



2005

Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Ian Gough and Geof Wood with Armando Barrientos, Philipa Bevan, Peer Davis, and Graham Room. Reviewed by Kwong-leung Tang.

Kwong-leung Tang
Chinese University of Hong Kong

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw>

 Part of the [International and Area Studies Commons](#), and the [Social Work Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Tang, Kwong-leung (2005) "*Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America.* Ian Gough and Geof Wood with Armando Barrientos, Philipa Bevan, Peer Davis, and Graham Room. Reviewed by Kwong-leung Tang,," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 32 : Iss. 4 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol32/iss4/15>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Social Work at ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.



Among Mexican migrant farm workers for example, traditional values and definitions of masculinity bring about secrecy about homosexual relationships. Familism and situational factors such as drug use and drinking also influence the risk of exposure. Social workers have a responsibility to reach out to the socially excluded. A number of practical suggestions have been made to achieve this social justice goal. For example, in the case of Mexican farm migrants, the following recommendations have been made: information be made available in Spanish, outreach efforts be made gender specific, role playing be incorporated in order to induce social learning, and folk theater such as the Chicano theatre for communication should also be used.

Among African Americans, familial influences still remain strong. This is an immense resource in giving care to AIDS victims and in bringing about harm reduction. In the Delta, in addition to the family, the church also exerts a powerful influence on the values and ideals that people hold. An asset-based approach is proposed for working with and within community. The social networks and informal organizations that are fostered by the church in particular are seen as assets to be utilized in helping the community.

This book is valuable for scholars as well as well practitioners. Scholars will find a number of suggestions pertaining to the theoretical validity of the generalist model in addressing the issues of HIV / AIDS among socially excluded populations. The practitioners will find a number of suggestions, tips and valuable insights necessary to help marginalized AIDS victims. Among helping professions, social workers perhaps have the most useful and pivotal role to play in containing and managing the AIDS pandemic. This book is highly recommended to anyone who is interested in issues of social service delivery to those who suffer from AIDS.

Vijayan K. Pillai

University of Texas at Arlington

Ian Gough and Geof Wood with Armando Barrientos, Philipa Bevan, Peer Davis and Graham Room, *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. \$75.00 hardcover.

A key line of investigation among comparative social policy scholars is the classification of national welfare systems. Their starting point is often Esping-Andersen welfare state regime theory and their end product is replete with the delineation of new and expanded typologies, often with theoretical and empirical justifications. This book from Ian Gough and his colleagues exemplifies this approach. They wish to recast the welfare state regime paradigm, putting forth a middle-range model that facilitates comparative social policy studies in both developed and developing nations.

The book is organized around three sections and a short conclusion. These sections cover theoretical frameworks, regional regimes and regimes in global context. Section one reviews the intellectual and normative foundations of welfare regimes, distinguishing three typologies, namely welfare regimes, informal security regimes and insecurity regimes. Section two looks at welfare regimes in three regions of the world: East Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The final section examines the multi-tiered, international welfare systems, bringing international-level covenants, treaties and agreements into the regime relationship between rights and correlative duties.

Importantly, Gough and his colleagues identify a series of distinctive regimes. Welfare regime are at the apex of their conceptual hierarchy and three distinct regime genres, namely Esping-Andersen's original welfare state regimes, informal security regimes and insecurity regimes are then identified. The authors further contend that within each of these category, there is the possibility of identifying different species. In addition, there are two mixed variants combining informal security elements: the liberal-informal welfare regimes of Latin-America and the productivist welfare regimes of East Asia. Explicitly, the authors identify a moral hierarchy of regimes types on a continuum from insecurity to informal security to formal security.

To date, comparative research has paid little attention to the countries of the developing world. The author's elucidation and application of welfare regimes to the developing world remedies this imbalance, particularly with the addition of the two distinctive concepts of informal security regimes (discussed by Geof Wood in Chapter 2) and insecurity regimes (identified by Philippa

Bevan in Chapter 3). However, these informal security and insecurity regimes are evolving concepts, strong in theoretical discussions but weak on empirical validation. On the other hand, the book blends perspectives from development studies and social policy in an interesting way. There is a rich discussion of welfare development in the developing countries from the angle of development studies (for instance, Latin America by Armando Barrientos in Chapter 4 and Bangladesh by Peter Davis in Chapter 7).

This book is an ambitious undertaking, particularly when it tries to formulate welfare regimes for almost all parts of the world. Rightly, the editors caution that notwithstanding the unifying and converging forces of global capitalism, the variegated and path-dependent patterns of development or lack of development across different zones of the world must be emphasized. Their analysis is bolstered by cluster analysis of welfare outcomes and welfare mixes (i.e. public and private spending on welfare etc.) in Chapter 1, where patterns of similarities and differences are identified. However, the absence of quality comparative longitudinal data for developing countries undermines the efficacy of the statistical analysis. Admittedly, the unevenness of social welfare development and the paucity of reliable empirical data have always hampered research of social policy development in Asia and Africa.

The use of regime types and sub-species in the classification also raises questions about whether the typological approach can capture the complexity of welfare development across nations, particularly when the social, political, cultural and economic factors at work in different parts of the world are so numerous and complex. More importantly, the worsening plights of their poor and socially excluded groups urgently calls for effective ways to improve their conditions. Although the authors talk briefly about the battle for social citizenship, pragmatic and effective policy prescriptions are lacking.

Scholars analyzing events in East Asia will find another weakness in Gough account of the East Asian productivist welfare regime type which pays insufficient attention to indigenous writings and perspectives. Rather surprisingly, some key and early readings on East Asia welfare development are completely missing and indigenous assessments of future welfare pathways are

not appropriately assessed. Thus, when Gough argues that the Asian financial crisis required the state to develop a more autonomous welfare state, this view diverges from the views of many East Asian scholars. Recent developments are hard to reconcile with Gough's observations on welfare pathways in Korea: the South Korea President has not followed through on his promise to set up a poverty alleviation commission, while the pro-business Hong Kong post-colonial government established such a commission in early 2005.

While these shortcomings flaw the text, the book is serious in its intent, provocative in its theoretical discussion and wide ranging in its multi-perspectives. It should not only appeal to academics interested in classification but to those who are concerned with poverty and the problems of promoting human welfare in the developing countries. Additionally, it would make a thought-provoking text for a course on comparative social policy for graduate students in both the developed and developing worlds.

Kwong-leung Tang

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Michael J. Austin (Ed.), *Changing Welfare Services: Case Studies of Local Welfare Reform Programs*. New York: Haworth Press, 2004. \$69.95 hardcover, \$39.95 papercover Robert Jay Dilger et al, *Welfare Reform in West Virginia*. Morgantown, WV: University of West Virginia Press, 2004. \$30.00 papercover.

During the 1990s, the welfare system underwent significant changes. As a result of the 1988 Family Support Act, new educational, job-training and job placement services were introduced and these significantly augmented the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (or AFDC) program which had been in existence since the 1930s. In addition, many states obtained waivers from the federal legislation in order to experiment with a variety of innovations that departed significantly from the entitlement approach that had characterized the AFDC program since its inception. With the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, AFDC was replaced with the new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (or TANF) program, and significant reductions in welfare caseloads around the country were recorded.