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## Review of *The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction*. David Garland. Reviewed by Huibing Ke.

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## Book Reviews

David Garland, *The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction*.  
Oxford University Press (2016), 144 pages, \$11.95 (paperback).

As a professor of public management and teacher of a course on social welfare and social work, I am always looking for a fresh new work on welfare states. This little book, a contribution to the Oxford University Press series, *A Very Short Introduction*, is particularly interesting; despite its brevity, it manages to describe how welfare state systems function, including the UK, the USA, and across the world. Garland argues that far from being a failure or a problem, welfare states are an essential part of modern government. According to Garland, the question of what the welfare state is has not been easy to answer. Thus, the author seeks to answer this question from a variety of different perspectives — historical, academic, purpose, international, personal, and looking forward.

The book is divided into nine chapters. The first is an introductory chapter that presents an overview of the welfare state and puts the subsequent chapters into perspective. Garland proposes three distinctive elements: the welfare state offers a minimal form of poverty relief; a series of social services (including social insurance schemes and public institutions of education); and instruments for macroeconomic management. Garland argues that "... rather than choose between them, we ought to view them as concentric circles of welfare state government, each one forming a structurally integrated element of the whole" (p. 8). It is a peculiar feature of contemporary political orthodoxy that welfare for the rich provokes so little ire, while welfare for the poor is a source for all manner of moral panics and carnivalesque television programming.

The second chapter offers a historical overview of what preceded arrival of the welfare state in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and makes the point that the creation of welfare states was "... the resumption, albeit in a distinctively modern form, of a near-universal pattern that had been pulled apart by the shattering emergence of free-market capitalism" (p.15). In particular, Garland draws our attention to the fact that all states had, to some extent, been concerned with the well-being of their inhabitants. Traces of this genesis are found in modern welfare states.

The following chapters examine the early days of the welfare state. These chapters outline and comment on the birth of the welfare state. Garland places considerable emphasis on the hazards of industrial society, the new social forces and failures of social provision, as well as the new recipes for action, state capacity catalyzing events and coalitions for reform. He appreciates that the welfare state is central to modern state formation. He outlines three specific sets of developments: Welfare States 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0. In Welfare State 1.0, which predominated from the 1940s until the 1980s, the old social risks of sickness, unemployment and old age security in particular were covered for male industrial workers, with allowances given for their female and child dependents. States of this sort generally have "... five institutional sectors: social insurance, social assistance, publicly funded social services, social work and personal social services, and economic governance" (p. 46). At this point, Garland draws on Esping-Andersen's typology to examine the varieties of welfare capitalism that exist. To give a sense of these varieties, Garland describes the welfare state regimes that developed in Sweden, Germany and the USA, each of which exemplifies a different world of welfare. He then gives a passing nod to its limitations: 80 percent of the world's population is left out of Esping-Andersen's account, with China as the most significant omission.

The sixth chapter examines the welfare state's problems after the oil crisis of the 1970s, including problems of management, political challenges and adaptation problems, such as poverty, perverse effects, such as independence, and jeopardizing values, such as the traditional family. However, as Garland argues, the problems of cost containment in the face of rising expectations were real.

Garland then focuses on neoliberalism and Welfare State 2.0, consisting of tax cuts, privatization, financial deregulation, credit expansion, and the deterioration of public services. As the author points out, "The neoliberal assault succeeded in modifying welfare states everywhere, restructuring the programs of WS 1.0 into the more market-oriented forms of WS 2.0 and bringing to an end the remarkable expansion of the post-war decades" (p. 112). It has been social provisions for the poor, increasingly known in the UK as well as the US as 'welfare,' that have been hardest hit.

The eighth chapter focuses on post-industrial transitions and the WS 3.0. Garland sees challenges on the horizon, primarily related to the problem of work in a post-industrial era, including "... long-term joblessness, precarious employment, and mass unemployment" (p. 126). The shape of Welfare State 3.0 is yet to be determined, but it must grapple with the issues brought on by globalization, aging societies, high levels of migration, the increase in the precarity of jobs and the poor quality of jobs, and changes in the ways men and women engage in paid work.

A concluding chapter highlights the importance and indispensability of the welfare state. According to Garland, "The welfare state is ... a fundamental dimension of modern government, absolutely integral to the economic functioning and social health of capitalist societies." (p. 133) At the same time, as he underlines its importance, he recognizes that, "Welfare regimes can take a variety of different forms, and can be more or less effective, but a welfare state of some description is a vital part of any modern nation" (p. 133).

This book is a useful and timely overview of the development of welfare states around the world. It provides a more interesting and vigorous introduction to the topic of welfare states than the vast majority of existing textbooks and includes an excellent guide to further reading. Garland's robustly researched book is invaluable to anyone wishing to gain a comprehensive overview of welfare state. As Esping-Andersen commented on the book, "This slender and yet weighty little book has no rival anywhere. It is the authoritative introduction for anyone remotely interested in the welfare state." It is not only a long overdue reference that fills the gaps in the literature, providing readers with a big picture of the past and current developments,

but will become also a longstanding reference for students and researchers who are interested in the field of social welfare studies and policy research.

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Katherine J. Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. University of Chicago Press (2016), 256 pages, \$30.00 (paperback).

One of the most perplexing questions in current American politics is how a manifestly unqualified candidate such as Donald Trump could have been elected president in 2016. As a point of investigating that question, Katherine J. Cramer's book is an excellent place to start. *The Politics of Resentment* is a worthy addition to a growing category of recent books focusing on the perspective of the so-called white working class, a category also including ethnographic studies by Arlie Hochschild and Justin Gest, more personal works by J.D. Vance and Joan Williams, and a conservative analysis by Charles Murray.

Cramer's research is on Wisconsin and the contentious politics surrounding the politics of Governor Scott Walker, whose successful attacks on public employee unions led to an unsuccessful recall effort spearheaded by liberal and labor forces in the state. Several years before Walker's election in 2010, Kramer, a professor of politics at the University of Wisconsin Madison and a Wisconsin native, began inviting herself to coffee klatches and group breakfasts and lunches to better her understanding of diverse geographic perspectives on politics and government. From a stratified sample of counties across the state, she deployed snowball sampling to find groups of 'ordinary people' that meet regularly. She subsequently revisited all of them at least once, often more frequently. Although her conversational research goes against the positivist biases of mainstream political science, she convincingly argues that her methods yield important insights into the worldview of