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EDUCATION PROBLEMS WITH URBAN MIGRATORY CHILDREN IN CHINA

FEI YAN
University of Oxford
Department of Social Policy & Social Work

In China, due to the Residence Registration System and Segmented Governmental Management of Education, the educational problems with urban migratory children have been overlooked for a long time. The results are, on one hand, these children have no access to Public-Funded School because they are not categorized as local residents; on the other hand the illegal Schools for Migrant Workers' Children exist in many cities. The satisfactory solution to the problem will be a win-win process: the promotion of migratory children's education will not only benefit this minority group and the communities in which they live, but also contribute to the healthy development of the society and country.

Keywords: children, education, China, urban, migrant

In China, as the economy develops, there is an ever-increasing migratory urban population. It includes a considerable proportion of children. Of the approximately 120 million migratory individuals, 2.4-3.6 million are school-age children. Because this floating population is large, highly mobile, and difficult to control, educating migrant children is becoming a prominent problem. How to improve these children's educational environment and integrate them into mainstream education within the context of China's nine-year compulsory education policy is a challenge.

I made contact with these children for about half a year as a social worker. During this period I experienced their hardships and happiness, realized their agonies and expectations. I hope this article can conduct a meaningful exploration of the educational problems facing migratory children. When the problem is recognized and emphasized by more organizations, the solution will be closer.
All citizens of the People’s Republic of China are required to complete nine years of education. However, migrant children are usually excluded from both the rural and urban education systems. This damages the principles of obligation, equality, and comprehensiveness of primary education (Hui Qin, 2001).

According to Article 2 of the Interim Measures on Schooling for Children Among the Floating Population (Chinese National Education Committee, 1998), migratory children are defined as follows: children between the ages of 6 and 14 living with parents or guardians in a temporary location for more than half a year, who have the ability to study. Migrant workers cluster in both rural and urban areas. They live in simple houses and tents, densely packed, with poor sanitary conditions, and often lacking basic safety. More important, the children have different expectations from their parents. Forced to live in the fringe of society, they may feel treated unequally. This could generate resistance to society.

Migratory families frequently have more than one child. The traditional belief in the superiority of boys over girls is deep-rooted, and awareness of birth-control is limited. This leads to larger families. I found that when a family has two or more children, one is usually a boy. Parents will spend most of their money on him and place high expectations on him. Girls will have less attention and opportunity to go to school.

Because compulsory education in China is carried out by local governments and follows a system of top-down administration, the distribution and scale of schools are based on the distribution of permanent residents in the locality. The influx of large numbers of migrant children exerts great pressure on local primary education. The number of planned admissions is greatly exceeded, thus increasing the local financial burden.

Currently, migrant children are admitted into schools in two ways. They either pay normal school fees and enter public schools or they study in unlicensed schools set up for migrant children (Ke Deng, 2001). According to Article 7 of Interim Measures on Schooling for Children among the Floating Population ((Chinese National Education Committee, 1998) migrant children should enter public primary or secondary schools. The Decision of the State Council on Reform and Development of Basic Education (Chinese State Council, 2001) says: “The solution about the reception of compulsory ed-
ucation for migrant children must be emphasized. It should be mainly under the control of local government, in mainly public primary or secondary schools so as to protect, through different ways, the rights of migratory children in receiving compulsory education.”

From the above documents, it can be seen that the education of migrant children is mainly carried out in local schools. However, the reality is, when receiving these children, the schools require many levels of checking and verification, requiring varieties of credentials (e.g. the Three Certificates: employment, health, and temporary residence certification). This potentially raises admission requirements and denies entry for most migrant children.

When migrant children go to public schools, their parents have to pay 500 RMB (60.2 US dollars) in tuition fees each term, plus 1,000 RMB (120.5 US dollars) for selection of the school, and 1,000–30,000 RMB (3614.5 US dollars) as sponsorship. According to statistics from Dr. Han Jailing of the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, the monthly income of the 31,000 migrant families in Beijing averages around 1,000 RMB. About 20 percent of these families get less than 500 RMB per month, while the income of about 43 percent varies between 500 to 1000 RMB. For the majority of migrant families, these fees are impossibly high.

Schools for Migrant Workers’ Children are a response to this situation. They have lower fees (normally 350–500 RMB per term), simple admissions requirements, and are located near migrant communities. However, they have many problems which will be discussed later.

It is more difficult from migrant children to enter secondary than primary schools. Local government regulations require them to return to their hometowns when they reach this level. They would thus have to leave their parents. Furthermore, the local ministries of education do not have the power to set up secondary schools. In many places, therefore, the nine-year compulsory education is really only six years or less.

Migrant workers are mostly engaged in building or trading in markets and are paid very little for their labor. They cannot provide their children with the same educational benefits that normal city residents can. They are often poorly educated themselves. Therefore, while they may wish their children to pursue a
different life from theirs and enjoy a better social status, they are, in my experience, often short-sighted regarding their children's need for education. They are also likely to use physical violence against their children.

The Schools for Migrant Workers' Children are not integrated into the compulsory education system of the country. The fact that they exist in large numbers proves that they are meeting a need. However, this cannot conceal their problems.

Setting up such a school requires limited investment. Simple houses or tents in a field are sufficient. A legal title is not required. They are not subject to the laws and regulations of local government and cannot rely on the control or support of local social service organizations. There are no common standards they must follow.

On the other hand, according to Article 16 in Regulation on Running Schools by Private Persons and Organizations issued in October, 1997 by the National Ministry of Education, those applying to run educational institutes should submit documents to auditing and approving government departments including: 1) an application declaration; 2) the qualifications of applicants; 3) the qualifications of principals, teachers, and other personnel; 4) amount and sources of funding; and 5) regulations and future plans for the institute. Assembling these documents is a complex process, therefore school administrators usually ignore these procedures.

Furthermore, these schools have mediocre equipment, poor faculty, and weak management. Their students usually lack the Three Certificates. Many are in the area illegally. All of these factors make it impossible for schools to obtain legal status.

Because initial investment in the schools is small and little administration is required, a profit can be made even from the modest school fees (350–500 RMB or 36.1 US dollars per term). Fees are sometimes collected monthly and parents can sometimes bargain over the amount. Payment in arrears is generally allowed. This is one reason for their popularity among the migrant population.

Since schools are concerned primarily with profit, they rarely communicate with other schools with which they may be in competition. They are also driven to keep costs low. Housed in aban-
doned storehouses or residences, they have no reading rooms or libraries, no sports facilities, and no laboratories. Even basic equipment such as compasses and protractors is often lacking. The normal conduct of classes is adversely affected.

School administrators are provincial people. The majority have no more than intermediate education and little teaching experience. Some principals are even illiterate. They are far from meeting the standards set out in the *Regulation on Running of Schools by Private Persons* (Chinese National Education Committee, 1997) which requires that principals be of high moral standards, have more than five years teaching experience, and special training in administration.

Administrators select teachers who will be reliable, usually relatives or people from their hometowns. Most have only senior high school or polytechnic backgrounds and no teaching experience. Therefore, they lack teaching certificates. Teachers usually regard this as a temporary job and frequently move on when they find other opportunities. An exception to this pattern is the hiring of retired local teachers. They have skill, knowledge, and experience but are extremely rare.

Teachers in migrant schools do not have access to further training in the city's Teachers' Schools, so they cannot improve their knowledge and skills. They have no supervision and their performance is not evaluated by anyone. Thus, the education they can provide is minimal. They focus on Chinese and mathematics. Music, physical education, art, and vocational subjects are taught in a slapdash manner or completely ignored. Moral education and extra-curricular activities can be totally absent.

The ultimate cause of the problem is the Resident Registration System and the malfunctioning of Segmented Governmental Management of Education. Resident Registration gives citizens different social statuses. Children who do not have a local registered residence cannot enjoy the right to education even if they were born there. Even if they can qualify for local public schools, they will have to pay higher tuition fees because they have no registered local residence.

In the current state of compulsory education, the policy of Segmented Management of Education makes primary education the responsibility of county and village financial departments.
Nine years of education is compulsory and local government must pay for it. But local governments are not required to take any responsibility for migrant children. Since migrant children have no registered residence anywhere, they exist in a vacuum. They are no one's responsibility.

There are both short-term and long-term solutions to this problem. In the short term, public schools could open their doors to migrant children without charging extra fees. Migrant workers have paid taxes and are entitled to equal education for their children. Public schools often have under-utilized facilities and resources, so this should not be a hardship.

The government should become involved in the regulation and management of Schools for Migrant Workers' Children. They should provide support for substandard schools and give better ones legal status. Registration standards may have to be lowered a bit. The overall goal is to improve education for all the nation's children; well-educated citizens are the builders of a promising nation.

Because Segmented Governmental Management of Education encourages local governments to ignore migrants, a funding system should be devised which requires cooperation among units. The hometown of migrant families should contribute to the funding of schools in the migrant centers. Common standards should be established. Student records should be shared. Private donations can be solicited to support migrant schools and provide training for teachers in these schools. Volunteer teaching assistants could also be sought.

Providing migrant children the opportunity to receive compulsory education cannot be done by any Ministry of Education in one region alone. Therefore, a long term goal is establish cooperation and coordination among government departments concerned with public security, planning, finance, personnel, and social security. Laws, policies, and regulations must be made consistent.

The current Residence Registration System must be changed. Fair and equal competition between urban and rural regions should be guaranteed. The interests of the minority groups of farmers in the migratory population must be given special attention. The importance of registered residence should be weakened.
and a new registration system giving equal status to urban and rural residents should be established (Depeng Yu, 2002). This will allow the current schooling conditions of migrant children to be improved and their legal rights to education guaranteed.

The Chinese government should take active responsibility for the education of the entire population. Education should not be affected by geographical differences and social hierarchy.

Humans are selfish in nature, and what is known as kindness and wickedness does not exist. To solve the education problems of migrant children we can rely neither on human kindness—merely expecting support from kind people and organizations—nor on the government alone. The key point is to change selfishness into a system benefitting everyone. "If only mutual fighting and elimination can lead to benefits of self, then humans are worse than monsters; if only mutual helping and support can lead to benefits of self, than humans re better then angels" (Xiaoming Liang, 2002). We cannot allow migrant children to sacrifice their education just for the convenience of controlling the cities. Not just social workers but every person with a sense of responsibility and conscience should play his or her part. Nobody can be just an on-looker.

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This paper is a critical discourse analysis of the usage of the concept of "culture" in social work discourse. The paper argues that "culture" is inscribed as a marker for difference which has largely replaced the categories of race and ethnicity as the preferred trope of minority status. "Culture" is conceived as an objectifiable body of knowledge constituting the legitimate foundation for the building of interventions. But such interventions cannot be considered other than an instrument which reinforces the subjugating paradigm from which it is fashioned. The concept of culture, constructed from within an orthodox, hegemonic discursive paradigm, is deployed as a marker of deficit.

Keywords: culture, culture definition, cultural competence, multiculturalism, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, social work discourse

This paper examines social work's usage of the concept of culture. Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), a neo-Marxist turn to the study of discourse which examines language and its usages to understand their social and political import, this paper investigates the particular ways in which "culture" is inscribed and deployed in social work discourse. In following the tenets of CDA, language and discourse are approached in this study "as the instrument of power and control. . . . as well as the instruments of social construction of reality" (Van Leeuwen, 1993, p. 193). Discourses are understood to be central modes and components of the production, maintenance, and conversely, resistance to
systems of power and inequality; no usage of language can ever be considered neutral, impartial, or a-political acts. This study, consequently, examines the particular meanings social work assigns to “culture,” and analyzes the implications for constructing and utilizing such a signifier. It studies, in other words, what the concept of culture does in the disciplinary discourse.

This study is grounded in the theoretical position that the usage of the concept of culture in social work and the meanings social work assigns to “culture” are profoundly political, biased, and partial inscriptions. “Cultural constructions are always ‘ideological,’ always situated with respect to the forms and modes of power operating in a given time and space” (Ortner, 1998, p. 4). “Culture” is to be understood as a relational demarcator whose usage is an inscription of differential positions and hierarchical identities—a tractable device which can be used to demarcate whatever a particular set of interests dictates should be set apart from something else; included or excluded from the rest. The borders and the contents of “culture,” in other words, are understood to be constructed rather than discovered (Allen, 1996).

For the purposes of this paper, social work discourse on “culture” is defined narrowly as the body of academic or scholarly discussions and expositions on “culture” found in social work publications. A preliminary review of such materials indicated that “culture” appears most often as the primary subject of interest in two related arenas: social work education and social work practice. In both cases, the main problematic is pedagogy—methods for teaching either students or workers to become “culturally competent.” Twelve such works, selected from social work journals including Social Work, Journal of Multicultural Social Work, Journal of Social Work Education, and Child Welfare constitute the admittedly limited sources for generalizations about the disciplinary discourse. The large body of social work literature focusing on issues of “culture” and “cultural sensitivity” in research was omitted from the review to limit the scope of the discussion. The plethora of articles concerning multiculturalism, diversity, and culture in associated fields such as psychology and sociology were excluded for the same reason. In keeping with the intent to examine the general trend of the discussion in the field, no concerted efforts were made to identify works considered seminal, or authors regarded as notable authorities.
A Conceptual Muddle

The concept of culture has taken on increasing significance in the discourse of social work in recent years. As a central construct in discussions of multiculturalism, diversity, social justice, and the correlate issues of minority populations which it is most often employed to denote, “culture” has become a key signifier of difference in our discourse. Its increasing usage as a central indicator for a large portion of the “client” population with whom social work concerns itself has, in other words, inscribed “culture” as a construct which no social work researcher, practitioner, or educator can credibly ignore.

The cultural critic Stuart Hall (1980) asserts that “no single, unproblematic definition of ‘culture’ is to be found here [in various discussions of culture]. The concept remains a complex one—a site of convergent interests, rather than logically or conceptually clarified idea” (p. 522). As the anthropologist Susan Wright noted of the classic review of “culture” in Anthropology, already “By mid-century, Kroeber and Kluckhohn had found 164 definitions in their famous review of what anthropologists meant by culture” (1998, p. 7). Some examples of more recent works attesting to enduring dilemma of the culture concept in Anthropology and elsewhere can be found in Keesing (1974) and his updated version of the same topic in (1994), Matthews (1989), Boggs (2004), and Cochran (1994).

The examination the concept of culture as such a “site of convergent interests”—its salience, its substance, and most importantly, its function as a powerful category of identity—has been interrogated by scholars outside of social work (Abu-Lughod, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Archer, 1985; Bhabha, 1994; Bourdieu, 1991; Brown, 1995; Foucault, 1972; Gramsci, 1985; Stuart Hall & du Gay, 1996; Mitchell, 1995; Rosaldo, 1993; Said, 1994; Young, 1995). The increasing focus on “culture” as a problematic occlusion of the dynamic of power in our society—a displacement from the discourse of other politically significant factors such as race, class, and gender—has also been discussed elsewhere (Gordon & Newfield, 1996; Scott, 1995; Stolcke, 1995).

Despite the ubiquity of its usage, however, neither the meaning nor the significance of the concept of culture has been sufficiently examined in social work. What the sociologist Margaret
Archer (1985) has said of the conceptualization of culture in that discipline, that "it has displayed the weakest analytical development of any key concept" which "remains inordinately vague despite little dispute that it is indeed a core concept" (p. 333) can also be said for social work. The salience of "culture" and the efficacy of multiculturalism, its main paradigmatic support, remain uncontested and under-examined in social work discourse. "Culture," which the critic Raymond Williams (1976) has famously called "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (p. 87), remains a taken-for-granted term in social work, a "naturalized" concept in Marxist terms.

As the historian Hayden White observed, there is exquisite difficulty involved in speaking about or defining with a degree of clarity and precision, any perpetually convoluting and contestable concepts such as culture.

When we seek to make sense of such problematical topics as human nature, culture, society, and history, we never say precisely what we wish to say or mean precisely what we say. Our discourse always tends to slip away from our data towards the structures of consciousness with which we are trying to grasp them; or what amounts to the same thing, the data always resist the coherency of the image which we are trying to fashion them. Moreover, in topics such as these there are always legitimate grounds for differences of opinion as to what they are, how they should be spoken about, and the kinds of knowledge we can have of them. (White, 1978, p. 1)

Anyone who has attempted to sort out that which is due to "culture" and that which is not and anyone who has attempted to delineate one "culture" from another, will recognize the aptness of both Williams' and White's descriptions, and it is, perhaps, the sheer slipperiness of the term that deters social work from examining the construct. If, however, the difficulty of conceptualization and communication were the only issue, social work discourse should resound with discussion and debate about "culture": how it should be conceived and why it should be conceived thus, however clamorous and contentious the resulting discussion may be. But no such debate is evident.

The absence of debate and deliberation cannot easily be attributed to social work's lack of recognition that constructs such
as "culture" are consequential. A field so sensitive to the power of labels, which insists on "serving clients" rather than "helping patients," is obviously aware of the perils of language and its uses. The lack arises, perhaps in part, from social work's conceptualization of the issue as one of measurement rather than premise. Our struggles with the definitional niceties of our basic constructs tend to be limited to the problem of methodology: the difficulty in determining the right variables to represent the category/construct at hand. The assumption appears to be that if we had better tools or methods then we could actually get to, and measure, the thing itself. The essential existence of culture is taken for granted, in other words, and it is only the deficits of our existing methodologies in capturing and measuring culture that we find troublesome; the problem is conceived as the need for epistemological refinement rather than ontological scrutiny.

CDA, on the other hand, sees the examination of the taken-for-granted assumption, the investigation of basic constructs, as the crucial task at hand. Discursive demarcations—the acts of naming, classifying, and categorizing—necessary to all language usage are in themselves considered acts of power which demarcate the center from the periphery, the normal from the deviant, the same from the different, self from the Other. Identities and realities constructed through such discursive practices are, consequently, not only constructed in ways that conceal their manufacture, but are always constructed unequally, legitimating one at the cost of the other. From this perspective on language and discourse, destabilizing basic constructs—interrogating, contesting, and reinscribing entrenched, sedimented, and naturalized assumptions—becomes a political imperative. On this view, a task which we tend to see as an ancillary aggravation to the real work of building interventions, is deemed necessary as a mode of resistance against the marginalizing, exclusionary forces of hegemonic ideologies.

De-naturalizing occluded assumptions, the taken-for-granted context of discourse, is a key task of CDA. That which is uncovered through CDA as both an agent and a product of discursive occlusion is usually defined as ideology (N. Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Ideology's ordinary indiscernibility in discourse is attributed to the functioning of hegemonic power. Cast in the neo-Marxist terminology of Norman Fairclough (1995),
the power to control discourse is seen as the power to sustain particular discursive practices with particular ideological investments in dominance over other alternative (including oppositional) practices. . . . such assumptions are quite generally naturalized, and people are generally unaware of them and of how they are subjected by/to them. (p. 2)

Although most critical discourse analysts inscribe the mode of hegemonic power as "ideology," it can also be understood to be any version of structurally or "culturally" imposed dominating/subjugating power that functions to construct unequal identities—whether based on gender, race, culture, or other inscriptions of power. Kress' (1996) use of Bourdieu's concept of the "habitus" rather than "ideology" to capture the naturalizing dynamic of power which devises and maintains the unequal binary positionalities of the subject/object is an example.

