw the low wages allotted to WPA workers as a threat to organized labor's bargaining position. Other worker advocates criticized the program for the discrepancies between the wages of skilled and unskilled workers, the failure of the program to advance workers' training, and the program's requirements for WPA employment. Despite its sizable budget, the WPA did not provide employment for all eligible workers. Unemployed workers had to be certified as eligible for WPA work, a certification that did not guarantee employment. Some estimates suggest that the WPA employed only a quarter of the eligible unemployed workers. In addition, regulations limited employment in the WPA to one person per family, which prevented many women from obtaining WPA jobs (women workers made up less than 20 percent of the WPA workforce). Republicans and some conservative Democrats lambasted the WPA for its wasteful use of tax dollars and its propensity for paying workers for doing unnecessary work or no work at all. Republican political foes accused FDR, not without some justification, of using the WPA as a new means of rewarding political patronage.

The regional and racial discrepancies in WPA wages drew fire from civil rights advocates. In the South, racial wage differentials left some southern African American workers with much smaller wages than their white southern counterparts. The low-skilled and physically demanding work frequently assigned to Black workers compounded their frustrations over low wages. Nonetheless, Black workers made up a disproportionately high number of WPA workers (between 15 and 20 percent of the WPA workforce), and FDR's executive order banning discrimination in WPA hiring amounted to one of his administration's most aggressive civil rights actions.

In early 1937, as the economy showed tenuous signs of recovery, WPA opponents in Congress slashed funding for it and other relief programs. This cut in "emergency" programs exacerbated the effects of the economic collapse of 1937, when production fell more than 40 percent and unemployment climbed. In response to the "Roosevelt Recession," Congress approved FDR's additional spending measures, which restored some of the funding to the WPA. The WPA continued until 1943, when a coalition of Republicans and southern white Democrats succeeded in eliminating the agency.

G. Mark Hendrickson

See also: Great Depression and New Deal; Public Works Administration; Relief

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World Bank

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) was established following a conference at Bretton Woods in 1944 (which also led to the creation of the International Monetary Fund). The conference debates and the bank's Articles of Agreement contain no references to poverty or to related notions such as living standards or equity. Today, the World Bank Group comprises, in addition to the IBRD, the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

The principal lending vehicle for the bank's poverty agenda is IDA, a soft loan window created in 1960. Between 1960 and 2002, IDA, whose funds have been periodically replenished by industrialized countries, has lent about $135 billion. Until the creation of IDA, the IBRD, which raises its resources on global financial markets and whose loans are at near-market rates, was constrained from lending to poor countries because of their perceived lack of creditworthiness. Nor did the bank lend to poverty-oriented projects with high social rates of return, because a low financial rate of return rendered them "unbankable." In contrast, IDA credits are lent only to countries whose per capita incomes are below a certain level, and the loans have a nominal service charge and long maturities. Still, until the late 1960s, the bank barely touched on the subject of poverty and continued to focus on economic growth as the key to poverty reduction. The shift from a market-disciplined, "productive investment" approach toward an increasingly social, need-based definition of its goals had started with the switch from reconstruction to development banking, but became more pronounced in the late 1960s.

It was during the 1970s, however, that the institution set out in earnest on an ambitious path of poverty-oriented social engineering, seeking to improve on the economic and political processes that, in many developing countries, appeared to be shortchanging the poor in the distribution of benefits from growing production. Those efforts to help the poor, over and above the promotion of growth, came to be understood, in a stricter sense, as "poverty alleviation." Whereas poverty reduction through growth has been the bank's constant, if mostly implicit, pursuit, poverty alleviation in the more ambitious sense of providing more than a "trickle-down" effect has followed a more eventful course in the bank's history. During this period, it initially promoted a redistribution-with-growth strategy, focusing first on small farmers and subsequently on the urban poor. Later in the decade, it tried to push for a basic human needs approach to poverty alleviation.

A hiatus followed in the early 1980s. The economic crisis afflicting many of the bank's borrowers led to a focus on policy-based adjustment lending, overshadowing the bank's poverty reduction objectives—although this new focus was rationalized as enabling the bank to address more effectively the relationship between poverty and the policy environment. Critics, however, charged that adjustment lending exacerbated poverty by making governments cut social expenditures. The bank's poverty objective again became a central issue in the late 1980s, and with the end of the Cold War, the bank's poverty agenda came to be increasingly influenced by donor governments, legislatures, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the media, with IDA replenishments being the principal leverage.