Another thesis central to CDA is that language and discursive practices are not simply reflections of ideology and the manifestation of power, but active agents in the hegemonic process of constructing and maintaining ideology. Rejecting classic structuralisms from orthodox Marxist materialism to Saussurean linguistics and Levi-Straussian anthropology, CDA maintains that discourse is to be understood not as an epiphenomenal product of structural determinants, but as a constitutive mode/function of power relations. "CDA sees discourse—language use in speech and writing—as a form of 'social practice' . . . discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially shaped" (N. Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). Cameron (1997), a feminist scholar of discourse, locates this approach within a postmodernist turn: "whereas sociolinguistics traditionally assumes that people talk the way they do because of who they (already) are, the postmodernist approach suggests that people are who they are because of (among other things) the way they talk" (p. 49).

CDA is posed in part as a critique of conventional discourse analyses whose lack of concern for the role of power in discourse, and whose naïve/hegemonic faith/insistence upon positivistic inquiry is deemed a serious socio-political failure. Though some scholars are more explicit than others in identifying their positions, CDA does locate itself unambiguously on a political terrain. Fairclough's (1995) definition of CDA is a fair description of its topography: "this [CDA] framework is seen here and throughout
as a resource for people who are struggling against domination and oppression in its linguistic forms” (p. 1). Discourse being “always/already political” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 131), the role of the discourse analyst cannot be other than politicized, and for some scholars, even activist in character since the ultimate purpose of CDA, for them is the engendering of social change. “Critical studies of language, Critical Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis have from the beginning had a political project: broadly speaking that of altering inequitable distributions of economic, cultural and political goods in contemporary societies” (Kress, 1996, p. 15). Or in the words of Teun van Dijk (1997):

Analysis, description and theory formation play a role especially in as far as they allow better understanding and critique of social inequality, based on gender, ethnicity, class, origin, religion, language, sexual orientation and other criteria that define differences among people. Their ultimate goal is not only scientific, but also social and political, namely change. (van Dijk, 1997, p. 22).

Discursive Lacunae

Although the concept of culture is central to the reviewed works on cultural competency and much attention is devoted to delineating methods for working “appropriately” or “sensibly” with those who have “culture,” most of the reviewed pieces do not anchor their assertions upon explicitly delineated definitions of “culture.” Most of the articles do not provide any definition at all while the three that do, Liberman (1990), McPhatter (1997), and Christensen (1992), do so only in vague terms. Whether the authors assume a discipline-wide consensus on the definition of “culture,” consider it a matter of common sense understanding obviating the need to use up any of the already scarce space allotted a journal article, or recognize the task as a troublesome one and opt simply to ignore it, the central construct of “culture” is left invariably ill-defined.

In her 1990 article “Culturally sensitive intervention with children and families,” Lieberman, one of the three who do attempt a definition, describes the theory of cultural adaptation rather than giving a straightforward definition of “culture.” She cites a particular childrearing strategy of an African tribal group to make the point that cultural practices develop in response to an
actual or perceived need for survival in a given environment. Guisi women's custom of toting their children on their backs is attributed to their need to keep children away from open cooking fires. The author candidly concedes that there are endless variety of adaptive strategies which the Guisi could have chosen for child safety, "but for reasons of their own, restricting mobility is the adaptation the Guisi came up with" (Lieberman, 1990, p. 102).

The analysis here seems incomplete in two obvious ways. If, for one, the given survival-driven adaptation theory is taken to its logical end, the explanation for the particular choice must be that a host of survival needs working in complex concert determined that no other method but this would do. If such a theory is to be rejected, then surely it is those ineffable factors which fall under the unexamined rubric of "reasons of their own" that constitute the crux of how "culture" develops. In either case, however, an explanation of how "culture" develops is an insufficient substitute for a definition of what "culture" is.

Christensen, in her 1992 article detailing a curriculum for Canadian school of social work, uses a definition attributed to Elaine Pinderhughes. "Culture" in this case is described as "consisting of commonalities around which people have developed values, norms, family styles, social roles, and behaviors, in response to the historical political, economic, and social realities they face" (1992). The latter part of this description traces its roots to the anthropological survival/adaptation theory utilized by Lieberman, and is similarly, a description of the etiology of "culture" rather than a definition of it. The first part of the description, explaining 'culture' as a set of "commonalities" around which values, norms, styles, roles, and behaviors have been constructed, suggests the existence of culture as a kind of meta-phenomenon from which the given laundry list of social configurations arise. As a distinct departure from the commonly espoused idea that culture is those very values, norms, family structures, social roles, etc. rather than something that produces them, the theory is of interest. However, in failing to define what those commonalities are (race? ethnicity? religion? locality?) the description remains as ambiguous as the previous.

In her 1997 article on cultural competence in child welfare, McPhatter cites James Green's (1999) definition that culture is
"those elements of people’s history, tradition, values, and social organizations that become implicitly or explicitly meaningful to the participants . . . in cross-cultural encounters" (p. 265). The most obvious problem with Green’s definition is his employment of the term to define the term—culture as that which becomes meaningful in a cross-cultural encounter. This kind of tautological enterprise is all too common among the authors who tend to write about culture as that which people of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural background have. More importantly, taken out of whatever context it originally appeared in, Green’s definition of culture is an oblique and incomplete dictum. In describing what culture does, rather than what it is, Green’s explanation serves to raise more questions than it answers. Which elements of history, traditions, values, and social organizations constitute culture? How do these discrete elements become transformed, aggregated, as culture? Does the definition imply that culture is transactional in nature? If so, does culture come into existence as an entity or a recognizable phenomenon only within the context of a transaction? Can, culture, in this sense, be said to exist?

Sowers-Hoag and Sandau-Beckler, the authors of “Educating for cultural competence in the generalist curriculum” (1996) do not provide a definition for culture. They do, however, talk about culture as a matter of personal identity and an essential ingredient for individual dignity. Cultural competence is, therefore, described as a “commitment to preserving the dignity of the client by preserving their culture” (p. 39). Since, as will be discussed in later sections of this paper, the pervasive underlying assumption of these works is the notion that culture is that which differentiates minorities, immigrants, and refugees from the rest of society, culture as a signifier of personal dignity and identity can be understood to be true only of minority/immigrant/refugee populations. If culture, characterized as a kind of a personal and community resource, is of significance and relevance only to minority/underprivileged populations, then it must be understood also as a paradoxical measure of deficiency; that which marks one as being less than those without it, and simultaneously, that which one must strive to retain as a buffer against that very weighted differential.

The idea of identity and personal dignity being intrinsically
tied to culture is present also in Lieberman’s piece. Immigration, in so far as it places a person outside of a familiar language and mores, is said to cause in some cases, “a shattered sense of one’s identity” (Lieberman, 1990, p. 104); that countries ravaged by war and political upheaval and the subsequent destruction of cultural institutions that have traditionally “upheld their sense of personal dignity” (p. 105) produce emigrants who experience a cultural crisis as well as a personal one. The given example of the prevailing argument against interracial adoption that “Black babies will ultimately suffer from severe identity problems if they are raised by parents of a different ethnic background,” (p. 105) speaks to the paradoxical use of culture as both deficit and necessity. In citing this particular issue, however, the author also exposes a key conceptual problem common among the reviewed articles. In throwing together the “race” of the babies, the ethnicity of adoptive parents, and the cultures of both as a single undemarcated impediment to successful adoption, Lieberman displays a characteristic conceptual snarl which appears to be at the heart of social work’s discussion of cultural competence.

Though “culture” is much employed—deployed—in these pieces, basic critical analyses interrogating the validity, adequacy, and legitimacy of this plainly meaningful and exceedingly consequential signifier are conspicuously missing. The unimpeachability of “culture” as a sensible signifier for large segments of our client populations appears to be taken as truth established beyond question. Despite these lacunae, the discussions do on the whole provide an abundance of substance from which implicit definitions for culture and the ramifications of their deployment can be inferred. Because of these lacunae, critical consideration of the inscriptions and deployment becomes essential. The point is that the discourse’s lack of transparency and legibility regarding its choices for inscription and deployment highlights the need for critical examination, and opens up the space in which to do so.

Culture as Deficit

In the literature reviewed, “culture” is inscribed unambiguously as a signifier of difference: “a state of enlightened consciousness enables one to connect with culturally different others
at a new level of excitement and joy” (McPhatter, 1997, p. 265); “problems experienced by culturally diverse persons” (Sowers-Hoag & Sandau-Beckler, 1996, p. 38). This difference is written as a particular marker for ethnic minorities and people of color. All of the reviewed articles employ the labels “minority,” “people of color,” and “ethnic” as synonyms for the “culturally different” and the “culturally diverse.” Morelli (1998) states, for example that:

In the United States, our increasing populations of ethnic and racial minorities suffering with severe mental illnesses require culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate mental health services. The multiple facets of work involving culturally diverse individuals with severe mental illness challenge social work faculty to prepare students with salient, useful knowledge and skills. (p. 75)

Lieberman (1990), writes:

*on the average,* it is more likely that a person from a particular culture (let’s say Hispanic) will display more of a particular characteristic—let’s say a tendency to defer to the wishes of others—than a person from another culture where that value is less prevalent. (p. 109)

That “culture” is conflated with race and ethnicity is conceptually and methodologically dubious; that it is invariably equated with minority races and ethnicities is cause for consternation. Deployed as a synonym for race, the traditional demarcator for difference in US society, and ethnicity, the sophisticated multifarious variant of “race,” “culture” functions in this discourse as a referential demarcator measuring the distance these Others stand in relation to the Caucasian mainstream, inscribed in its turn as the “culture-free” norm. The inscription of “difference” begs the question “different from what?” Explicitly stated in some cases, (Pinderhughes, 1997; Mason et al, 1996; McPhatter, 1997; Lieberman, 1990) and implied in other cases (Sowers-Hoag & Sandau-Beckler, 1996; Haynes & Singh, 1992), the “white” mainstream as the point of comparison for difference and divergence is again consistent throughout the reviewed pieces. Lieberman (1990), referring to “Latino values,” states in the most obvious example, that “when it comes to respect for the parents and the management of anger, the differences from Anglos are clear” (p. 108).
Although, this “cultural-sensitivity” accounting of group differences is a distinct improvement on the pernicious tradition of the mono-cultural grand narrative, this distinctively multiculturalist vision is not without problems.

Against the blank, white backdrop of the “culture-free” mainstream, the “cultured” Others are made visible in sharp relief, and this visibility—a sign of separateness and differentiation from the standard—are inscriptions of marginality. Embedded in the conceptualization of culture as difference, in other words, is that of difference conceptualized as deficiency. “Culture” in this arithmetic is a marker for the periphery, a contradictory descriptor for a deficit, since to have “culture,” in this schema, is to be assigned a position subordinate to that of those inscribed as without “culture.” As the anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1993) puts it, “the more power one has, the less culture one enjoys, and the more culture one has, the less power one wields” (p. 202).

“Difference” or “diversity,” linked to the notion of culture in social work discourse does not describe the overall variance among cultures; does not function as a neutral descriptor for heterogeneity, but is a unidirectional identifier for those who are not normative.

In inscribing and deploying “culture” as a discursive device marking out minority populations, the discourse simultaneously defines its opposite. If “culture” and its contents are understood to be socially constructed demarcators, then not only “cultured” minorities, but the “culture-free” majority must be understood as an inconstant identity which is constructed rather than found.

Culture never stands alone but always participates in a conflictual economy acting out the tension between sameness and difference, comparison and differentiation, unity and diversity, cohesion and dispersion, containment and subversion. (Young, 1995, p. 53)

Despite its insistent rhetoric of cultural relativism or multiculturalism purporting the sensibility that cultures are different but equal, social work constructs and deploys the central concept of culture as a device marking simultaneously that which is on the inside of the margins, and that which is outside.

**Culture Reified**

As a measure for gauging difference from the norm, “culture” and cultural borders are assigned in social work discourse
in reductionist terms that allow for enumeration and categorization. "Culture" and cultural attribute are presented as reified characteristics—fixed difference rather than positional divergence—which can be attributed to groups of people, who in turn can be identified by those essential attributes. Such essentialist definitions of culture are usually modified, appended often with caveats asserting that, in fact, "culture" is not static but ever changing, and additionally, that people, being individual, have differing levels of identification or ties to their cultures. These caveats, do not, however, substantively affect the functional conceptualization and deployment of "culture" in the discourse, since the idea of changeability and fluidity are assigned not to the category of "culture" itself, but the specifics of characteristic attributes. Remaining embedded within the caveat is the identification of a static core "culture" which can be modified and differentially adhered to, since variance must center around something, and modification presupposes a core entity which can be modified but remain discernible as itself.

Writers who are attempting to generalize about ethnic cultures typically qualify their descriptions by pointing out that research is limited, that groups are heterogeneous, and that many conclusions are based on informal observations or clinical experience rather than on empirical data (e.g., Uba, 1994). Nevertheless, there appear to be core characteristics that many accounts agree on. (Phinney, 1996, p. 920)

Identification of such core cultural attributes abound in the reviewed literature. Lieberman (1990) writes about the difference between "the quintessentially American value of individualism" (p. 107) and the oft cited Hispanic value of collectivism. Referring to a study conducted to prove this idea, she reports that while "Anglos" were found to value "honesty, sincerity, and moderation" "Hispanics" were found to value "being sensitive to others, loyal, dutiful, and gracious" (p. 170). Woll (1996) advises that "writers such as Sue and Sue, Atkinson, Maryuma, and Matsui, and Bryson and Bardo have clearly articulated that ethnic minorities do not particularly value 'personal insight' or the ability to talk about the deepest and most intimate aspects of one's life" (p. 71). Mason et al. (1996) assert that "people of color are more likely to be in an extended family configuration," and
that another example of the difference between people of color and the "dominant culture" is the "concept of time, which for many people of color is more past- or present-based as opposed to future-oriented for people of European descent" (p. 168).

The multiple slippages evident in Mason's attribution of social practices to the racial designation of "color," and the pairing of the racialized marker of "color" against the geographic (and arguably "cultural") descriptor "European" are problematic conflations which merit examination in themselves (Dyer, 1997). But the point to be made here is that the identification and the preservation of such identification—stereotypes in other words—are made possible by the acceptance of the conceptualization of culture as a category defined by essential, fixable traits. The conceptualization which constructs, inscribes, and naturalizes the dominant as the normative, "culture-free," and "white," also makes possible this reification of "culture" and obstructs the legibility of both positions as constructed distinctions. The seemingly evident connection between the reification of "culture" and the generation of such cultural stereotypes is, to reiterate, kept assiduously occluded. While stereotypes of racial characteristics are vehemently repudiated in social work discourse, stereotypes fashioned from "culture," a term used interchangeably with, and as a descriptor for race, escapes equal censure.

Culture Commodified

What then is the utility of conceptualizing "culture" as a static phenomena which emphasizes the "homogeneity of culture and the imperative of uniform traditions?" (Jayasuriya, 1992, p. 41) If "culture" can be claimed in objective terms, that is, if "culture" is conceptualized as an inventory of set traits or identifiable markers, it can also become classified as a body of knowledge which can be studied, disseminated, and acquired, however complex and difficult those process might be. Such a discourse, furthermore, enables the production of the "cultured" as a "social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 70).

One obvious benefit of this commodification of "culture"—constructing "culture" as a knowable, measurable thing—is that
it allows social work to both study and teach about "culture" and the "cultured." Perhaps more importantly, as an acquirable and transferable body of objectifiable knowledge, "culture" can be reduced to the level of problems for which interventions, to be practiced upon the "cultured" and their problematic differences, can be devised. While interventions to be practiced upon the "raced" and "ethnicized" for their problematic differences may be objectionable to social work, interventions conceived to ameliorate differences attributed to "culture" are, through this conceptual mechanism, made not only possible but palatable.

The difficulties inherent in such assimilative or even acculturative enterprises are freely acknowledged in the literature reviewed. The problem, however, is generally attributed not to the mechanisms of a discursive construction which objectifies "culture," but to constraints in current pedagogical methodologies which are as yet incapable of fully enumerating and enlightening students and practitioners about the great multiplicity of cultures and their various attributes. The problem is conceptualized as our inadequate technology and inadequate commitment to the cause. If there were only sufficient time, funding, institutional, and societal support, social workers could acquire and inculcate in others the requisite body of cultural information. If a truly inspired methodology or technology for researching, acquiring, and disseminating cultural knowledge could be discovered and be sufficiently disseminated, social workers could become competent to deal with the "cultured" and their accompanying cultural issues.

The key problem inherent to the discursive designation of "culture" as an essential, identifiable, knowable entity, is that the central role of power becomes concealed. One of the more interesting consequences of this construction of culture is that it obviates the necessity of structural reform. Although the subject is too complex to discuss here in brief, the individualizing, pathologizing function of this construction is worth further study. If the "cultured" are indeed the exotic, different, deficient human beings, the construction inscribes them as, then the source of the problem lies in their difference and their inability to adapt to the normative society, not vice versa.

What becomes occluded in the discourse is that the exoticiz-
ing, stereotyping constructions of those marked by "culture" as the Other becomes possible only through the objectification inherent in the assigning to "culture" and those marked by "culture" an inventory of essential characteristics; that within this paradigm, the Other, the object of knowledge and intervention, cannot be construed as other than subordinate to its dominant counterpart who occupies the position of the knowing, intervening Subject. In the language of a feminist critic who likens this dichotomy between the dominant subject and the subjugated object, to that between the European and the Oriental:

Orientalism is part of the European identity that defines 'us' versus the non-Europeans. To go further, the studied object becomes another being with regard to whom the studying subject becomes transcendent. Why? Because, unlike the Oriental, the European observer is a true human being. (Hartsock, 1987, p. 546)

Discursive Hegemony

The prototypical argument offered against the viewpoint outlined in this paper is succinctly expressed by historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.: "It is time to adjourn the chat about hegemony. If hegemony were as real as the cultural radicals pretend, Afrocentrism would never have got anywhere" (1991, p. 570). Whether or not Afrocentrism is the actual end product they would promote, both Schlesinger and social work discourse appear to accept as a self-evident truth that the persistence of multiculturalism is evidence of progress. The device of identity politics which built departments of Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies in the academy, and forged the course towards ethnic consciousness, diversity promotion, and cultural relativism in its applied arenas, are accredited by both as measures of an emancipatory teleology, headed steadfastly (or precariously, depending on one's politics) toward the eventual eradication of racial/ethnic/cultural inequities in our society.

The contrasting view raised by this paper, echoing a multidisciplinary plethora of critiques and examinations of the focus on "culture" and the multiculturalist paradigm, is that this fragmenting enterprise may be an essentially convoluting undertaking which not only fails in producing its purported goal of progres-
Culture as Deficit

sive liberation, but actually fortifies the inequities it purports to undo. The point is that social, political, and economic hegemony maintained by an orthodox ideology cannot be deposed by constructions contrived from the confines of that very ideology. In the words of Audre Lorde (1979), "the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house" (p. 486).

Discursive power constructs "truths," defines "realities," and maintains these constructions as devices which simultaneously produce and preserve that power (Foucault, 1977). Social work’s turn to the construct of culture, its posing of multiculturalism as its primary emancipatory modality is, in the language of another critic, a conceptual and methodological dead-end similar to the dilemma of misapplied postmodernism: "If interest in postmodernism is limited to a celebration of the fragmentation of the ‘grand narratives’ of post-enlightenment rationalism, then, for all its intellectual excitement, it remains a profoundly parochial enterprise (Bhabha, 1994, p. 4).

Despite all its good intentions, as long as social work remains bound within the paradigm which celebrates the inscription of "culture" as racialized and ethnicized deficits, its discourse as well as its applications will remain parochial and subjugatory endeavors that assume the guise of change while reinforcing marginalization.

Furthermore, social work’s multiculturalism bolsters this marginalizing paradigm through enlisting its subjugated, less-than-normative, minority clientele as compliant partners in their marginalization. What Gramsci (1992) said about capitalism—that the ruling do so not by manifest coercion but through the production and maintenance of ideas and ideals which obscure the need for contestation and manufacture the willing acquiescence of the ruled—might also be said of our deployment of "culture." Those who are demarcated by the deficit marker of "culture," in other words, accede to the hegemonic claim that the very measures which define them as "cultured" and therefore "deficit" entities, are also the devices for their progressive liberation. Culture-enforcing interventions, in this light, should be problematized as power-obscuring, conciliatory measures that serve to both distract from and occlude out the mechanisms behind both the conceptualization of the problem and their proffered solution.
According to Bourdieu (1977) a hegemonic discourse "delimits the universe of possible discourse" (p. 165). Social Work’s lack of examination key constructs such as "culture," must be problematized.

The mechanics of the orthodoxy is another question entirely too complicated to pursue here. But I will pose two possible threads to follow in answering the question of why social work, despite its avowed mission to oppose and to dismantle such oppression, remains entrenched within the paradigm which might very well enforces it. Perhaps in part it does so because inherent in its mission to mend the consequences of social problems is the professional necessity for determining and enforcing appropriate behavior. That dominant ideology determines that which is "appropriate" should, hopefully, be clear by this juncture in the discussion. This primary imperative cannot but exist in conflict with the other, later call for multiculturalism which claims in essence that all behaviors should be viewed as appropriate: "all values are equally important because whatever occurs within a cultural milieu, can only be appraised and given meaning within that particular cultural context." (Jayasuriya, 1992, p. 40). Social work’s reluctance to examine and expose the tension between these two antithetical disciplinary imperatives, is perhaps understandable. Its existence as a viable profession depends on the maintenance of the paradigm which ensures that such troubling questions become concealed. The reification, or the commodification of culture and cultural traits is necessary to social work’s professionalization project—the turf-claiming, identity-seeking enterprise which attempts to demarcate its incontestable purview apart from and on equal footing with other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, psychiatry, and economics. Social work has claimed culture, particularly the practice of cultural competency, however precarious such a claim may be, as an arena in which it outstrips the competing disciplines. Perhaps more to the point, the reification of culture is maintained, since if social work cannot claim a body of objective, transmissible, and acquirable knowledge from which measurable outcomes and interventions can be built, it also cannot claim the legitimate disciplinary status in the academy it has for so long pursued.
Conclusion

This paper has outlined the position that in social work discourse, “culture” is inscribed as a marker for difference, and that difference, constructed from within an orthodoxic, hegemonic discursive paradigm, is deployed as a marker of deficit. “Culture” has also largely replaced the categories of race and ethnicity as the preferred trope of difference: it is a markedly less controversial indicator than race, a category despite whose continued ubiquity is increasingly denied both conceptual legitimacy and political bona fides. It is also a more profitable device than ethnicity, a descriptor which seems to be used currently as a kind of particularized progeny of “race,” and appears to be particularly useful only when coupled with “culture,” its functional enunciation. The concept of culture has come to characterize the minority, the “person of color.” Additionally, “culture,” as the operationalized measure of racial and ethnic status, is conceived as an objectifiable body of knowledge which can constitute the legitimate foundation for the building of interventions. Such interventions, produced entirely within the conceptual paradigm which constructs “culture” as a deficit marker for subjected populations, cannot be considered other than an instrument which reinforces the subjugating paradigm from which it is fashioned.

Given this proposition that social work, either as a conflicted entity which finds itself in an irresolvable bind between two antithetical imperatives, or as a subjugating body which claims to dismantle hegemony while actively promoting it, fails in achieving its professed goals, what then can be done? What alternative conceptualizations and modes of practice can be adopted? The single suggestion offered by this paper is for social work to take pause from its preoccupation with the production of interventions and critically examine, de-naturalize, its foundational concepts—to excavate and uncover the mechanisms which assemble and perpetuate the predicament that renders its interventions moot. As Henry Louis Gates (1986) put it: “To use contemporary theories of criticism to explicate these modes of inscription is to demystify large and obscure ideological relations and, indeed, theory itself” (p. 592). Or in the words of Cornel West (1990), “demystification
is the most illuminating mode of theoretical inquiry for those who promote the new cultural politics of difference” (West, 1990, p. 589).

Whether such a demystifying process can produce a different kind of discourse, a qualitatively different means of language usage which can be employed by social work to address the needs of the population it serves, without automatically attributing deficiencies to them or the issues that they confront, is difficult to foresee. Such a language, or a method of discourse would have to allow for the de-inscription from “culture” its current encumbrance of subjugation, allowing it to be understood not as a marker for the Other, but as a descriptor for inevitable human variation.

Bhabha contends that:

the transformational value of change lies in the rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One (unitary working class) nor the Other (the politics of gender) but something else besides, which contests the terms and territories of both. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 28)

The one, in the case of social work can be translated as the pre-multiculturalist—Eurocentric and monocultural—discourse and application, and the other as the current multiculturalist discourse and application. The argument made throughout this paper has been that while the former is a pernicious form of bigotry which social work has long struggled to stamp out from its discourse, the latter ideal, conceived usually as the ideal replacement of the first, is also problematic.

Whether a transformation or a change can be instituted to rework, rearticulate, those two subjugating discourses to create a more radical emancipatory discourse and application is difficult to conceive, however necessary it may be. It is clear, however, that the transformative role of contemporary social work must be devised as something fundamentally unlike the role it assumed in adopting its fragmentary multiculturalist ideals. Although the mechanisms for achieving this are far from easy to envision, it is apparent that the initial step must be the task of examination, the demystification and contestation of the current discourse necessary to createthe conceptual space in which alternatives can be posed, tested, and contested.
The manifest censorship imposed by orthodox discourse, the official way of speaking and thinking the world, conceals another, more radical censorship: the overt opposition between “right” opinion and “left” or “wrong” opinion, which delimits the universe of possible discourse, be it legitimate or illegitimate, euphemistic or blasphemous, masks in its turn the fundamental opposition between the universe of things that can be stated, and hence thought, and the universe of that which is taken for granted. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 165)

References


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Culture as Deficit


This paper sketches social workers' understanding of social justice and reliance on Rawls (1971), highlights findings about “hard to employ” welfare recipients facing welfare reform, and articulates the parameters of Rawlsian justice (Rawls, 1999a; 2001) with particular emphasis on people who have been on welfare for long. The paper shows that social workers do not have any space to maneuver in Rawlsian justice to uphold justice for long-term welfare recipients, and welfare reform’s “work first” stipulation does not violate Rawlsian justice. The paper raises some questions about social workers’ continued reliance on Rawls. It suggests social workers update the literature to reflect Rawls’s revised and clarified vision of justice and apply it appropriately.

Keywords: Social justice, long-term welfare recipients, work first, Rawls

In a Theory of Justice and Justice as Fairness: A Restatement, Rawls (1971; 1999a; 2001) conceptualized the meaning of social justice, and laid out the foundation that would allow all citizens to get justice in society. Rawls encapsulated his very elaborate thinking about social justice in two elegant principles. The second principle of justice brings disadvantaged people to the forefront: “social and economic inequalities . . . are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society” (Rawls, 2001, pp. 42–43). Given such strong and clear emphasis on maximizing the well-being of poor people, it is not surprising that social workers unanimously agree that Rawlsian justice is highly suited to furthering our justice concerns related to various people with

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whom we work (Figueira-McDonough, 1993; Reisch, 2002; Reisch and Taylor, 1983; Van Soest, 1994; 1995; Van Soest and Garcia, 2003; Wakefield, 1988a; 1988b; 1998). The question is: Can Rawlsian justice also help social workers to promote justice for long-term welfare recipients in the context of the welfare reform of 1996?

It is important to answer this question for three reasons: a) social workers are committed to bringing about social justice with and for people who are poor, vulnerable, oppressed, and marginalized (NASW, 1999; Reamer, 1998); b) social workers have uniformly and heavily drawn from Rawls (1971) to promote social justice in micro to macro levels of practice; c) social workers critique the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act [PRWORA] (1996, P.L. 104–193), henceforth welfare reform, as unjust because of its sole emphasis on individual responsibility to gain economic self-sufficiency without a concomitant focus on social responsibility to make this possible (Anderson, Halter and Gryzlak, 2004; Long, 2000; Stoesz, 2000; Reisch, 2002; Taylor and Barusch, 2004).

Interestingly however, despite social workers’ reliance on Rawls (1971) to promote justice with varied populations, no social worker has applied Rawlsian justice to critique welfare reform. In light of social workers’ high regard for Rawls to promote social justice for varied problems, and Rawls’s apparently serious concern for delivering justice to poor people, as evidenced through the second principle of justice, it is worth examining whether Rawlsian justice can help us promote social justice as we define it for long-term welfare recipients in this era of welfare reform. Such an examination may help to clarify whether we can continue to rely on Rawls to develop a justification that would be needed by policy makers to attend to our advocacy demands related to long-term welfare recipients.

To this end, this paper briefly sketches social workers’ understanding of social justice and their reliance on Rawls (1971), highlights some recent findings related to long-term welfare recipients in the context of welfare reform, and more fully articulates the main parameter and specific elements of Rawlsian justice (Rawls, 1999a; 2001) as they relate to adults compelled to rely on public assistance for long. Specifically, the paper discusses Rawls’s notion of distributive justice, his two principles of justice, definition
of least advantaged members and "surfers," and distinction between allocative justice and distributive justice. This examination reveals: a) welfare reform with its work first stipulation does not violate Rawlsian justice, and b) there is no space in Rawlsian justice that allows social workers to maneuver it to uphold justice as they define it for long-term welfare recipients. The paper raises questions about social workers' continued reliance on Rawls to promote justice, especially for long-term welfare recipients, when Rawls has revised and clarified his thesis on justice. It suggests social workers update the literature to reflect Rawls's revised position on justice so we may appropriately apply it for our causes.

Social Workers' Views on Social Justice, Rawlsian Social Justice, and Welfare Reform

Social Workers and Social Justice

The NASW Code of Ethics (1999, p. 18) requires social workers to promote social justice so that all people, and particularly poor, vulnerable, oppressed and marginalized people, "have equal access to resources, employment, services, and opportunities that they require to meet their human needs and to develop fully." However, the code does not define social justice, and a review of the social work literature indicates that it's meaning and strategies vary among social workers (Beverly and McSweeney, 1987; Caputo, 2002; Chatterjee and D'Aprix, 2002; Figueira-McDonough, 1993; Reisch, 2002; Saleebey, 1990; Van Soest, 1994; Van Soest and Garcia, 2003; Wakefield, 1998).

Among the available definitions of social justice, lately social workers tend to forward Barker's (1999, p. 451) definition: "an ideal condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, protections, opportunities, obligations, and social benefits." It is possible that this definition is cited most frequently not because it reflects our profession's stance on social justice, but rather because of its conciseness. Whereas Barker's definition emphasizes equality in social, economic, and political spheres, and includes the idea of obligation to acquire justice or benefits, not all social workers share this view. Overall social workers agree social justice entails equality in certain spheres to ascertain fair distribution of socio-economic-political resources for all people
Further, these social workers promote social justice on various grounds such as meeting people’s basic and developmental needs, equal moral worth, redress, egalitarianism, altruism, and gift of citizenship. Last, while there is much discussion on what people need so that there is justice, there is very little discussion about whether people have any obligation to society, such as getting wage employment, to get justice.

Recently, Reisch (2002) has identified five principles of a just society: holding the most vulnerable populations harmless in the distribution of societal resources, mutuality, emphasizing prevention, stressing multiple ways of providing access to services and benefits, and enabling clients and constituencies to define their own situations and contribute to the development and evaluation of solutions. In place of obligation, Reisch promotes the idea of mutuality or individual’s “capacity to repay society for its assistance at some time, in some way” (p. 351). He believes a sense of mutuality would balance individual’s rights and responsibilities and would address welfare reform’s focus on “responsibility, but not agency, over societal obligation” (p. 351). In the context of welfare reform, he sums up his vision of justice for people facing its dire consequences by stating that a just society is one where people “can live decent lives and realize their full human potential. This requires the elimination of those policies that diminish people’s sense of control over their lives . . . expansion of those programs that enable people to exercise personal freedom by removing the fear of economic and physical calamity from their lives and making them feel like integral and valued parts of society” (p. 351).

Social Workers and Rawlsian Social Justice

A review of the social work literature shows that almost all authors at least refer to Rawls (1971), if not also draw on aspects of his justice theory to discuss or advance their justice concerns. First, in relation to libertarian, utilitarian, and egalitarian theories of social justice, social workers unanimously agree that Rawls’s (1971) theory of justice is most suited to our purposes; some prefer Rawlsian justice to others because of its egalitarianism while others favor it to promote distributive justice (Conrad,
Welfare Reform and Rawlsian Social Justice

1988; Figueira-McDonough, 1993; Goldberg, 1992; Longres and Scanlon, 2001; Reisch, 2002; Reisch and Taylor, 1983; Van Soest, 1994; 1995; Wakefield, 1988a; 1998; Wright and Bodnar, 1992). Some draw on Rawls's "difference principle," guarantee of a "social minimum," along with emphasis on "social primary goods" to promote justice in various fields and aspects of social work practice (Beverly and McSweeney, 1987; Figueira-McDonough, 1993; Raber and Conrad, 1999; Reisch and Taylor, 1983; Wakefield, 1988a; Wright and Bodnar, 1992). Second, social workers rely on Rawls to cover the broad spectrum of micro-macro social work justice concerns. For example, some pull the micro-macro divide together to discuss social justice (Reamer, 1998). Others focus more exclusively on clinical social work and discuss psychotherapy with people with mental health problems (Dean, 1998; Swenson, 1998; Wakefield, 1988; 1998); social administration issues related to staff morale in times of agency restructuring as a result of scarce resources (Raber and Conrad, 1999; Reisch and Taylor, 1983); policy-practice issues such as balance of peace and justice (Figuera-McDonough, 1993; Linhorst, 2002; Van Soest, 1995); or social work education related to clinical practice, policy, research, and field education (Conrad 1988; Longres and Scanlon, 2001; Reid and Billups, 1986; Reisch, 2002; Swenson, 1998; Van Soest, 1994; 1995; Wakefield, 1988a; 1988b; 1998).

Third, there is very little critique of Rawlsian justice by social workers, except extremely minimal statements noting that Rawlsian justice maintains the status quo (Reisch and Taylor, 1983), results in minimal distributive justice for poor people (Wakefield, 1988a; 1998), and emphasizes liberty over equality (Reisch, 2002). Although hindsight shows that these criticisms are extremely pertinent, in relation to the space devoted to incorporate his ideas into social work, the brevity of words devoted to these criticisms undermines their significance. Last, one notes that some articles related to social justice do not directly cite Rawls. But, a few social workers are regarded as authorities on social justice, or Rawlsian social justice (Barker, 1999; Beverly and McSweeney, 1987; Saleebey, 1990; Wakefield, 1988a; 1988b; Van Soest, 1994; 1995). Consequently, authors of this last group of articles uniformly cite these stalwarts to define or discuss their social justice concerns or
to refer to Rawlsian justice. So, anyone reading the combined volume of our social justice literature would conclude that recourse to Rawlsian justice would allow us to address all our social justice problems. It was this belief that directed the author to read Rawls (1971; 1999a; 1999b; 2001). The assumption was that although social workers had not applied Rawls to critique welfare reform, a thorough understanding of Rawls may allow us to create a rationale that would enable adults who have been on welfare for long for a variety of micro-macro reasons get justice, instead of living through the daily hardships and humiliations entailed in the oppressive work first and time limit requirements of welfare reform.

Social Workers and Welfare Reform

Welfare reform is the most substantial welfare policy change in America since 1935. A significant change relates to the availability of cash assistance to poor families with children, now known as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or TANF. It requires all adults to be personally responsible for their economic well being by going to work first, irrespective of personal, interpersonal, and structural barriers to work. Cash assistance can only be obtained on a temporary basis. Also, there is a life time limit on the availability of cash assistance. Whereas the limit is five years from the federal government, states can impose their own rules to define both work first and time limit.

Shortly after its enactment, the welfare rolls reduced dramatically in most states as people who could work were able to find jobs in a then booming economy (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1999; Pearce, 2000). Early studies conducted in various states found that about 50 percent to 70 percent of TANF leavers were employed immediately after exiting the system, although their average earning was usually below the poverty level (Acs and Loprest, 2001). However, some leavers found it difficult to retain their temporary, low-skilled jobs, and cycled in and out of welfare (Anderson, Halter, and Gryzlak, 2004; Loprest, 2002), while others found it hard to even get a job (Zedlewski, Nelson, Edin, Koball, Pomper, and Roberts, 2003).

The primary interest of this paper is the last two groups of people, variously termed as hard-to-employ, welfare-to-work, and long-term welfare recipients. Research shows they face nu-
umerous barriers to employment such as inadequate education, job skills and experience; health, mental health, and substance abuse issues; domestic violence; lack of childcare, transportation, and jobs (Anderson et al, 2004; Banerjee, 2002; 2003; Jackson, Tienda, and Huang, 2001; Primus, Rawlings, Larin, and Porter, 1999; Solomon, 2001; Taylor and Barusch, 2004; Zedlewski et al., 2003). They need special assistance to develop their personal capabilities and to address their personal and inter-personal issues; there needs to be investment in social capital development so that the work first requirement can bear fruit for many although not all (Anderson et al., 2004; Banerjee, 2003; Jackson, Tienda, and Huang, 2001; Prince and Austin, 2001; Taylor and Barusch, 2004). Some (Anderson, Halter and Gryzlak, 2004; Taylor and Barusch, 2004) promote a halt to work first and time limit for some long-term welfare recipients arguing that thoughtful investment in human and social capital development is required before such people can strive towards economic self-sufficiency; additionally a few even need a waiver from the work requirement. While there are local programs designed primarily to help long-term welfare recipients find jobs and attend to other personal issues, research also shows that the success rates of these programs vary and tend to be modest because it takes time to bring about the dramatic changes in personal self-efficacy and societal inclusion that are necessary to make employment and economic self-sufficiency as emphasized by welfare reform a sustainable reality (Anderson et al, 2004; Banerjee, 2003; Prince and Austin, 2001; Schorr, 2001; Stoesz, 2000; Taylor and Barusch, 2004).