At the end of 1991, the bank's staff operational manual affirmed that "sustainable poverty reduction" was the institution's "overarching objective." Externally, poverty reduction became the benchmark by which its performance as a development institution began to be measured. Loan approvals were linked to a country's commitment to poverty reduction. New goals sprang up. Although addressing the problem of inadequate income, or "poverty," remained a central objective, the bank began to focus on the relevance to poverty of a host of other issues: gender equality, the universal right to education, protection or security against hunger, minimum nutrition and health standards, the environment, the right not to be forcibly resettled, the suffering caused by natural disasters and wars, socially vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, the special claim of sub-Saharan Africa, safety nets for the victims of macroeconomic adjustment programs, and the AIDS crisis.

Significantly, the bank began to stress the relationship between political variables in borrowing countries and the impact of those variables on the poor. "Governance," or the quality of government and corruption issues, was now debated openly. Rather than dealing exclusively with governments, the bank began to work with civil society and NGOs in implementing its antipoverty programs. And acknowledging that the fungibility of public resources meant that money channeled to a government might or might not go to its official objective, the bank began to use public expenditure reviews to influence the overall budgetary priorities of borrowing governments. In the new millennium, the bank emerged as the largest external source of financing for programs in education and HIV/AIDS in poor countries.

Have poverty reduction and development been distinct objectives for the bank? For the most part and throughout its history, the bank has seen the promotion of economic growth as its principal means of bringing about poverty reduction. The institution has encouraged such growth as much by financing the expansion of productive capacity as by seeking to improve the way in which capacity is used. Underlying these activities is a strong assumption that growth in output eventually benefits a majority of the population or, at least, increases a nation's capacity to reduce poverty within its borders. Over much of its lifetime, however, the bank has thought that it should and could do better than rely on economic growth and trickle-down effects to help the poor. Growth, it came to believe, could be made more beneficial to poor people by redesigning the geographical, sectoral, factor-mix, and other aspects of production so that the benefits of additional output might accrue more directly to the poor.

It would be tempting to conclude that the bank made almost steady progress in learning about and addressing poverty. However, its agenda and intellectual prognosis have had greater shifts than can be reflected in its lending operations, which have in practice been subject to a number of constraints. For the most part, the principal contribution made by the bank to poverty reduction has been the result of its general support for economic stability and development rather than of its many efforts to bring about more direct poverty alleviation. Although the poor have made up a declining proportion of the world's total population through the bank's life, the institution continues to be strongly criticized for its actions (or inaction) in light of the persisting scale and intensity of global poverty. In part, the bank has itself to blame, for promising far more than it can deliver. But in part, it is also a convenient scapegoat for both borrowing and industrialized countries whose own actions are a much bigger part of the problem.

Devesh Kapur

See also: Globalization and Deindustrialization; U.S. Agency for International Development (AID)

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Y

Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) is an international network of community-based organizations whose stated mission is "to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all" (YMCA). Originally founded to assist and convert the young men flocking into cities in the nineteenth century, the YMCA long emphasized Bible reading rather than antipoverty activism; after a brief spate of social activism, it has become a family-focused community organization. From the 1870s through the 1920s, the YMCA ran programs for working men in tandem with corporate employers. During the Great Depression, local YMCAs provided unemployed men with services such as fitness programs, medical assistance, education, job training, and recreation. During the 1930s and 1940s, the national YMCA tentatively embraced a more liberal stance, though never to the extent the YWCA did. YMCA social welfare activity peaked in the late 1960s and early 1970s, influenced by the Student YMCA, its college organization, which was highly active on social justice issues. Today, besides providing transient low-cost housing, many local YMCAs serve as ecumenical community centers for both sexes. They provide nonprofit day care, programs for underprivileged youth, and reasonably priced fitness facilities. YMCAs began forming in U.S. cities in the 1850s, inspired by the new British YMCA and by American evangelical revivalists. Most YMCA programs focused on keeping men from such vices as alcohol and tobacco, and they increasingly emphasized physical fitness and camping as ways to build rugged, "masculine" men who adhered to Christian values of sobriety and hard work.

The YMCA long avoided taking public stands on social issues, initially resisting the direction of the Social Gospel movement, efforts by concerned members, and activities by some locals. Focused on individual salvation, from 1880 to 1915 it passed no resolutions about public affairs. Some local YMCAs were more active, though; the Cleveland YMCA fought for improved government treatment of underprivileged "delinquent" boys, built public bathhouses in tenement areas, organized public relief for the neediest, and founded the city's first public playground. In 1919, by a narrow margin, the national YMCA adopted the Social Ideals of the Churches, a prominent Social Gospel creed, marking the start of a serious crisis over the YMCA's purpose and techniques. In the 1920s, it faced pressure to embrace social reform both from some prominent YMCA staff members and from an increasingly activist student membership. It began offering summer programs in which students learned about industrial problems by taking jobs in industry and discussing issues with their coworkers.