Social workers criticize welfare reform on various grounds. For example, some (Abramovitz, 1996; Jimenez, 1999; Segal and Kilty, 2003) note that welfare reform is primarily designed to discipline poor women, especially poor black single mothers, and to impose mainstream values of work, marriage, and childbearing. They also express concern about poor women’s inability to escape domestic violence, or harmful relationships with undesirable men because of fewer options. Moreover, critics note that while undoubtedly there is value to work and a work ethic, inability to get or retain a minimum wage job in the secondary labor market is more complicated than mere unwillingness to work and desire to live off welfare benefits as some assume
(Anderson et al., 2004; Bane and Ellwood, 1994; Banerjee, 2003; Schorr, 2001; Segal and Kilty, 2003). Research has shown some of the creative ways through which poor single mothers make ends meet (Edin and Lein, 1997), the hardships they endure as a result of welfare reform’s work first stipulations (Zedlewski et al., 2003), and their reluctance to return to welfare despite job loss yet the need to return not because of calculation but because of desperation (Anderson et al., 2004).

Despite these findings, when welfare reform came up for re-authorization discussion in 2002, President Bush emphasized the drop in welfare rolls as an indicator of its success, and pushed for an even higher percentage of welfare caseload to be involved in work, and even more hours of work than its initial expectations (National Conference of State Legislators, 2002). However, research findings cast doubt on the feasibility of this recommendation. Thus, welfare reform’s implications on hard-to-employ long-term welfare recipients become a social justice concern for social workers because their basic and developmental needs are in jeopardy (Reisch, 2002).

To sum up, bringing about social justice is important for social workers. Some point out that welfare reform is unjust. Many rely on Rawls to promote justice for people. Thus, it is worth examining how Rawlsian justice may help us to promote justice for long-term welfare recipients. Next I devote considerable space to discussing Rawlsian justice because except for Wakefield (1988a; 1988b; 1998), no other social worker has elaborated on the Rawlsian theory of justice. However, Wakefield discusses Rawls’s 1971 theory of justice and that too in the limited context of psychotherapy as a social justice concern. Rawls has twice revised his 1971 theory of justice (Rawls, 1999a; 2001). In his final thesis, Rawls (2001) clarifies that the revised theory is not about applied moral philosophy, but rather it is a political conceptualization of justice.

A Critique of the Parameter and Selected Elements of Rawlsian Distributive Justice

Distributive Justice

Broadly, Rawlsian justice (Rawls, 1971; 1999a; 2001) lays out how political, economic, and social resources are to be distributed
in an ideally just society so that all citizens can get their fair and due share or social justice. In envisioning this society, Rawls assumes: a) all citizens are free and equal, reasonable and rational, and normal and fully cooperating members of a pluralist society, b) the "basic structure" or the government is primarily responsible for creating a just society, and c) co-operation and reciprocity among citizens and institutions are critical for the stability of this just society. Distributive justice results when the government, its citizens, and institutions fulfill their respective duties and obligations.

**Implications of Distributive Justice on Work and Income.** In Rawlsian justice both the government and its citizens involved in various social, economic, and political institutions have their respective roles to play in sharing the benefits and burdens of societal functioning. As such, the government has an obligation to maintain justice through its constitution, legislation, and implementation bodies by accurately following the procedures of his two principles of justice (to be elaborated shortly). Simultaneously, all citizens have a duty to co-operate with the government and its rules. One rule requires that all people contribute their labor and/or capital to producing material goods and services needed by society. Such production takes place in a more or less free market economy because of its efficiency to coordinate demand and supply as well as ability to stabilize the economy.

Thus, citizens' fair and due economic share from society, at least those who need wage employment to make a living is crucially tied to their pay and benefits package which are a predetermined contract between two parties in a market economy. People who depend on wage employment, earn according to their ability, merit, effort, and contribution, as well as what the market is willing to pay for their labor based on demand and supply. Rawls specifies that if some people are more talented and in higher demand because of scarcity, they should be paid more than those who are less talented and more easily and abundantly available. Conversely, people who are unhappy with their wages should enhance their educational and occupational skills to earn more. However, it is important to note that social cooperation, meaning work or wage employment, is a critical ingredient in Rawlsian justice. But Rawls does not require work to be a basic
right, nor does he require the government to have a full employment policy or set a minimum wage standard because these would interfere with the functioning of a more or less free market economy.

Implications of Distributive Justice on Welfare Assistance. Despite Rawls’s preference for a more or less free market economy where there is reasonably full employment, and people cannot be “forced to engage in work that is highly productive; work they do depends on them based on market incentive” (2001, p. 64), he also recognizes this economy’s inability to meet “claims of need” (1999a, p. 84). A valid claim of need arises only when people cooperate with the work requirement, but fail to make an adequate wage to make ends meet, or when they are temporarily unable to work because of ill-health, or due to the seasonal or temporary nature of their jobs. Only under these three circumstances, Rawls requires the government to pay a “social minimum,” or welfare assistance.

Rawls does not address how much or what constitutes the social minimum, but overall it appears that the social minimum should meet working poor people’s needs and fit into the requirements of the second principle of justice. However, he is clear that the social minimum should be less than the value of market wage to retain the incentive for work. He maintains that the legislature should determine how much public revenue ought to be allocated for social minimum by keeping working poor people’s cost of living in perspective with other public expenditure and total public revenue, reflecting standard public policy making practices.

Rawlsian Principles of Justice

Rawls expects the government to adhere to two principles of justice to ensure distributive justice for all. The two principles of justice are:

a) Each person has the same indefeasible claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme of liberties for all.

b) Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: first, they are to be attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second,
they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society (Rawls, 1999a; 2001, p. 42-43).

The first principle is known as the equal liberty principle; it guarantees equal political and civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, assembly, religion, property ownership, and political participation to all citizens. The first part of the second principle is known as the fair equality of opportunity principle; it guarantees equal access to education and work for citizens with equal ability and talent, irrespective of their socio-economic class background. The second part of the second principle is known as the difference principle, and it guarantees that inevitable and desirable socio-economic inequalities are to the maximum advantage of the least advantaged members of society (to be defined later).

Further, Rawls imposes a lexical ordering to these principles, which means that the second principle cannot be given priority over the first principle, and that the fair equality of opportunity principle has precedence over the difference principle. And, it is important to note that Rawls (2001) has demoted the position of the difference principle from being the first part of the second principle to the last part of the second principle (Rawls, 1971).

Critique of the Two Principles of Justice. The principle of equal liberty is very helpful because it treats all citizens as equals, irrespective of their race, gender, class, national origin, religion, ability and so on. But, it is also worth noting that these political and civil freedoms are not anything more than what the American constitution already provides its citizens.

Fair Equality of Opportunity Principle. Because the two-part second principle is so appealing, particularly with regard to poor people, it is important to understand its implications. The fair equality of opportunity principle does not guarantee equal access, but rather it guarantees fair access to work and education because it states that all people with equal ability and talent, irrespective of their class background, must have equal access to education and work. This principle is very helpful for talented poor individuals because they have the same access to education and work as talented rich individuals. But when two persons do not have the same ability they are not required to have the same
access to education or work. However, Rawls recognizes that poor people's background may interfere with their opportunities to realize their abilities and talents. Thus, Rawls recommends, but does not require, that extra resources may be spent on poor children's education, until they finish high school. Disappointingly, however, Rawls does not specify extra resource allocation for remedial education, post-secondary education, or vocational training for poor adults who must work to earn a living. In addition to this major limitation, this noteworthy justice principle with high potential for bettering the life chances of poor children comes with a reciprocity clause attached to the difference principle.

The Difference Principle. The difference principle appears to be the most beneficial principle of justice for poor people because it is not about treating all citizens equally, but rather it is about treating poor people especially so that they can maximally increase their well-being. However, Rawls does not elaborate much on how socio-economic inequalities are to be precisely addressed to make them to the greatest advantage of poor people. Overall, he requires the government, specifically the legislature, to apply the difference principle to set its social and economic policies by comparing various schemes of cooperation and choosing that in which the poorest people fare the best and then apply that scheme to setting the social minimum. Rawls clarifies that even in an ideally just society there will be inequalities in any scheme of cooperation because, as noted earlier, economic distribution takes place via the market place where people earn a living based on their talent-related contributions, and some are naturally more talented. Some point out that the difference principle amounts to trickle down effects (Wakefield, 1988a; 1998), while others point out that even if it betters poor people's economic situation, it can create vast inequalities in power and influence, as well as a distribution can be just even if it violates the difference principle (Nathanson, 1998).

The Reciprocity Clause in the Difference Principle. The difference principle comes with a critically important reciprocity clause, which reflects Rawls's central concern for fairness to all citizens. Rawls explains that, "reciprocity is a moral idea situated between impartiality... on the one side and mutual advantage on the
other," (1971; 1999a; 2001, p. 77), expressing "concern for all members of society" (2001, p. 71). Consequently, the reciprocity clause states that socio-economic inequalities, as well as any extra expenditure on poor children's education, also must benefit "others as well as ourselves . . . even if it uses the idea of maximizing the expectations of the least advantaged, the difference principle is essentially a principle of reciprocity" (Rawls, 2001, p. 64). Thus, while both the fair equality of opportunity principle and the difference principle allow extra expenditure to educate poor children, yet such extra expenditure is permissible only when "more attention to the better endowed (is given) . . . otherwise not" (1999a, pp. 86–87). So, in effect the difference principle creates the illusion of treating poor people especially because the reciprocity clause attached to it takes away this advantage from poor people. Because of ignoring extra-expenditure to remedy poor adults' education and occupational skills in the fair equality of opportunity principle, and the reciprocity clause in the difference principle, it is hard to understand how Rawlsian justice can help poor children and adults get ahead in life. Moreover, it is important to note that although social workers emphasize the difference principle, none mention the reciprocity clause and point out its shortcomings.

Least Advantaged People and Surfers

With regard to the main concern of this paper, that is, the fate of long-term welfare recipients in the context of welfare reform, Rawls's definition of least advantaged people is critically problematic as well. For example, although the American society has more than two classes, Rawls simplifies it by classifying citizens into two groups: most or more advantaged and least or less advantaged. Rawls goes through an elaborate process to identify "the least advantaged" members of society (1971, pp. 95–100; 1999a, pp. 83–86; 2001, pp. 57–60, p. 65, p. 139). However, he finally defines least advantaged people as "those who share with other citizens the basic equal liberties and fair opportunities but have the least income and wealth" (2001, p. 65). In short, working poor people, with minimum income, are the least advantaged members of society.

It is important to note that Rawls is extremely cautious and
highly respectful in venturing to define/identify least advantaged members of society. In *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, he provides a very elaborate explanation about his conceptualization of least advantaged people, stating, “the term ‘the least advantaged’ is not a rigid designator” (2001, p. 59, note #26). Rather, Rawls continues, they are people who are worst off under a particular scheme of cooperation because these same people may not be the worst off in another scheme of cooperation. Thus, he emphasizes that least advantaged people are defined only by their “income and wealth;” they are never identifiable by gender, race, or nationality. While this thoughtful respect is remarkable because it prevents labeling people, it is also problematic because it brackets empirical evidence showing the gender and color of income and wealth (Oliver and Shapiro, 2000; Schorr, 2001; U. S. Census Bureau, 2000).

“Surfers”. Rawls writes very little about people who do not work. Pieced together, it appears he classifies non-working poor citizens as “surfers,” or adults who are able but unwilling to work. With regard to people on welfare, Rawls’s discussion and words are worth noting. In the context of work, he asks, “Are the least advantaged, then, those who live on welfare and surf all day off Malibu?” (2001, p. 179). He continues and answers that if so, then, “surfers must somehow support themselves.” Rawls does not support public assistance for adults who do not contribute to material production under any circumstance. He views “surfers” or long-term welfare recipients as able but unwilling to work; he does not discuss people’s inability to work because he views all citizens as normal, rational, and cooperating with a social system. In Rawls'ian justice, it is unfair for people to live off the labor of others. Thus, non-working poor citizens who rely on welfare are unworthy poor, marginalized in the purview of Rawls'ian justice.

*Grounds for Distributive Justice*

In light of social workers’ high regard for Rawls, it is worth exploring if there is any concession in Rawlsian justice for non-working poor people. A thorough reading (Rawls, 1999a; 2001) indicates that only when people cooperate with the work requirement of his revised political conception of justice are they entitled
to distributive justice. However, moral worth, redress, and need are not grounds for his version of distributive social justice. Rawls notes that he does not question the concept of moral worth. In fact, when people conscientiously try and work but fail to make ends meet, they deserve the social minimum, but sheer moral worth of people does not qualify as a basis for justice. This is so because in a pluralist society there are varying ideas about what constitutes good character and action, and as such there cannot be any universal agreement on moral worth. Also, Rawls considers redress in his theory of justice, via the difference principle, but clarifies, "the difference principle is not, the principle of redress. It does not require society to move in the direction of an equality of natural assets. We are not to try to even out handicaps as if all were expected to compete on a fair basis in the same race" (Rawls, 1968/1999b, p. 166; 1999a; 2001).

Allocative and Distributive Justice Clarified. Last, he also rules out need of any kind, whether basic or developmental, but accepts "claims of need" arising out of work effort, and requires that a social minimum be paid, as already noted. In the context of need, it is instructive to note Rawls’s clear and emphatic distinction between allocative and distributive justice. He explains that allocative justice is concerned with the distribution of "a given collection of goods" which is to be "divided among definite individuals with known desires and needs" (1999a, p. 77), and "who have not cooperated in any way to provide those commodities" (2001, p. 50). Rawls states that because the collection of goods that is to be allocated is not "the product of these individuals," they do not have any "prior claim" to the goods, and the collection of goods can be distributed according to needs or desires (2001, p. 50). Rawls strongly rejects allocative justice in his scheme of distributive justice and reiterates this position in his final thesis on justice stating, "We reject the idea of allocative justice as incompatible with the fundamental idea by which justice as fairness is organized" (2001, p.50). He rejects allocative justice primarily because it contradicts two of his basic assumptions about citizens and the government: a) "society as a fair system of social cooperation over time" where citizens work together "to produce the social resources on which their claims are made"
(Rawls, 2001, p. 50), and b) "reciprocity," an auxiliary idea in the difference principle, wherein, inequalities benefit "others as well as ourselves" (Rawls, 2001, p. 64).

Summary and Discussion

An Unexpected Finding: Welfare Reform Mirrors Rawlsian Justice

Clearly, social workers have no room to maneuver in Rawlsian justice to help adults who are long-term welfare recipients get justice as they envision it in the context of welfare reform. In fact, certain elements of welfare reform mirror Rawlsian justice, and as such welfare reform is not unjust. First, Rawlsian justice would condone the work first stipulation of welfare reform because work or wage employment in a market economy is the critical obligation of least advantaged people to reap the benefits of Rawlsian distributive justice. Second, welfare reform and Rawlsian justice are similar in that both view non-working poor adults as surfers—able but unwilling to work and outside the domain of distributive justice. Rawls' highly respectful and thoughtful, as well as equally restrictive definition of least advantaged people as any working poor citizen, non-identifiable by gender, race, ethnicity, marital status, education, occupation, location, and history of poverty, becomes a pivotal ground for disqualifying millions of non-working poor citizens from accessing justice both in Rawlsian justice and in welfare reform.

Third, both welfare reform and the second principle of Rawlsian justice with its reciprocity clause are similar in that neither has space for any extra expenditure to address long-term welfare recipients' needs such as remedial education, vocational training, higher education, or to attend to other personal, inter-personal, and structural barriers that impede their ability to work. Such extra expenditure would amount to allocative justice, which is barred along with moral worth, need, and redress as grounds for acquiring justice in Rawlsian justice. Thus, all citizens must first contribute whatever they can to the material production of society to access justice. Accordingly when citizens work but fail to make ends meet, they are deserving of welfare assistance in both Rawlsian justice and in welfare reform. Last, the federal five year lifetime limit on welfare assistance eligibility, or less than five
years as some states have stipulated, is different from Rawlsian justice in that the latter does not have any time limit on availability of the social minimum. In Rawlsian justice it is possible for adults to work on any available menial job and simultaneously rely on welfare assistance to bridge the gap between income and expenses throughout their lives. Despite this difference the underlying message in either of the scenarios—welfare reform or Rawlsian justice—is identical: work no matter what the job circumstances demand of you or else figure out a way to survive by yourself. In sum, Rawlsian justice and welfare reform both fail to deliver justice as viewed and promoted by social workers to non-working poor adults who are on welfare for long.

Discussion

Given social workers' historic reliance on Rawls to promote justice, it is surprising to find that Rawlsian justice cannot help us intervene on behalf of long-term welfare recipients to promote justice as we understand it. This finding raises many questions among which two are: a) why does Rawlsian justice continue to be extolled in our literature as a viable means for promoting justice for poor people in general and people facing welfare reform in particular (Reisch, 2002), when Rawls's revised and clarified vision of justice differs from our vision of justice? b) in light of this new understanding of Rawlsian justice, what can we do to help long-term welfare recipients get justice as we conceptualize it?

A possible answer to the first question may be attributed to the difficulties in reading Rawls first hand and understanding his extremely elaborate explication of social justice. Some social work scholars clearly understand Rawls's 1971 theory of justice and critique it appropriately (Wakefield, 1988a; 1988b; Reisch, 2002; Reisch and Taylor, 1983), as well as apply it cautiously (Wakefield, 1988a). However, the brevity of their criticism and cautions about Rawlsian justice undermines the seriousness of their comments when they also devote extensive space to apply it to social work problems. Thus, it may be hard for social workers in general to understand the implication of these brief comments. So it is likely we apply Rawls to our varied problems because some social work stalwarts have promoted Rawls in our social justice literature. And new comers to the social work justice literature may inad-
vertently believe that Rawlsian justice provides answers to all our issues, as this author mistakenly did. If this answer is plausible, it implies that we need to update our social justice literature to reflect Rawls's revised thinking about justice and promote Rawls for our purposes only when applicable, and perhaps with even more caution. It needs to be noted that the revised Rawlsian justice is not applicable to adults who do not work, as well as people with chronic and persistent mental illness, health issues, and substance abuse issue who may not work.

On the other hand, some social workers may believe that Rawls's (2001) revised political conceptualization of justice which requires all adults to work in order to access social justice may appear harsh for some social workers, but it is still acceptable to them. Such a scenario may lead to three camps among social workers: pro-Rawls, against-Rawls, and the go-between Rawlsians. The pro-Rawlsians may then more clearly articulate work preparation and work obligation as required grounds for getting justice and push their agenda accordingly. Those who find themselves against the revised Rawlsian theory of justice may find it harsh because social workers have and continue to promote justice on grounds of need, moral worth, redress and distributive justice. Some of them, such as Reisch (2002) even in his most recent incorporation of obligation to society, represented as mutuality, merely refers to peoples' "capacity to repay . . . society . . . at some time, in some way." This may be too soft an understanding of reciprocity from the pro-Rawlsian social workers' perspective because Rawlsian reciprocity requires hard work from adults to gain access to distributive justice or welfare. Thus, this second group may need to re-think their future promotion of Rawls in the social work literature.

The go-between Rawlsian social workers may take a strategic position where they may subscribe to the overall notion of Rawlsian distributive justice in general but prefer to forsake Rawls to promote justice for long-term welfare recipients. In light of the centrality of work obligation to acquire justice in mainstream politics, and our professional acknowledgement of the value of work in people's lives, they may intervene in the welfare reform debate, as well as in their varied capacities help long-term welfare recipients become more capable of working. For example, in the
welfare reform debate they can promote the idea of redress for cumulative capability deprivation as a basis for rethinking work first and time limit for all long-term welfare recipients. They can substantiate with research findings that long-term welfare recipients want to work, but need much help to do so (Anderson et al, 2004; Banerjee, 2003; Taylor and Barusch, 2004). If it is essential to cite justice theorists to strengthen their advocacy argument, they can draw on other contemporary and well-regarded justice theorists whose views are more on par with our social justice concerns such as Barry (2002), Nussbaum (2000), Sen, (1999) and Young (2000).

Drawing from these welfare justice theorists' base, they could strengthen their arguments about social justice for long-term welfare recipients and argue that there are many more diversities and capability deprivations among poor people than what Rawlsian justice or welfare reform acknowledges. Thus, all citizens may have equal opportunities for education and work, but people who are long-term welfare recipients lack the institutional conditions and resource supports to allow them to acquire these opportunities, and face many more personal, inter-personal, and structural barriers to capability development than others (Anderson et al, 2004; Taylor and Barusch, 2004). Thus, it is unjust to expect personal responsibility for work when society and life's circumstances outside of one's control do not permit some people, especially people of color and particularly women, to develop their capabilities. They can point out that the capabilities that a person has depend to a large extent on social arrangements, and as such the government and larger society cannot escape this responsibility. Instead of marginalizing or stigmatizing non-working poor adults even further by setting them outside the scope of justice, they need to be included in the main text of justice.

To accomplish this latter task, they can strategize and work more effectively in various micro-macro interventions towards enhancing the capabilities and sense of empowerment of people who are long-term welfare recipients. Also, they can strategize and collaborate with inter-disciplinary personnel to address such people's needs and enhance their well-being. Another strategy can focus on greater social work involvement in the world of poor people's education and work—vocational education, wage
employment, self-employment, income packaging. In the long run, these varied strategies together can help poor people become more capable individuals, escape the label of being long-term welfare recipients, and allow them to thrive in their chosen fields of work and life.

References


Using the 2001–2002 California Workforce Survey, this paper examines the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers. I attribute the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers to differentials in their human capital. However, data analyses indicate that classical human capital indicators such as education, job training, and work experiences are not sufficient to account for the observed income gap between Hispanics and Caucasians. Instead, English fluency is a highly valuable aspect of human capital for Hispanic workers. English non-fluency, along with less education, job training, and work experiences explain why Hispanic workers earn less than Caucasian workers. However, variations in English fluency do not affect the incomes of Asian workers. Those findings suggest that English non-fluency is a unique source of income penalty for Hispanic workers. It may be attributed to stereotyping by employers.

Keywords: Hispanic, income, workers, non-fluency, stereotyping

Introduction

This research focuses on workplace inequality by investigating sources of the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers. For several decades, researchers on ascriptive workplace inequalities has made significant contributions to our understanding of differentials in job training attainment (Knoke and Ishio 1998; Caputo 2002), pay raises (Kaufman 1983; Browne et al. 2001), job authority attainment (Smith 1997), and work dissolution (Elvira and Zatzick 2002). However, the majority of those studies have focused on two groups: Caucasians and
African Americans. Indeed, in much of the literature on workplace inequality, minority is synonymous with African American. However, the turn to the new millennium has witnessed drastic changes in the American demographic landscape. The 2000 U.S. Census Bureau reported that Hispanics (12.5 percent) replaced African Americans (12.3 percent) to become the largest minority group in the nation (http://www.census.gov/census2000/states/us.html). The newly released statistical yearbook of the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) reported that Mexico is among the top five countries sending immigrants to the U.S. in recent years, along with India, People's Republic of China, the Philippines, and Vietnam (http://www.bcis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/index.htm). The U.S. Census Bureau projected that the Hispanic and Asian populations will double in the next 50 years, in contrast to a slight increase of the African American population and a decline in the Caucasian population (http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/natproj.html). Indeed, a mosaic is emerging in the American racial landscape, yet research addressing racial discrepancies between Hispanic and Caucasian workers in crucial labor outcomes is scarce.

Decades of studies on workplace ascriptive inequalities have accumulated a large body of knowledge on the causal factors of those inequalities. Early economic studies focused on both sides of labor demand and supply. On the demand side, the observed wage gap between Caucasians and African Americans was due to employer's "discriminatory taste" (Becker 1957) or employer's "statistical discrimination" (Thurow 1975). On the supply side, classical human capital theory states that the low level or low quality of education received by African Americans explains why African Americans make less money than Caucasians (Becker 1993). Later sociological studies report that job and workplace segregations and the devaluation of female and minority jobs are to be blamed for the resulting wage gaps between men and women, Caucasians and non-Caucasians (England 1992; Tomaskovic-Devey and Skaggs 1999; Tomaskovic-Devey and Skaggs 2002).

However, because most studies on racial inequalities have focused on Caucasian-African comparisons, results and models
from those studies are not readily applicable to explain differentials between Caucasians and Hispanics. For example, English fluency has been found as one of the most significant factors that explains the income gap (McManus, Gould, and Welch 1983) and occupational differences between Hispanic and Caucasian workers (Stolzenberg 1990). However conventional studies comparing Caucasian and African American workers have paid scant attention to the issue of language proficiency, as a vast majority of Caucasians and African Americans are native-English speakers. This study uses data from the 2001–2002 California Workforce Survey to re-investigate the roots of the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers. I attempt to understand this income gap with insights from human capital theory.

Human Capital Theory and Income Inequalities

Human capital theorists stipulate that human capital, like other forms of capital, results from long term deliberate investments in areas such as education, job training and health and produces considerable returns to its carriers (Schultz 1961). In several treatises, Mincer (1962; 1991; 1994) estimates income returns to job training. Although the exact figures vary depending on data, methodology, and time frame, job training recipients are guaranteed returns that commonly are expressed as higher income in the post-training session. Noble Prize laureate Gary Becker (1993) also analyzed how firms react differently depending on the consequences of job training.

Several empirical studies have fruitfully applied human capital theory to explain gender and racial differences in salaries and training attainment (Duncan and Hoffman 1979; Olsen and Sexton 1996; Barron and Black 1993; Altonji and Spletzer 1991). Two aspects of human capital are used to explain income differentials between men and women, and between Caucasians and minorities. The first aspect concerns the quantity of human capital; women and minorities receive lower pay than their Caucasian male coworkers because women and minorities have a lower level of human capital stocks than do Caucasian male workers. Women and minorities complete less training, which explains why their income is lower than that of Caucasian men (Duncan
Another study reports that differences in training duration explained 45 percent of the income difference between men and women in the post-training session (Barron, Black and Loewenstein 1993).

The second aspect concerns the quality of human capital; women and minorities receive lower returns from their human capital investment than do Caucasian male workers because the quality of their human capital is relatively lower (Becker 1993: 195-204). However, empirical evidence diverges on the quality argument. Some scholars reported that the quality of schooling African Americans receive is lower than that received by Caucasians (Card and Krueger 1998; Farkas 1996). But others found that industrial productivity is higher in industries with a high proportion of African American employment (Galle et al. 1985), indicating a disjuncture between quality of schooling and productivity. In fact, the very observation that minorities receive a lower rate of return from their human capital investment, despite the lack of conclusive evidence indicative of their low quality of education or productivity consequences of educational quality, has become striking evidence of employment discrimination against minorities (Finkelstein and Levin 1990).

English Proficiency: A Crucial Component of Human Capital

Earlier human capital scholars stressed the pivotal roles of education, job training, and work experience in affecting income. Because a vast majority of Caucasian and African American workers are native English speakers, classic studies on Caucasian-African American employment inequalities do not include English language proficiency as one of the explanatory factors (Siegel 1965; Duncan 1969). However, English language proficiency has taken on increasing importance due to demographic changes over the past three decades. Since the 1970s, American workplaces have hired increasing numbers of Hispanic and Asian workers, most of whom are not native English speakers (Veltman 1990). Studies on those new immigrants identified a unique source of labor market penalty: English language deficiency (Chiswick 1978; 1979). One study documented that low incomes for minority groups are a consequence of their low English fluency, along with other human
capital factors such as low educational attainment and job training (McManus, Gould, and Welch 1983).

To the extent that language proficiency facilitates communication with others in the workplaces, speaking the majority language can be considered as an integral component of workers’ human capital. Accurate language communication is essential to customer satisfaction, coordination with coworkers, and learning what to do and how to do a job (Stolzenberg and Tienda 1997). In contrast, language non-fluency handicaps communications, limiting the range of people with whom workers can provide services or coordinate work. Language non-fluency has been found to reduce not only job opportunities in general, but also chances of obtaining high-paying jobs for which workers are otherwise qualified (Devine and Kiefer 1991). Studies of an economic ethnic enclave found that workers’ lack of English skills often led them to obtain jobs in economic sectors that use languages other than English (Portes and Manning 1987; Robinson 1988). But those non-English sectors often have harsh work environments, hire small numbers of workers, and offer low wages (Sanders and Nee 1987). Therefore, gaining language proficiency in the majority language is an indispensable component of immigrant workers’ human capital because fluency in the majority language can increase their potential incomes and outputs (Mora, 1998).

Workplace Discrimination and Segregations: Other Sources of Income Penalty for Minority Workers

Besides the human capital model, workplace discrimination is another major source of income gaps between predominant Caucasian and minority groups. In this vein, comparable worth models were developed to ascertain how organizations create discriminatory job structures that sort women and minorities into minority-dominated and women-dominated jobs (England 1992). As a result, those female- and minority-jobs normally require less training and schooling, are easily replaced, less likely to lead to promotion and have lower pay than those jobs whose incumbents are dominantly Caucasian males. A recent study reported that the source of the gender gap in income is that women are disproportionately placed, largely by Caucasian male employees allied
with employers, in jobs that require less skill, involve lower task complexity, and entail low job authority (Tomaskovic-Devey and Skaggs 1999). Scholars also have argued for an eclectic approach that simultaneously accounts for individual, job, and organizational variations in assessing training differentials between men and women (Knoke and Ishio 1998), and employment benefits (Kalleberg et al 2000).

Although employment discrimination and job segregation are not the focus of this study, the above discussion indicates that job-level and workplace-level variations may mediate racial income differences. For example, if women and minorities are disproportionately congregated in less desirable positions or workplaces, which in turn provide low incomes to their incumbents or workers, controlling for job and workplace variations would erase the significant income gap between minority and Caucasian workers. Therefore, this study also regresses income on races along with mediating independent variables at the job and workplace levels. The main purpose of including job and workplace independent variables is to identify the original source that explains the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers. By comparing and contrasting job and workplace models with human capital models, I attempt to spot the roots of the income gap between Hispanics and Caucasian workers.

What Produces Incomes Disparities: An Empirical Assessment

The orthodox human capital model has been used to explain a large portion of income differentials between Caucasian and minority groups. Particular to Hispanic workers, English fluency was identified as one of the main human capital factors that explain why Hispanics have lower occupational status and income than do Caucasian workers (Mora 1998; Davila and Mora 2000; Carliner 1981; McManus et al. 1983; Grenier 1984; Stolzenberg 1990; Stolzenberg and Tienda 1997). But the need to overcome the language barrier for career development is not unique to Hispanic workers; other groups, particularly Asian immigrants, face a similar obstacle (Schmid 2003). Therefore, in light of human capital theory, English fluency, much like other conventional human capital factors such as education, training, and work ex-
Penalty for Hispanic Workers

experience, should significantly increase incomes for Asian and Hispanic workers, and thus mitigate income gaps between them and Caucasian workers. This discussion leads to the following two testable hypotheses:

H₁: The average incomes for Hispanic and Asian workers are significantly lower than that for Caucasian workers.

H₂: The income-gap between Caucasian and Hispanics/Asian workers can be explained by the difference in their stock of Human capital factors including English proficiency, education, training, and work experiences.

Data and Measures

The dataset used in my analyses is the 2001–2002 California Workforce Survey (Data Archive & Technical Assistance, University of California at Berkeley). The survey was designed to assess working conditions in California and to measure the extent to which various groups of workers differ in regard to wages, hours, benefits, and work control in their working environment. The survey research center at the University of California, Berkeley conducted telephone interviews to California residential households during 2001–2002. A technique called list-assisted, random-digit sampling was used to take advantage of large computer databases of telephone directory information. Three steps were applied to eliminate business and non-working phone numbers. Telephone interviews of the eligible residential households produced a sample with 1404 respondents (For details on the survey design, see 2001-2002 California Workforce Survey Codebook). Among the total respondents, 1045 were working full-time or part-time during the survey period. Because this study investigates work wage differentials among multiple racial groups, these 1045 workers comprise the final sample for my statistical analyses.

Income is the dependent variable, measured with the question "how much do you earn per hour/month/year at this job?" Because respondents provided information on the number of hours they work per week, I first computed weekly wage for those who reported their hourly wage by multiplying their hourly rate with number of hours they work per week. I then computed their annual salary by multiplying their weekly rate by 52. Thus the
dependent variable is respondent’s annual income. I transformed the personal income into the nature log form to stabilize sample variance and reduce heteroscedasticity (Allison 1999: 128).

*Race* is the crucial independent variable, whose relationship with income is the main focus of this paper. The survey asked respondents “Which of the following best describes your race or ethnic group?” The original coding has six racial groups: Caucasians (620), African-Americans (68), Hispanics (246), Asians (69), Native Americans (17) and Middle Eastern (9). Because the numbers for Native Americans and Middle Easterners are too small to warranty a significant statistical inference, I created a new classification that contains Caucasians (620), African-Americans (68), Hispanics (246), Asians (69) and others (26) including Native Americans and Middle Easterners.

I also acknowledge that Hispanic cannot be a valid racial group as Hispanics have many phenotypes and racial identifications, ranging from “white” to “black” (Bailey 2001; Fergus 2003). But Hispanic is a socially identifiable group that is constructed by their national origins, length of residency, and language knowledge and use (Portes and Macleod 1996).

*Human capital* is an important independent variable that may mediates the relation between race and income. It includes education, work experiences, employer-paid job training, worker-paid job training, and language ability. To capture the nonlinearity in the monetary returns to education, I reclassified education into five dummy variables: less than high school, high school, some college, BA, and postgraduate level. Work experience is measured with the number of years respondents have worked for the current employer. Employer-paid and worker-paid training is measured respectively with “did you participate in any employer-paid training in the last 3 years? (yes = 1, no = 0)” and “did you ever participate in a training not paid by your employer in the last 3 years (yes = 1, no = 0)?”

The survey did not directly ask about language fluency. Instead, it asked respondents to report the language used in their workplace and language used in their homes. About 93 percent of respondents report that English is the main language in their workplaces. The rest of the respondents report that Spanish (6 percent) and other languages (1 percent) are the main language used
in their workplaces. In addition, the survey asked respondents to report language used in their homes. About 85 percent report speaking English, 11 percent speak Spanish, and the remaining 4 percent speak a variety of different languages including Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian. Because this paper focuses on language proficiency in English, I focused on those whose workplace language is English and created three different groups based on their home languages. The three groups are those who speak English at home, those who speak Spanish at home, and those who speak other languages at home. I reasonably infer that those speaking English at home and work have better command of English at work than do those speaking Spanish and other languages at home but speaking English at work.

The control variables include individual characteristics such as age and sex, job level characteristics such as unionization, job supervision, full time work, and occupational classification into seven major groups, and workplace characteristics such as independent workplace, size of workplace and industrial classification into eight main groups.

Findings

Table 1 compares average income levels among the five racial groups. It shows that an income penalty associated with being a minority is pervasive in contemporary California workplaces. While the average income for the entire sample of California workers is $42,145 per year, the annual incomes for Caucasians, African Americans, Hispanics, Asian and other minority groups are $48,329, $42,984, $28,394, $43,845 and $42,905 respectively. Compared to other groups, Caucasians have the highest income, whereas Hispanics make the lowest wage, which accounts for merely 58.75 percent of that for Caucasians. This result partially supports H1 that average income for Hispanic workers is significantly lower than that for Caucasians. However, the income gap between Caucasians and Asian, in which the Asians made 90.72% of the income of Caucasian workers, is not significant. Similarly, income gap between African Americans and Caucasians is not significant without controlling for other independent mediating variables.
Table 1
Income Differentials among the Four Racial Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Income (St. Deviation)</th>
<th>Percentage of Caucasian income</th>
<th>t test (compared to Caucasian)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42,145 (34,670)</td>
<td>87.20</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>42,984 (60,189)</td>
<td>88.94</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=48)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>28,394 (23,807)</td>
<td>58.75</td>
<td>-7.00***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=206)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>43,845 (33,297)</td>
<td>90.72</td>
<td>-.889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=50)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minorities</td>
<td>40,141 (31,762)</td>
<td>83.06</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>48,329 (34,144)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=445)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** P < .001; F ratio = 12.287 (p < .001); adjusted R square = 5.6%

Sources of Income Penalty for Hispanic Workers

To account for the sources of income differentials among different racial groups, I produce Table 2 to show five different models; each controls for different groups of mediating factors. The income disparity between Caucasians and Hispanic workers persists in Models 1, 3, and 4, which suggests that variations in job and workplace characteristics are not adequate to explain why Hispanic workers make less money than do Caucasian workers. Model 2 presents striking results as the Caucasian-Hispanic income gap disappears when controlling for human capital indicators such as education, training, work tenure, and English fluency. This result supports H2 that controlling for human capital indicators eradicates the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers. In other words, Hispanic workers earn less because they have lower levels of human capital stock than do Caucasians.