Up through the 1920s, the YMCA offered extensive programs for working-class men that focused on maintaining what it called a "zone of agreement between the employer and employee" (Hopkins 1951, 478). In 1894, it refused an American Federation of Labor request for classes on labor problems and training for labor leaders. Seeking to build Christian character and to keep workingmen away from radicalism, the YMCA's "industrial" programs offered Bible-centered education, library and gym access, and wholesome recreation. These programs drew hundreds of thousands of men, including, by 1915, 150,000 Catholics. The first and most substantial program targeted transient railroad workers; others served workers in iron, steel, mining, cotton, lumber, and several other industries. Employers initially funded the programs, though member fees paid an increasing proportion of the costs. At some YMCAs, railroad workers changed the programs to suit themselves—insisting, for instance, on playing billiards (against YMCA policy) and contesting companies' use of YMCA facilities to house strikebreakers. At the same time, many workers apparently embraced the YMCA's idealized vision of sober, industrious Christian manhood. Dozens of "colored" YMCAs served working-class Black men; there, the focus on Christian manhood had additional implications. Black urban elites founded YMCAs to challenge racial stereotypes; they hoped that by showing whites African Americans who were model Christian men, they would earn respect and, eventually, equality (they abandoned this approach after World War II). Through the 1920s, the YMCA's industrial programs remained focused on bringing boys and men to Christ. These programs all but disappeared during the 1930s. The YMCA's Industrial Department never was as strongly sympathetic to workers and their movements as that of the YWCA.

The 1930s brought more liberal YMCA rhetoric, and sometimes action. In 1931, it adopted an "open platform" policy committing it to maintain discussion of social issues from all perspectives and to promote education for a greater social justice. Numerous local associations used this policy to fight for civil rights and free speech and to draw underrepresented people into public discussion and education groups. In 1935, abandoning the "zone of agreement" policy of its first five decades, the YMCA created a National Public Affairs Committee to educate and advocate for social justice issues, including better labor and racial conditions. Problems remained: In 1941, only 14 percent of local YMCAs engaged in public affairs education; in 1942, the YMCA's own Black secretaries accused it of severe discrimination in its programs and employment.

In the postwar period, the YMCA suffered something of an identity crisis. Even as it adopted an interracial charter in 1946, many locals balked at racially integrating. Urban whites were moving to suburbs, and suburban YMCAs began focusing on families rather than on single men. Simultaneously, inner-city YMCAs and the Student YMCA forced the national association to face urban poverty and racism; the YMCA responded in the 1960s by supporting civil rights and launching numerous programs to help the poor. In 1972, the YMCA proposed dropping its goal of converting young men in favor of fighting social problems. In order to fund programs for low-income people, it sought federal aid for the first time; it also relaxed its moralizing about drinking, smoking, and profanity in order to make its facilities more broadly welcoming. After the Vietnam War, it returned to an individualistic focus, offering fitness and other self-improvement programs.

Dorothea Browder

See also: African American Migration; Civil Rights Movement; Community Chests; Community-Based Organizations; Employment and Training; Housing Policy; Juvenile Delinquency; Missionaries; Protestant Denominations; Social Gospel; Temperance Movement; Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

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Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

The programs of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) for working-class and poor women, dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, originally emphasized evangelism. A changing membership and broader cultural developments have altered them significantly. Deeply held religious belief motivated many YWCA leaders and members, and at key times, their interpretation of the YWCA's religious goals led them to embrace controversial positions about racial and class issues. Through the nineteenth century, the YWCA was composed of middle-class Protestant women who sought to "save" workingwomen from urban evils. From 1910 through the 1940s, the YWCA facilitated a nationwide workingwomen's movement, assisted immigrant families, and lobbied for labor and civil rights legislation. From midcentury onward, it particularly emphasized racial justice. Today, its mission is "to empower girls and women and to eliminate racism"; it carries out its mission with attention to low-income women and lobbies extensively for related programs and policies. The YWCA is the largest U.S. provider of both nonprofit day care and shelter services to women and their families. It also offers low-income women employment training and placement, domestic violence prevention programs and domestic violence treatment, and financial literacy programs. The YWCA represents more than 2 million girls and women in more than 300 affiliated locals.

Arising in the 1850s in the United States and Britain alongside the YMCA, the YWCA initially brought together well-off evangelical Protestant women concerned about the many women migrating to cities for work. It sought to keep them from prostitution and to bring them to Christ. From the northeastern United States, the movement spread across the country in the 1860s. Early YWCAs provided workingwomen with boarding homes, employment training and placement, domestic science classes, physical education, libraries, and noontime Bible classes in factories. In 1907, two national YWCA movements merged into one, run by a national board.