To quantify this assertion, I compared Hispanic workers to Caucasian workers along crucial human capital dimensions.
## Table 2
Unstandardized Coefficients of OLS Regression of Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>8.777***</td>
<td>8.975***</td>
<td>9.461***</td>
<td>9.973***</td>
<td>9.222***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.163)</td>
<td>(.195)</td>
<td>(.113)</td>
<td>(.174)</td>
<td>(.240)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>-.168**</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>-.276***</td>
<td>-.315***</td>
<td>-.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(.065)</td>
<td>(.075)</td>
<td>(.060)</td>
<td>(.066)</td>
<td>(.068)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>-.195</td>
<td>-.171</td>
<td>-.117</td>
<td>-.187</td>
<td>-.259</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.102)</td>
<td>(.116)</td>
<td>(.095)</td>
<td>(.112)</td>
<td>(.154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>-.251*</td>
<td>-.242*</td>
<td>-.335***</td>
<td>-.293**</td>
<td>-.304**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.103)</td>
<td>(.104)</td>
<td>(.098)</td>
<td>(.111)</td>
<td>(.096)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>-.045</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>-.148</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>-.187</td>
</tr>
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<td>(.166)</td>
<td>(.172)</td>
<td>(.168)</td>
<td>(.180)</td>
<td>(.167)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reference group)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.394***</td>
<td>.409***</td>
<td>.250***</td>
<td>.340***</td>
<td>.169**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.050)</td>
<td>(.053)</td>
<td>(.052)</td>
<td>(.057)</td>
<td>(.053)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>.007**</td>
<td>.006**</td>
<td>.012***</td>
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<td><strong>Human Capitals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>.903***</td>
<td>.709***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.617***</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(.122)</td>
<td>(.160)</td>
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<td>(.153)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>.745***</td>
<td>.551***</td>
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<td>.381*</td>
</tr>
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<td>(.118)</td>
<td>(.157)</td>
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<td>Some college</td>
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<td>(.148)</td>
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<td>High school</td>
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<td>(.153)</td>
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<td>Less than HS (ref.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer-paid job training</td>
<td>.258***</td>
<td>.246***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.156**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.053)</td>
<td>(.055)</td>
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<td>(.054)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-paid job training</td>
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<td>.015</td>
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<td>.027</td>
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<td>(.060)</td>
<td>(.062)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work tenure</td>
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<td>.078***</td>
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<td>.035</td>
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<td>Home language:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(.109)</td>
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<td>Home language: Others</td>
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<td>Home language:</td>
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<tr>
<td>English (ref.)</td>
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continued
### Table 2

Continued

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<td><strong>Job characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Full time work</td>
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<td>.764***</td>
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<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>.158***</td>
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<td>Union membership</td>
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<td>.082</td>
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<td>Occupation-secretary</td>
<td>-.379***</td>
<td>-.256***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupation-machine operators</td>
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<td>-.358**</td>
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<td>Occupation-craft</td>
<td>-.469***</td>
<td>-.272*</td>
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<td>Occupation-farming</td>
<td>-.779***</td>
<td>-.340</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupation-service</td>
<td>-.674***</td>
<td>-.349***</td>
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<td>Occupation-PT (Ref.)</td>
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<td><strong>Workplace characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace size</td>
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<td>.099***</td>
<td>.056**</td>
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<td>Workplace independence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.021)</td>
<td>(.020)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit public</td>
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<td>-.109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.063)</td>
<td>(.057)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit private</td>
<td>-.165</td>
<td>-.251**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.086)</td>
<td>(.085)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit (Ref.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.246*</td>
<td>-.267**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.106)</td>
<td>(.094)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.442**</td>
<td>-.132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.151)</td>
<td>(.152)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-manufacturing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.418**</td>
<td>-.248</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.152)</td>
<td>(.144)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-finance</td>
<td>-.081</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.143)</td>
<td>(.132)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.1096***</td>
<td>-.713**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.254)</td>
<td>(.231)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-professional</td>
<td>-.222</td>
<td>-.216</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>(.113)</td>
<td>(.111)</td>
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</table>
Table 2
Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry-retail</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.795***</td>
<td>-.363**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.147)</td>
<td>(.140)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-whole sale</td>
<td>-.611**</td>
<td>-.142</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.226)</td>
<td>(.204)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-transportation</td>
<td>-.244</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.144)</td>
<td>(.144)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-public admin.</td>
<td>(Ref)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model R² (df)  34.8%(13)  32.2%(15)  51.8%(15)  27.3%(18)  59%(36)
Number of cases  753  696  632  725  563

Numbers in parenthesis are standard errors
*P < .05; **P < .01; ***P < .001 (two-tail test)

Table 3 shows that Hispanic workers on the average receive 2.58 years fewer years of education than do Caucasian workers. Breaking down the education level into five different categories, the percentages of Hispanic workers receiving less than high school or high school education are significantly higher than Caucasian workers by 21 and 9 respectively. In contrast, Hispanic workers receiving BA and graduate degrees are 13 percent and 17 percent, significantly lower than are Caucasian workers. Comparison of other human capital dimensions between Hispanics and Caucasians yields a similar pattern. Hispanic workers have shorter work tenure than do Caucasian. Fewer Hispanic workers participate in employer-paid and unpaid job training.

About 29 percent of Hispanics speak Spanish at home, in contrast to 0 percent of Caucasian workers who use Spanish at home. The evidence is striking that the source of the Hispanic-Caucasian income gap lies in the discrepancy in their human capital stock. Caucasian workers are more educated, receive more job training, have longer job tenure, and more cogently, have greater English fluency than are their Hispanic coworkers; all contribute to the higher income of Caucasians compared to Hispanics.

The results suggest that English fluency is a highly critical element of human capital for Hispanic workers. By merely adding
Table 3

Mean Value Differences in Human Capital Factors between Caucasian and Hispanics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Hispanic/N (St.d)</th>
<th>Caucasian/N (St.d)</th>
<th>Hispanic-Caucasian (t test)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall education</td>
<td>12.13/243</td>
<td>14.71/620</td>
<td>-2.58***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.45)</td>
<td>(1.89)</td>
<td>(-14.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>.23/243</td>
<td>.02/620</td>
<td>.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.42)</td>
<td>(.13)</td>
<td>(11.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>.27/243</td>
<td>.18/620</td>
<td>.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.44)</td>
<td>(.38)</td>
<td>(2.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>.34/243</td>
<td>.35/620</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.48)</td>
<td>(.48)</td>
<td>(-.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>.11/243</td>
<td>.24/620</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.31)</td>
<td>(.43)</td>
<td>(-4.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>.05/243</td>
<td>.22/620</td>
<td>-.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.21)</td>
<td>(.41)</td>
<td>(-6.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work tenure</td>
<td>6.69/217</td>
<td>7.26/510</td>
<td>-57***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.70)</td>
<td>(1.55)</td>
<td>(-4.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer-paid job training</td>
<td>.37/217</td>
<td>.64/510</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.48)</td>
<td>(.48)</td>
<td>(-6.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid job training</td>
<td>.15/217</td>
<td>.25/510</td>
<td>-.10**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.36)</td>
<td>(.44)</td>
<td>(-2.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak English at both home and work</td>
<td>.69/176</td>
<td>.99/615</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.46)</td>
<td>(.11)</td>
<td>(-14.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak Spanish at home and English at work</td>
<td>.29/176</td>
<td>0/615</td>
<td>.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.45)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak other language at home and English at work</td>
<td>.17/176</td>
<td>.01/615</td>
<td>.16***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.13)</td>
<td>(.11)</td>
<td>(16.31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the English fluency indicator to the other human capital factors as control variables, the income gap between Hispanic and Caucasian disappears. In particular, those who speak Spanish at home earned only 70.26 percent (Exp. \(-.353) = 70.26\%) of the income of their coworkers using English both at work and at home (see Model 2 in Table 2). In contrast, there is no significant income gap between those speaking other languages at home and those using English at home. Table 2 also shows that except for African
American workers who made 73.79% \((\text{Exp} (-.304) = 73.79\%)\) of Caucasian income, income gaps between Caucasians and other minority groups disappear in Model 5 when all the mediating independent variables are put under control.

Comparing Hispanics with African American and Asian Workers

That Hispanic workers have a lower level of human capital stock—such as education, job training, work experience, and English proficiency—than their Caucasian coworkers may explain why they earn less than Caucasians. Comparing incomes between Caucasian and African workers yields a different pattern: none of the mediating independent controls from various sources can explain the income gap between them. This suggests that African American workers may encounter greater discrimination from employers than do Hispanics. What needs to be done is the work toward reducing or eliminating discriminatory wage practices; this suggests a systemic and political, in terms of law-making and compliance enforcement, solution, rather than one that individual workers can implement, e.g. seeking further education or other ways of increasing their human capital stocks.

Asian workers share many similarities with Hispanic workers in several important work profiles. Both groups have a considerable number of new immigrant workers who do not speak fluent English (Stolzenberg and Tienda 1997), and are highly heterogeneous in their ethnic backgrounds. However, the income comparison between Asians and Caucasians contrast starkly to that between Hispanics and Caucasians. First, the income gap between Asian workers and Caucasian workers is the smallest and statistically insignificant (see Table 1); whereas the gap between Hispanic and Caucasian workers is the largest and statistically significant (Table 1).

Second, although English fluency appears to be so vital to the incomes of Hispanic worker, the impact of language on income is completely absent for Asian workers. This finding concurs with a previous report that occupational inferiority for Hispanic workers is most pronounced when they have low English fluency and low schooling, a negative stereotype commonly held by
many American employers for Hispanic workers (Stolzenberg 1990:151). As this profiling is absent for Asians, English proficiency is not a significant factor for Asian workers' income levels. In other words, my research suggests that it is a combination of employer stereotyping of low education and language fluency on the one hand, and a confirmation to this stereotype on the other, that produces income penalty for Hispanic workers. Despite the similar language barrier, Asian workers may receive much less of such a negative profiling, which explains the lack of income penalty for Asian workers. However, this allegation awaits for future scrutiny with pertinent data, particularly data from the employer side regarding how they perceive different racial groups in terms of possessing necessary job qualifications (Moss and Tilly, 2001).

Discussion

The turn of the century witnessed significant changes in the American population landscape. The Hispanic population has replaced the African American population to become the largest minority group. Yet, systematic studies on issues related and unique to Hispanic people are scarce. Analyzing data from a workforce survey from California, a state with the most diverse population composition, this paper made important contributions to the study of the Hispanic workforce. It identified English deficiency as a unique source of income penalty for Hispanic workers. Less educated Hispanic workers with English difficulties receive the largest income penalty.

To the extent that language proficiency facilitates coworker communication and enhances productivity, language fluency is considered an integral component of workers' human capital. Hence, language proficiency, much like education, should increase workers' income. This effect should be particularly pronounced for a group with great variation in their language proficiency. Hispanics and Asians are good cases in point as both groups are highly heterogeneous in their ethnic backgrounds and both have a considerable number of non-native English speakers. However, my research divulges that the effect of English fluency
Penalty for Hispanic Workers

on income is a contingent one. Hispanic workers who speak Spanish at home are the only group that pays an income penalty for English deficiency. This finding strongly concurs with previous studies that Hispanic workers fitting the stereotype of less education and poor English skills incur the greatest loss in American labor market (Stolzenberg 1990). This line of work also holds great promise. For example, an employer-level survey can determine the existence and extent of employer profiling of different racial groups. A critical question awaits scrutiny as to the consequences of such employer profiling on employees confirming to that profiling. The evidence presented in this research seems to suggest that when employer profiling is in place, employees with such negative profiles are likely to endure a great deal of financial loss.

Pending future evidential support, this finding entails some preliminary implications for Hispanic workers. First, individual Hispanic workers can improve their income by increasing their human capital stocks, including gaining more education and greater English fluency. In this regard, this research uses language spoken at home as an indicator of English fluency with strong plausible assumption that language spoken at homes is highly correlated with English fluency at workplace. However, English fluency is also related to level of education, to amount of time in the United States, and to residence in ethnic enclaves versus more integrated settings (Portes and Macleod 1996). In these ways, language spoken at home is likely to be part of a bundle of indicators of language fluency. Thus future studies are needed to empirically assess the factor loadings on English fluency from language spoken at home and other factors. Results from these studies can be used to validate the use of language spoken at home as a proxy for English fluency at work. Second, it may take a long time and collective efforts from the entire Hispanic workforce, in conjunction with policy-makers, to eliminate the employer profiling that assigns negative stereotypes such as low education level and poor English skills to Hispanic workers. Until then, the chronic and idiosyncratic bias against Hispanic workers will continue to handicap their incomes.
### Appendix

**Item Constructions for Independent Control Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable names</th>
<th>Measuring Items</th>
<th>Coding Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Are you male or female?</td>
<td>Male = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>How old were you on your last birthday?</td>
<td>Respondents' actual age in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time work</td>
<td>Are you currently working for full time (35 + hrs/wk) or part time?</td>
<td>Full time = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part time = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Supervisory</td>
<td>As part of your job, do you (1) supervise the work of other employees? (2) Influence the pay or promotion of the people you supervise? or (3) Hire and fire the people you supervise?</td>
<td>Agreement to each statement equals 1, and then results are summed up, thus producing a scale from 0 to 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union membership</td>
<td>Do you currently belong to a labor union?</td>
<td>Yes = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>What is your job title called?</td>
<td>A multiple dummy variable including the following groups: managerial, professional and technical, service, secretary, machine operator, craft, and farming. Professional/technical is the reference group in regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace size</td>
<td>About how many people are employed where you work?</td>
<td>1: fewer than 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2: From 10 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3: From 51 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4: From 101 to 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5: Over 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Indendency</td>
<td>Is the place where you work part of a larger company?</td>
<td>1: Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2: Yes, dependent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix
### Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable names</th>
<th>Measuring Items</th>
<th>Coding Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace types</td>
<td>Do you work for a business, a government, or a non-profit organization?</td>
<td>A multiple dummy variable where business is reference group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace industries</td>
<td>What kind of business or industry do you work for at this job?</td>
<td>A multiple dummy variable including the following groups: agriculture, manufacturing, finance, personal services, professional services, retail, wholesale, transportation, and public administration. Public administration is the reference group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References


Finkelstein, Michael and Bruce Levin. 1990. Statistics for Lawyers New York: Springer
Grenier, Gilles. 1984. "Shifts to English as Usual Language by Americans of Spanish Mother Tongue" Social Science Quarterly 65/2:537–550
Penalty for Hispanic Workers


Welfare reform had the unforeseen effect of causing large numbers of public assistance recipients to drop out of college, discouraging their pursuit and acquisition of postsecondary education (PSE) credentials. There is a growing body of research that shows the value of postsecondary education in getting public assistance recipients onto a path toward occupational and social mobility. The restrictions of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families PSE policy, coupled with the recognition that college participation should be an option for qualified welfare recipients, influenced the emergence of many successful state and county-level movements focused on reforming welfare reform PSE policy. Their work provides the few contemporary examples of civil society groups shaping welfare policy through advocacy and organizing. This article summarizes some of the issues and research on welfare and PSE, and chronicles the activities of TANF PSE reform movements in Maine and Kentucky. The case study conceptual framework draws upon Daniel Elazar's (1972; 1994) conception of political culture to provide historical, institutional, political and social context. Through documentation of how reform occurred in different states, the account provided may be useful to people interested in welfare reform and PSE, especially in regard to the lingering uncertainty of what will be the final provisions that constitute the reauthorization of welfare reform.

Keywords: welfare reform, higher education, public assistance, welfare recipients, organizing, political culture
Introduction

During 1995–96, more than 650,000 welfare recipients were enrolled in postsecondary education (Department of Education, 1999). The total is likely far greater than this since many colleges and universities do not identify their public assistance-receiving students, and some students prefer not to be identified as welfare recipients. By 1999, however, the number these students had been nearly halved, declining to almost 358,000 (Department of Education, 1999). This pattern materialized across the country. For instance, the City University of New York (CUNY) saw its enrollment of public assistance recipients plummet from 27,000 in 1996–97 to less than 10,000 by 2000 (CUNY Office of Institutional Data, 2001). What caused such a precipitous decline in the participation of public assistance recipients in postsecondary education (PSE)?

Welfare reform was the reason that so many public assistance recipients were leaving college. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), also known as welfare reform, marked the end of welfare as an entitlement. PRWORA mandated a new form of block grant-structured assistance, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), that put, among other things, maximum limits on receipt of assistance and participation in PSE. Assistance was restricted to a lifetime maximum of 60 months, and participation in PSE limited to one year of vocational education. Most states interpreted TANF stringently, offering far less than the maximum limits.

The TANF proscription on higher education became another barrier to poor women’s social and economic advancement. TANF’s mandatory work requirements began at 20 hours in 1997 and incrementally increased to 35 hours in 2002 (the rules are slightly different for two parent families). For single parents, coordinating child care, course schedules, study time, attending mandatory meetings with social service agencies, and getting to a TANF work placement, meant that many were pushed beyond their capacity to cope with so many challenges. TANF’s emphasis on labor force attachment embodied a view that any job is better than none, and that the poor need to learn discipline, workplace norms, and middle class behaviors and values, even
where recipients have work experience or desire education over work (Riemer, 1997). To further dampen participation in PSE, case workers unaware of the new rules often told recipients that they could not attend college at all if they wanted to continue receiving public assistance. Countless numbers of public assistance recipients ended up leaving school in order to maintain TANF, their primary source of income, health care, and child care. Combined, the TANF policies and welfare bureaucracy interpretations of the policies became the focus of reform movements, beginning as early as 1997 in Maine.

Recognition of TANF's chilling effect on higher education began soon after implementation of TANF. News reporters, often tipped off by college faculty or welfare advocates, provided coverage, albeit spotty. Stories were coming from places as disparate as Caspar, Wyoming (Rea, 1997), Boston, Massachusetts (Chacon, 1998), San Francisco, California (Irving, 1997), and Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Thompson, 1997). What was not being covered was the beginnings of resistance to the burdensome restrictions, as recipients and advocates began to organize and mobilize.

Research and Reform Context

This article chronicles and analyzes the reform of TANF higher education policy in Maine and Kentucky focusing on identifying the primary actors and detailing how change occurred. The author conducted most of the research and many of the interviews while the reform process was in motion or recently completed. Although the prospects of changing the laws in a conservative political climate seemed remote at the time, reform did occur. Ideally, activists, advocates, and researchers involved in improving the PSE dimensions of state welfare policy will find useful lessons in the abridged case studies below.

The initial research process involved identifying and interviewing the primary actors, and collecting documents such as bills and program literature in preparation for an Open Society-funded national conference on welfare reform and higher education (Price and Greene, 1999; Price 2000). We investigated nearly two dozen states, but concentrated on developing five in-depth state case studies. Maine, Kentucky, Wyoming, Illinois and
California were selected for expediency; they were among the first states where successful reform efforts occurred, and it was not difficult to obtain data in the form of interviews, drafts of legislative bills, state government documents, media reports, and college and welfare program publications. Also, these are among the few states where welfare bureaucracies and colleges track the number of people who receive public assistance and participate in higher education (other states include New York and Hawaii). Analysis of the state case studies determined that collaboration between different sectors of civil society was a central feature of all the successful reform efforts.

Higher Education as a Route to Social Mobility for Welfare Recipients

Welfare recipients have much to gain from acquiring higher education credentials. According to *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, the 1998 median earnings of a full-time worker with a bachelor's degree was $40,387, more than $15,000—or 61 percent—greater than that of a high school graduate (Crosby, 2001). Education beyond the bachelor's further enhances earning potential, although age plays a role in determining this outcome. Postsecondary education is likely to become more important to social mobility as the pace of technological change increases and affects the job prospects of ever larger numbers of Americans. The *Bureau of Labor Statistics* predict that the fastest growing occupations in the first decade of the twenty-first century will require at least an associate's degree (1999, p. 2).

Higher education is beneficial in other ways. The more education people have the less likely they are to experience unemployment. According to 1998 data, the unemployment rate for high school graduates was four percent compared to 1.9 percent for bachelor's degree holders (*Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, 1999). And the highest paying occupations typically require at least a bachelor's degree (although some occupations such as electrician or machinist pay well, but do not require a college degree). Minorities and women, whose earnings and income continue to lag behind those of Whites and men, find higher education to be one of the most reliable means for improving their socio-economic position. Black women, for instance, profit greatly as a result of

An early study of welfare recipients and higher education demonstrated that all of the study participants who acquired bachelor's degrees completely ended their welfare dependency, while 81 percent of associate degree holders did the same (Gittell, Schehl, & Fareri, 1990). In a related study of 840 recipients in five states, the findings made clear that while an associate degree enhances the earning power of welfare recipients, it is a bachelor's degree that provides the greatest economic independence (Gittell, Gross, & Holdaway, 1993). Prior to welfare reform, one study estimated that approximately 27% of welfare recipients were capable of immediately entering bachelor degree programs, and another third could, with one semester of remediation, enter associate degree programs (Carnevale & Desrochers, 1999). There is research that suggests that the performance of welfare recipients on measures such as time to complete the degree and grade point average is about the same as for non-welfare receiving students; their performance is bolstered where there are PSE programs that focus on the needs of welfare recipients (Gittell, Vandersall, Holdaway, & Newman, 1996; Price, Steffy, & McFarlane, 2003).

Welfare recipients also stand to gain from the "soft" benefits of higher education. Recipients report that their self-esteem and confidence improve as a result of going to college (Price, 2000). Mothers describe how their children are positively impacted by seeing a parent studying and completing college (Gittell, Gross, & Holdaway, 1993). Increasing and widespread (higher) education is associated with a demographic transition whereby child mortality and birthrates decrease and standards of living improve (Pandey et al., 2000), along with the possibility for a vibrant democracy energized by an astute, discerning, and participatory citizenry. In addition, the more a person earns the more he or she is able to contribute as a taxpayer.
Welfare reform forced those who could have benefitted from getting a credential into the low-wage job market because they were the most "work-ready." Many low wage jobs do not provide the experience that can be used to improve a person's job marketability, and rarely provide benefits such as health care or pensions. The Children's Defense Fund found that among welfare leavers in New York State, the only group likely to escape poverty by relying on earnings alone were those who had at least two years of higher education or a vocational degree (Children's Defense Fund, 2000).

While the steep decrease in the welfare rolls and increases in labor force participation have been taken as illustrative of the success of welfare reform, the situation is far more complex. The robust 1990s economy contributed greatly to welfare reform's success, especially the increase in service sector occupations. However, these are among the lowest paying and most impermanent jobs in the labor market. And even where there are gains in employment and earnings, the benefits are questionable. The Urban Institute asked the question "Does work pay?," noting that "The work incentives under TANF are heavily weighted toward inducing non-working families to move to work. However, the benefits of increased work effort and higher wage rates beyond part-time minimum wage work are offset by declines in cash aid and the phaseout of earned income tax credits (Urban Institute, 1998, p. 27)." A study of welfare reform in 13 southern states concluded that views that "work pays" for welfare recipients does not consider the extra expenses that come with work (Tootle, 1999). A similar observation was made in a study of a major work first program in California: "... gains in income [through earned tax credits and work] were almost exactly counterbalanced by reductions in income from lower welfare and Food Stamp payments and by higher payroll taxes" (Freeman, Knab, Gennetian & Navarro, 2000, p. 5).

In states like New York where approximately only 30% of welfare leavers are continuously employed, a significant number of recipients find themselves needing welfare again (New York State Office of the State Comptroller, 2000). In sum, welfare reform has moved poor women into the workforce without bringing about a significant improvement in their economic status (Porter..."
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& Dupree, 2001). The college option offered women competent and qualified to take advantage of it the possibility of strengthening their socioeconomic power. TANF undermined a quiet but effective route to economic viability for welfare recipients, a route which existed under AFDC.

Welfare and Postsecondary Education Before PRWORA

The Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA) brought into existence the Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills Program (JOBS). The FSA encouraged states to offer education, including PSE, to qualified recipients. Under this policy regime 47 states allowed recipients to pursue at least two years of college, and 37 allowed up to four years of college participation (Gittell & Covington, 1993). Postsecondary programs that addressed the needs of low income parents flourished between this period and the implementation of PRWORA, as for example, in New York (for examples of model college programs and the obstacles they face under TANF, see Price et al., 2003). CUNY, the third largest university system in the nation, created programs that focused on the needs of welfare recipients (see Gittell et al., 1993; Gittell et al., 1996; Gittell & Vandersall, 1995). Programs offered varying combinations of financial aid search assistance, counseling, academic support, transportation and training-related expenses, and services such as on-campus childcare (see Price et al., 2003 for examples). However, under welfare reform these programs suffered funding cuts and were forced to change their mission from supporting public assistance receiving students pursuing degrees to that of immediately preparing them for any available job (Price et al., 2003).

Policy Paradox: Devolution, TANF, and Postsecondary Education

Devolution, an ideology used in support of welfare reform, was argued as a means to return states the flexibility in policy formulation they supposedly lost to intrusive and one-size-fits-all federal policies. Yet, devolution prevented states from continuing their FSA and JOBS interpretations of education as a way to aid their resident’s efforts to attain economic viability.

The welfare reform policies that we identified as most injurious to recipients pursuing higher education were those that disallowed or restricted participation in PSE and that mandated...
minimum work requirements, but failed to define school attendance as work. As detailed below, recipients and civil society groups worked to change these rules and to address related problems such as the need for childcare, transportation, and other education-related expenses. These are fundamental needs that low-income people must address in order to execute the ordinary activities and involvements that are a part of getting a college degree. Efforts to reform state, county, and municipal TANF PSE policy occurred in distinct sociocultural, institutional, political, and economic contexts, which the following sections illustrate.

Political Culture: 
Analytic, Historical, and Institutional Contexts

The conception of political culture we employed draws on the work of Daniel Elazar (1972; 1994; 1992). We find Elazar’s treatment of political culture useful in comprehending how reform articulates with dominant political and social ideologies, especially in pointing toward how to use local ideologies and language in the service of reform. Political culture constitutes a field in which norms, attitudes, beliefs, and values of individual and group political behavior are played out (Elazar, 1994, p. 3). Elazar does not treat political culture’s influence as fixed and completely determining of behavior. Rather, political cultures are continually changing as new frontiers arise, the products of the interaction of population dynamics, new technologies, and new ideas; yet they retain their core values in the new contexts (Elazar, 1972; 1992; 1994).

America began as a society influenced by two dominant but contrasting political visions associated with the earliest settlers of Puritan, non-Puritan English, and Germanic stock (Native and African American contributions to political culture are unacknowledged). One is a market-based orientation that emphasizes commerce and individual pursuit of opportunity. The other orientation is an idea of communalism and commonwealth, where the citizenry are expected to work together to produce the best government possible, based on shared moral values and principles. Sometimes these contrasting visions can effectively co-exist and at other times they clash (Elazar, in Palmer et al., 1992, p. xxiii).
Elazar defines the American political system as having three primary political-cultural orientations: moralistic; traditional; individualistic. He calls these “subcultures” (Elazar, 1994; Elazar in Palmer et al., 1992, p. xxiii) because despite differences, the shared values are too intertwined to warrant defining each as a specific culture. Each subculture is associated with specific sections of the states that make up the nation and a product of the contrasting marketplace and commonwealth ideas.

In individualistic political cultures the role of government is viewed as limited mainly to that of maintaining a free market, and performing limited utilitarian functions. Private interests are paramount and government is not seen as a vehicle for creating a just society. Hence, there is a prevailing view that government intervention into public life should be limited. This view informs conceptions of political participation and the role of political actors. Politics are treated as a part of the marketplace, and can be used to further a person’s own self-interests: “Politics is just another means by which individuals may improve themselves socially and economically” (Elazar, in Palmer et al., 1992, p. xxiii). However, individualism does not preclude citizen-driven reform efforts, especially where privileged relationships with influential leaders can be developed, as our Wyoming case study suggests.

Moralistic political cultures are grounded in the view that politics are the instrument by which people use government to build the “good society.” The role of government and politics is to improve the commonwealth for all. Politicians and the public approach politics as a participatory endeavor, not as the province of self-serving individuals. Amateurs can play important roles in politics in moralistic political cultures. In the interest of bettering the commonwealth, when necessary, it is permissible for government to intervene into private affairs. Even political party ideologies are seen as less important than the needs and desires of the citizenry. Within moralistic political cultures politicians do not fear proposing new programs even if the citizenry do not clamor for it, if they feel the need is there and it will improve society. Still, in moralistic political cultures interventions tend to be local (Elazar, in Palmer et al., 1992, p. xxiv), and moralism can be taken to extremes. Maine is the epitome of a moralistic political culture, although over time the southeastern and urban parts of the state have developed strong individualistic orientations.
Traditionalistic political cultures are rooted in feudal-like notions of society and government that developed in the context of the agrarian plantation economy. Government and politics are viewed as being rightly governed by an elite whose power derives from their social and kin networks. Although traditional political cultures are especially associated with the secessionist states of the South, early southern settlers (up through the 20th century) moved into and influenced the development of border states such as Kentucky, and indeed some moved farther West. In traditional political cultures government is used in the service of maintaining the status quo and its hierarchy, and paternalism remains a reality in many political and governmental arenas. New programs are rarely initiated unless they are related to maintaining the status quo, or there is substantial pressure. Kentucky is an example of a traditional political culture, but it is also an example of how political cultures change over time. Kentuckians of the past two decades have become increasingly effective in making government responsive to their needs and desires.

Maine: Changing the Rules of the Game—Politics, Activism, and Advocacy

Maine is a small, racially homogeneous state with approximately 1.2 million residents, more than half of whom live in rural areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Ethnic and racial minorities make up less than two percent of its population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Maine’s economy has always lagged compared to other Northeastern states, and historically it has been among the nation’s poorest states. Work opportunities have tended to be labor intensive and seasonal. Thus, economic development and self-sufficiency have always been important issues for Mainers. Maine’s foundational industries were fish, fur, granite, timber, shipbuilding and textile production. Slowly, all of these industries declined as sources of reliable and widely available employment. Even with the growth of tourism as a positive source of revenue in the 1990s, Maine’s economy still plagues its citizens with unemployment, under-employment, and low-paying service jobs.

Maine’s political culture is predominantly moralistic. The moralistic tendencies are predominantly the product of the influ-
ence of its Puritan and Yankee settlers. The French Canadians are especially associated with the development of the individualistic political culture tendencies (Elazar 1992, p. xxii). Maine's moralistic tendencies are represented in the citizenry's commitment to the public good, using government and the private sector to achieve this end. In Maine, citizen's participation in politics is highly valued, and it is widely believed that government should be accessible to the people (Palmer et al., 1992, p. 4). The individualistic Mainers, however, seek to use politics to protect the status quo, especially the market, and their own personal and familial interests. They remain, however, a weak influence on Maine's politics.

Historically, Maine's politics have been dominated by "amateurs," (Elazar, 1992, p. xii), consistent with the view that politics and government are the province of the people, not elites. Its legislature is semi-professional as legislators typically hold jobs in addition to political office. This is changing, however, as the state's legislature becomes more professionalized.

Although Republicans have dominated Maine's political institutions since the 1950s, they respect the communitarian ethos, and unlike in other states, rarely take rigid ideological positions. Consensus is important to Mainers, and politicians have had to find ways to meet this desire. During elections, personalities and issues appeal more to Mainers than ideology (Palmer et al., 1992, p. 5). In moralistic political cultures the idea of serving the commonwealth imbues political relationships, suggesting that a politician's personal ties and loyalties to a party are not the primary concern of their political activity. Maine's citizenry has law-making power in the form of the initiative and referendum, reinforcing the participatory political role of the citizenry in law making. Attempts to make or repeal laws can begin with only ten percent of the voters in the last gubernatorial election.

Maine was the first state to successfully challenge and reform TANF's restrictions on the higher education option. This is consistent with the state's commitment to education. For example, in 1982 (under AFDC), advocates were able to convince the Maine Department of Human Services (MDHS) to take advantage of a Reagan administration federal Work Incentive Demonstration project by allowing women on welfare to go to college (Price &
The advocates aimed to show how higher education is a means of eradicating poverty and empowering women. This demonstration eventually came to be known as ASPIRE. Thus, Maine and its state welfare bureaucracy supported the higher education option, consistent with Elazar's view that bureaucracies in moralistic political cultures tend to be pragmatic and non-ideological (Elazar, 1992).

The MDHS aims to be accessible to all the state's citizenry, unlike many state welfare bureaucracies. It has a history of working with citizen advisory groups, and since the eighties, under different governors, has maintained a focus on helping its clients become self-sufficient. Under Democratic Governor Brennan (1979–1987) the MDHS's approach to its clients was to "... improve the social and economic conditions of the poor" (Palmer et al., 1992, p. 90). Under Republican Governor McKernan the focus changed to education and skills training as the way to get people off welfare and out of poverty. The MDHS Maine has been relatively generous in budgeting for welfare. For example, in 1989, welfare accounted for 23.6 percent of the state's expenditures, compared to an average of 19.8 percent for all states (Palmer et al., 1992, pp. 117–118). Close working relationships between legislators and the citizenry help explain Maine's policies on welfare.

The groundbreaking legislation that established Maine as a leading proponent of the higher education option for welfare recipients was Chapter 1054-B (June 1997, c.530, § B-1), Parents as Scholars (PaS). It is far-reaching because it set another precedent: that of being an education-focused Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE) program. Under PRWORA, the MOE approach was touted as a means of giving states the flexibility to design their own welfare programs in ways that deviate from the federal legislation, as long as states pay for most of it with their own funds. This is not as straightforward as it seems since the state must be politically and economically willing and able to set aside non-TANF funds for welfare programs. The PaS program is administered by the Maine Department of Human Services (MDHS), which is significant because it requires working with Maine's institutions of higher education. The PaS program is a companion to the state's TANF program, ASPIRE.

The initial legislation provided for the participation of up
to 2000 TANF recipients in PaS. The program had roughly 1200 participants as of summer 2000 (personal communication, 2000). The PaS program is open to all TANF recipients attending two or four year institutions, and who meet two requirements: having the necessary aptitude for the program chosen (this is typically interpreted as having a GED or high school diploma) and being already enrolled in college (a PaS participant cannot already have a bachelor's degree). PaS provides a range of supports that include "occupational expenses," book and supplies, child care, transportation-related expenses, dental and eye care, up to $500 in car repairs, and other supports. The student must pay his-her own tuition, but financial aid is often sufficient to cover these costs. PaS participants receive a monthly check equivalent to what they would receive under TANF. Because PaS is an MOE program, the legislation can stipulate that the time spent in the program does not count against a recipient’s TANF five-year lifetime limit. However, participants are expected to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

Students in PaS are required to work 20 hours per week during their first two years of college, but study and classroom time count as work. A student is accorded one and one-half hours of work/study hours for each hour spent in classroom instruction. Therefore, a 12 twelve hour course load is interpreted as 30 hours of work (12 hours in class, 18 hours study time; see the Parent as Scholars website). After two years the work load increases, but given the broad interpretation of work activities, this does not present the obstacles to college participation found in other states.

Maine offers a noteworthy model of civil society collaboration on reform. Public assistance students, academics and college administrators, welfare administrators, poverty lawyers, faith-based groups, advocates, and state legislators, were all able to cooperate and build consensus on what poor women (focusing on single mothers) need to get in, stay in, and complete college. This group was able to build the political support to create and fund an MOE program. This configuration of actors seems to be the ideal configuration of civil society actors who together can reform welfare reform PSE policy.

The road to reform in Maine began innocently and on unrelated fronts that converged over time. The Dean of Students
at the University of Southern Maine, while driving to work, heard a National Public Radio news story about the then-pending welfare reform legislation, and wondered about its impact on her students. This led her to discuss the issue with a faculty member of the university’s women’s studies and social work programs, who then asked two poverty attorneys working at the Maine Equal Justice Project (MEJP) about the potential impact of welfare reform on higher education. These actors would become intimately involved in the reform process.

On another front, advocates and welfare recipients were active in ways that aided mobilization. The Women’s Economic Security Project (WESP), a coalition of women’s, poverty, faith-based, labor, and social service groups, began a campaign to counter the anti-welfare and fault-finding rhetoric that accompanied welfare reform debates. Prior to welfare reform, WESP had conducted its own research among welfare recipients, and with the help of an economist, published the widely publicized report “Living on the Edge: Women Working and Providing for Families in the Maine Economy” (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 7). This report became a “weapon” in the hands of poverty and women’s advocates. WESP’s focus was on developing and presenting a picture of how the economic system works to keep women and single parents poor (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 7). WESP used creative means for disseminating their research. They contacted newspaper editorial boards, provided educational luncheons for legislators, and created a speaker’s bureau that sent their people to talk to community groups (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 7).

Finally, during a community action-sponsored Walk-a-Mile project that paired legislators and welfare recipients, a Republican legislator on the Health and Human Services committee, found himself walking with a young welfare recipient struggling to complete college (Price & Greene, 1999). Being able to talk with this woman and learn the details of her struggles and aspirations is believed to have led this legislator to become a supporter of the higher education option.

These three developments eventually converged. The Main Equal Justice Project, whose focus is on providing low income people legal representation aimed at strengthening their voice in public policy arenas (http://www.mejp.org/Who.htm), took a
leading role in developing a strategy for pushing the PSE option. The MEJP was assisted by the Main Equal Justice Partners (created shortly after the Maine Equal Justice Project), which focuses on class action and administrative representation. The two groups worked with the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods (M.A.I.N.), a statewide coalition of advocacy groups focused on the needs of low-income people.

The MEJP attorneys studied their options carefully because there were no models to follow as welfare reform was in the process of being implemented. They decided that they would pursue the MOE option. This meant that they would need to secure the political support and financial resources needed to create a state-funded welfare program that assists women who go to college. MEJP, in consultation with M.A.I.N., wrote a proposal that eventually became the PaS bill (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 5). University of Southern Maine academics and administrators were instrumental in getting their welfare students to mobilize and prepare public testimony, while other advocates and grassroots groups did the same. The participation and testimony of TANF students and former welfare recipients was an indispensable part of the legislative and lobbying process. Many of the students involved in the reform process continued their activism in other arenas after getting the PaS legislation passed.