Around this time, the YWCA began incorporating Social Gospel ideology and drawing in more workingwomen. In 1908, it created an Industrial Department. In 1911, it started publicly advocating for living-wage laws and protective labor laws for women. During World War I, the YWCA provided shelter, recreation, and assistance to more than 300,000 women war workers. After the war, it joined other female reformers and policy intellectuals to convince the U.S. Department of Labor to continue studying women's needs; many YWCA staff members served in the resulting Women's Bureau.

Beginning in the second decade of the twentieth century, tens of thousands of workingwomen and their middle-class allies used the YWCA to build a multiracial, national industrial movement (causing considerable internal turmoil). The YWCA's Industrial Department offered them lobbying power, education, and crucial social and political networks. Locally, workingwomen met weekly in "industrial clubs." Initially a top-down continuation of the YWCA's traditional mission, the clubs changed their goal after members began to run them. At a time when few labor unions admitted women, the clubs provided a place to discuss wages and working conditions and to develop leadership skills that many later used in the labor movement. They also provided exercise, recreation, medical checkups, and sex education classes, including birth control. Attracting staff who were further to the left politically than most YWCA board members, the Industrial Department served as a path into activism for middle-class women. By 1918, more than 800 industrial clubs had sprung up, with more than 30,000 members from various religious backgrounds. Ultimately, membership reached nearly 60,000, and tens of thousands more women attended club meetings without joining. In 1919, a YWCA staff member designed a program to train women labor leaders, offering courses on women in industry and on economic and political history. Immensely popular, the program soon added training in leadership, public speaking, parliamentary procedure, and writing. In 1920, the Industrial Department membership convinced the YWCA National Board to sign on to the Social Ideals of the Churches, a prominent Social Gospel creed, and insisted that it endorse collective bargaining, a controversial stance for many board members. From the 1920s through the 1940s, the YWCA's workingwomen held annual regional and national summer conferences, inviting labor leaders, workingwomen's advocates, theologians, scholars, and health experts to lecture and lead discussions. The conferences drew nearly 1,000 industrial club representatives annually—African American, Asian American, Mexican American, white, and immigrant; unionized and nonunionized; Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish.

Beginning in 1921, the YWCA's Industrial Department also played a central role in founding, staffing, and recruiting for a number of two-month summer schools for working-class women. The schools ran through the 1940s and fostered many labor activists. Each summer, the schools brought together hundreds of workingwomen from a range of backgrounds, occupations, and regions to exchange perspectives; to learn about economics, history, and labor activism; and to play, swim, write and perform plays, and stargaze. Women from YWCA industrial clubs successfully fought to overturn racially exclusive admissions policies at some schools and to include domestic workers in their programs.

African American women constantly pushed the YWCA to live up to its professed Christian embrace of all races, and they did not except programs for workingwomen. In 1915, the YWCA held the first interracial conference ever in the South, in Louisville, Kentucky, to discuss programs for African American women workers. It greatly expanded such programs during World War I, and by 1919, a special secretary oversaw forty-five wartime service and recreation centers serving 12,000 Black women workers. The YWCA's workingwomen initially included African Americans in their national conferences; local and regional gatherings gradually included women of color, and when Japanese American members were interned during World War II, fellow members protested and kept in touch with them. Industrial club members often brought more racially liberal ideas from conferences back to conservative communities. The clubs and conferences welcomed women who performed paid household work—often the only work women of color could find. During a period when labor organizers and labor laws tended to ignore household workers, the YWCA lobbied for them and helped them organize. Industrial clubs' advocacy for household workers caused considerable tension in some local YWCAs, whose middle-class members resented any interference in their own employment practices.

In the postwar period, race became a primary focus for the YWCA. In 1946, it adopted an interracial charter committing it to integrate and to fight racism in the broader society. Although the national association took great strides, some all-white local associations disaffiliated, and others tried to ignore the call to integrate. In 1970, responding to efforts by a group of 500 Black women, the YWCA adopted as its "One Imperative" the elimination of racism "wherever it exists and by any means necessary" (YWCA, "Eliminating Racism"). Dorothy Height, an extremely prominent advocate for African American women, served on the National Board from 1944 to 1977 and was instrumental in YWCA racial justice programs.

Dorothea Browder

See also: African American Migration; Civil Rights Movement; Community-Based Organizations; Employment and Training; Feminisms; Housing Policy; Living-Wage Campaigns; New Left; Protestant Denominations; Service and Domestic Workers; Social Gospel; U.S. Department of Labor; Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

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About the Editors

Gwendolyn Mink is the author of *Welfare's End* and *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State*, which won the Victoria Schuck Book Award from the American Political Science Association.

Alice O'Connor is associate professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her published works include *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* and she is coeditor of *Urban Inequality: Evidence from Four Cities*.