The legislative sponsor was Democratic Senator Chellie Pingree, a popular legislator who '... lobbied tirelessly in support of the bill with her colleagues in the press and with the executive branch. ...' (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 8). Pingree played a role in positively influencing the position of the MDHS, making known to the Maine Commission of Human Services that she wanted to see the legislation passed (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 8). There were nine co-sponsors of the legislation, and it had bipartisan support. When the legislation reached committee it met little resistance, although it was carefully deliberated. The efforts of Mainers to reform TANF gained them national recognition, and they provided a beacon of hope to countless TANF college students, activists, and advocates around the nation.

The primary problem in implementing PaS in Maine was making caseworkers aware of the new rules. Early on there were complaints that caseworkers were not informing recipients of the
college option. However, these problems were quickly identified and redressed. Caseworkers are now required to inform recipients of the college option.

Kentucky: Changing the Rules of the Game—Politics, Activism and Advocacy

Kentucky, once dependent upon industries such as fur, tobacco and mining, is now dominated by construction, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade. The state’s total population in 2000 was just over four million, with 55 percent of the populace living in urban areas and 44 percent in rural areas (Kentucky Deskbook, 2003). Whites constitute 90 percent of the population and African Americans 7.3 percent, while less than two percent is Latino/a (Kentucky Deskbook, 2003).

Kentucky’s political culture is essentially traditional, although it has growing individualistic tendencies (see Miller, 1994). The state’s politics have been significantly shaped by political factionalism and the influence of the Governor’s office. In Kentucky, the Governor has often exercised great authority despite the longstanding restriction of being able to serve only a single four year term. Brief legislative sessions, cronyism, patronage, and a weak and unprofessional legislature, combined to make possible a stronger executive office. Charisma, social networks, and political skill are important sources of power and influence in Kentucky politics.

Within the past two decades Kentucky’s political climate and culture has changed, and an organized citizenry are the vanguard of this change. They have been demanding that government be more responsive to their needs. For instance, the passage of the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act, a comprehensive bill, led to sweeping reforms in the primary and secondary education arena. This effort was spearheaded by a range of interest and advocacy groups who overcame sectarian concerns to collaborate on overhauling the education system. Reform of TANF PSE policy suggests that Kentucky citizens are continuing to pressure government to be responsive to their needs and desires. Another factor influencing the move away from old-style traditional politics has been the increased professionalism of the state’s legislature. Also,
the governor can now run for a second term, further increasing the power and influence of the office.

Democrats have dominated Kentucky politics, and factionalism has been a defining feature of party politics. Factionalism, however, has hinged around geographic and personality differences, not ideology. This is related to Kentucky's 120 county governments and their often provincial politics. Combined, these factors contribute to the view that Kentucky has a traditional political culture (Miller, 1994). Traditional political cultures are structured around elites who rationalize that their right to govern is rooted in family ties and social class and not an ideology of democratic participation. Politicians function as gatekeepers and protectors of the status quo instead of representatives of people seeking an improved commonwealth. Government is allowed an active role in traditional political cultures as long as it works in the service of policies that do not change the status quo. In such a climate, citizen-initiated social reform can be difficult to achieve, especially where ideology is strong.

Kentucky's TANF plan is called Kentucky Transitional Assistance Plan (KTAP). Under welfare reform, state officials' initial interpretation of TANF granted little flexibility to KTAP recipients engaged in PSE, outside of being allowed to continue their studies for the first 12 months of implementation (while working 20 hours per week). However, after the first year, difficulties for KTAP students surfaced as officials began to more rigidly interpret and enforce TANF rules. Some students were partially able to meet their work requirements through work study assignments. But under-funded work study programs (often limiting participants to 12 hours per week) meant a shortage of positions and recipients typically had to find work elsewhere to make up the remaining mandatory work hours. At the time there were no reliable data on the number of KTAP recipients enrolled in college, but their numbers were sufficient to become the thrust of a reform movement (since the reform of TANF PSE policy the community colleges now collect data on KTAP-receiving students). The impact of TANF on acquisition of PSE credentials in Kentucky surfaced as an issue important to recipients, and was taken up by advocates and grassroots citizen and welfare groups.

The primary groups involved in initiating the reform process
were the Jefferson County Welfare Reform Coalition (JCWRC), the Welfare Reform Coalition, (WRC) and Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KfC). The Office of Kentucky Legal Services later became involved, and along with KfC, was instrumental in building and holding together the reform venture. The two groups served constituencies and offered services that complimented each other. Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, composed largely of low-income and working class people, has nearly two decades of experience in grassroots organizing, leadership development, increasing citizen participation, and working to achieve social justice. Kentucky Legal Services provides service to low income individuals, the elderly, and other vulnerable populations.

Not long after TANF was implemented in Kentucky, JCWRC polled 300 Jefferson country TANF recipients to find what they wanted most under welfare reform. A major desire of recipients was to acquire education and training, which they saw as their avenue to economic viability. Using this information, KfC organized a weekend retreat to work on building and cementing a collaborative reform venture consisting of a range of interests and constituencies, and to draft a comprehensive bill supportive of higher education. Other coalition groups represented at the retreat include the Kentucky Commission on Women, Kentucky Youth Advocates, the Catholic Conference, and the Metro Needs Alliance. The collaborative found creative ways to disseminate their messages, such as brief videos of testimonies given by recipients at public forums. The testimonies focused on the importance of higher education to improving KTAP recipients' life chances. The groups worked to get community and four year college faculty and administrators, and student governments to endorse their proposed legislation. The legislation drafted by this coalition, and later amended and passed by Kentucky legislators, is HB (House Bill) 434 (Regular Session, 1998, No. 1323).

The collaborative considered asking the state welfare bureaucracy, the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children (KCfFC) to endorse their advocacy campaign. The KCfFC was at that point very conservative in its welfare reform policy. The collaborative decided against allowing the KCfFC to have a hand in shaping their proposal; instead, they decided to introduce and build
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support for their own legislation. Similar to the strategy undertaken by a grassroots welfare PSE reform group in Wyoming (EMPOWER), the Kentucky group sought to reinstate the higher education options extant under JOBS and AFDC, where recipients could acquire at least two years of higher education. The collaborative looked to Maine’s legislation and PaS program as models for their legislation, and decided to design their own version of PaS: the Kentucky Education Assistance for Parents program (KEAP). KEAP, like PaS, was envisioned as a separate state-funded MOE program. Major KEAP provisions would have reduced work requirements to ten hours per week, provided childcare and transportation subsidies, incrementally increased the number of KEAP slots to a total of 2000, and added an extra year of public assistance after the five year limit was reached. Students with high GPA’s would have had their work requirements rescinded.

Another recurrent feature of successful reform of a state’s PSE policy under TANF is finding and building supporting within the state legislature. A Kentucky Legal Services attorney, Rich Seckel, noted that legislative sponsors "were recruited one by one" (Seckel, 1999). In Kentucky the coalition sought out House Democrat Thomas Burchell, who at the time chaired the Health and Welfare Committee. Burchell had previously worked with Kentucky welfare groups, and was a supporter of the higher education option. Burchell became a leading sponsor of the new welfare reform collaborative and their legislative proposal.

An initial obstacle to reform was the intransigence of the Kentucky’s state welfare bureaucracy. The Cabinet’s leadership claimed that KEAP would jeopardize their work participation rates and that it would be too expensive to administer. Senator Paul Mason’s (R) staff estimated (erroneously) that KEAP would cost $20 million (Price & Greene, 1999, p. 25). The KCFPC argued that it could reform the rules through administrative procedures such as interpreting TANF to count school as work, and that legislative change was unnecessary. Apparently, the bureaucracy viewed the reformers as a challenge to its authority and control over policy change. This reluctance to engage the citizenry in policy discussion, and to defend the status quo is consistent with the tendencies associated with traditional political cultures.
Burchell and Kentucky Legal Services attorney Seckel had to make the case that KEAP did not require additional funds, but a reorganization of the existing budget. These became important points for making compromises to get the legislation passed.

By the end of January 1998 KEAP had been eliminated from HB 434, as a result of compromises. The decisions were strategic as Burchell believed that he could not build the support to pass HB 434 as long as KEAP was a part of the bill. He knew that KCfFC would oppose KEAP, and was worried that the Governor’s office would also oppose it (see Price & Greene, 1999, for details of the movement of HB 434 through the legislative process). Kentucky Legal Service did not easily give up on KEAP; they wanted to make the point that KEAP would not be a dramatic shift from what existed under AFDC and JOBS. However, in the interest of getting a victory that could later be expanded, the reformers agreed to have KEAP removed from HB 434. Negotiation over HB 434 occurred mainly between the bill’s sponsors, the Executive Director of KCfFC, and Kentucky Legal Service attorney Seckel. KTAP students were also involved in the process, providing experiential testimony about what they needed to stay in school and become economically viable, and how welfare reform was undermining their efforts and goals. The reformers’ combination of substantive background research and preparation, in-depth grasp of the issues, and activism in and around the state house, put them in a good negotiating position, even though they had to sacrifice KEAP.

The bill passed through the House and Senate with no opposition. On April 1, 1999, HB 434 was signed by Governor Patton. By this time the Governor’s staff realized that there was room for flexibility in TANF’s rules on participation in higher education and that HB 434 could fit into their education platform. Governor Patton, after all, ran for office as an “education” Governor. Even the KCfFC’s executive quickly changed discourses, now proclaiming herself a friend of higher education, and claiming that her opposition to HB 434 was about the strategies of the reformers and not their goals. The politicians and bureaucrats recognized that the TANF PSE reform movement was not a serious threat to status quo of traditional politics. Ironically, it offered a means to improve their political clout through gaining support of the poor,
all in the name of education (the executive director of the KCFFC eventually came to argue that all poor parents deserve access to PSE and has worked toward making this a reality). House Bill 434 permits KTAP recipients at least two years participation in higher education, and limits work requirements to 20 hours per week. Additionally, work study meets the definition of acceptable work activities. Once KTAP recipients reach the 24 month higher education participation limit, they are then required to work 30 hours per week (ten of these hours are deducted for time spent in classroom instruction). Soon after passage of HB 434, the KCFFC provided one million dollars to support its implementation. Some of this money was used to increase the number of funded work study slots for KTAP recipients (assuming that this would facilitate their being able to more easily meet work requirements). The bureaucracy has since broadened its commitment to PSE for TANF recipients by, for example, asking that all community colleges of the state higher education system focus on TANF recipients as a distinct segment of their student population.

Even though HB 434 was eventually endorsed by a broad range of governmental and civil society groups, implementation of the policy immediately presented two primary problems. According to a representative of K-TAP recipients, caseworkers were discouraging them from pursuing the higher education option (interview with K-TAP recipient and activist, L.G, 1999). As in Maine, line personnel were unaware of the details of the legislation and the adjustments that would have to be made in interpreting the rules. Also, caseworkers in Kentucky were at that time not properly trained to assess recipient readiness for higher education. These issues have been addressed through administrative procedures.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned

Not since the late 1960s and early 1970s has civil society groups been able to reform welfare in ways that reflect the perspectives, aspirations, and needs of welfare recipients. Quietly, between 1997 and the present, the kinds of reforms of TANF PSE policy narrated above in the two state case studies have occurred in more than 20 states (see Price et al. 2003). Indeed, the state,
county and city levels are the most effective levels at which to reform welfare reform PSE policy. This article has chronicled the ways in which collaborating civil society groups worked to reform the aspects of TANF that restricted or denied the PSE option to welfare recipients.

The state case studies show that diverse collaboratives and multifaceted strategies are effective modes of initiating and sustaining reform work. The collaboratives described here reached beyond welfare-oriented groups to include academic, housing, poverty, legal aid, women’s, children, PSE, and faith-based groups. Conducting initial basic and field research, organizing at the grassroots level, and identifying potential allies in city or state government are important elements of reform work. Broad-based support must be built around the TANF PSE issue.

Initial organizing and advocacy activities must include basic and field research. Data and analysis that illustrate the nature and scope of welfare and PSE issues are of great utility. Information about the issues—the value of higher education to recipients and society—must be strategically disseminated. Sound stratagems for drawing attention to the issues are equally important. While direct action was a part of the repertoire of many reform movements, it was used strategically and aimed at drawing attention while building support. The initial reform process should also include understanding a state’s political culture. This can provide insight into how reform work can engage the orientations and ideologies of a given political culture.

Relationship building—within the reform movement and with groups outside of it—may be the most important part of TANF PSE reform work. No particular model of organizing and mobilization emerged; what worked at the local level within the political context is what groups did, learning and adapting as they went along.

Effort should be directed toward identifying students who are affected by TANF. Experience shows their testimony can be persuasive and “...puts a human face on the issue” (Interview with Gina, a TANF student-activist from California, 2001). Aside from students, other groups may have an interest in confronting TANF’s restrictions on higher education. This includes (but is not limited to) college administrators concerned with en-
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Enrollment, college faculty committed to improving the life chances of poor students, and poverty, women's and family advocates concerned with improving poor women's social mobility potential and life chances. Advocates have an important role to play, whether it is helping grassroots people organize and develop strategies through building collaborative ventures or identifying and securing resources. Poverty lawyers must be included among advocates. Now that there exists a range of models and strategies for reforming TANF PSE policy, activists, advocates, and researchers should study these as a part of their development of reform strategies. They should interview people who have experience in the TANF PSE reform process.

Getting legislation passed or achieving administrative rule change does not guarantee that the desired reforms will occur. The policies may fail to be implemented in step with their intended letter and spirit. This may occur at institutional and micro levels (e.g., caseworkers not following new policy). At the macro level, a state bureaucracy may not have the will or resources to quickly implement reforms, and there may not be a supervisory structure to police the process. Vigilant observation of the implementation process must be maintained.

Common bureaucracy problems include a failure for the reforms to be communicated to caseworkers, a lack of caseworker competence in vital areas such as assessment of college readiness, and poor communication between welfare and college administrators. These are areas where snafus are likely to occur and should be closely monitored.

Winning the PSE option under welfare reform requires knitting together a constituency through organizing, advocacy, and networking and collaboration, as well as developing political savvy that grasps the clear and implicit norms and behaviors that structure political activity. While most TANF PSE reforms have occurred as a result of people learning through trial and error and persevering through sheer determination, there are enough examples of winning strategies to facilitate a more deliberative approach to ensuring that welfare recipients and low income single parents in general have the opportunity and supports to get the kinds of PSE credentials that may improve their life chances.
References Cited


Reforming Education Policy


**Interviews Cited**

This study examines media impact on job efficacy in a child protection agency. The research uses inductive, holistic research methods to examine the effect of media scrutiny on changes in management dictates, worker duties and responsibilities, and agency services. Data were collected from media sources, interviews, archival materials, and participant observation, then analyzed via qualitative content analysis, providing a basis for rich ethnographic description of perceptions and behavior of diverse groups of people involved in child protection. The study reveals how contradictions in American national culture generate a need for increased communication, understanding, agreement, and support, between various groups of people who influence child protection.

Keywords: child protection agency, media scrutiny, culture, job efficacy

Introduction

In recent years, the media has become an increasingly important influence in shaping public opinion about many aspects of American culture, including the way public service organizations are administered. One aspect of the culture that is often in the news is how Americans provide protection for their children, a popular topic in newspapers, on news reports, and in homes today. Often the media position on this topic is negative, noting that too many children are harmed, and blaming child protection agencies for not preventing these situations from occurring (i.e., "To save the state money, . . . children are being left in abusive
homes at risk of further harm, according to a judge and a protective services worker . . .;” “. . . one report . . . revealed that nearly one-third of 62 children who were abused to death . . . died despite making contact with the state CPS system”). Media influence seems to have fostered this sentiment among the general public, which knows little about the organization of agencies responsible for the protection of children, how they operate, make decisions, or cope with their responsibilities, particularly legal ones (Condie et al 1978:47). This general lack of knowledge, coupled with perceptions of many Americans regarding the bureaucratic nature of large agencies, seems to foster public distrust in the ability of a government agency to carry out the function of child protection (Hodges 2002:1).

One common criticism is the bureaucratic nature of public service agencies, often admonished for being overly rule-, regulation-, and authority-oriented, to the point of being impersonal and rigid (Weber 1946). While bureaucratic management is usually recognized as necessary in handling large volumes of activity (Billingsley and Giovannoni 1972), the agencies are also criticized as generators of “red tape” (Nathan 1994:157), a “coercive” deterrent to enthusiasm and job performance of their employees (Weber 1946; Blau 1966; Foner 1995), and adverse to change toward more effective service delivery (Cohen and Austin 1994; Kadushin and Martin 1988).

However, few studies have examined the effect of media scrutiny and criticism on the function of public service agencies and, in particular, of those public social service entities protecting children. This study was designed to investigate media influence on job efficacy in various aspects of the operation of child protection. It explores changes in duties which may be related to media criticism of agency competency. It also examines reactions of social workers to managerial changes induced by media criticism. The agency was selected since it was one of many agencies experiencing intense scrutiny, and it had instituted several changes in operations which seemed to address some aspects of the media criticism.

Background

The purpose of a child protection agency is first, to ensure children protection from harm induced by a person responsible
for their well-being and second, to provide help for parents in learning to take responsibility for their children (PS Services Manual 2004:1). Agencies providing child protection are responsible for responding to and evaluating every complaint for credible evidence of abuse, neglect, exploitation, maltreatment, or improper custody of a child. In recent years, they have also been responsible for showing evidence of “reasonable efforts” to facilitate continued in-home placement for maltreated children, through services designed to strengthen and stabilize families. Where safety is a concern, provision for out-of-home placement must be made, taking the best interests of the child into consideration in all decisions (PS Services Manual 2004:1).

Preventing unnecessary removal of children from their homes, or providing for prompt return or placement with relatives where possible constitute recent efforts at reform designed to curtail the numbers of children who became “lost” in the foster care system. Forms of family preservation programs, designed to provide “intensive professional assistance to families in crisis . . . restoring adequate family functioning, and . . . averting the need for the removal of children” are one example of such efforts (Center for the Study of Social Policy 2004:3). These programs provide aid in resolving stressful family situations, instruction in parenting skills and conflict resolution, in-home protection for at-risk children, and assistance to parents in using support systems for those families in need (Center for the Study of Social Policy 2004:3). Despite media controversy, such programs have been preserved, expanded, and have become primary tools of child protection agencies.

Research Questions

This paper is a product of a year-long study examining agency reaction to media-induced public opinion. The literature shows that Americans display considerable distrust of large bureaucratic organizations, and lack confidence in government functions, resulting in increased scrutiny of productivity in government agencies (Hodges 2002:1, Nathan 1994:157, Blau 1966:103). Media scrutiny likely brings demand for more public input into the function of child protection agencies. What is the bureaucratic response to involvement of external environmental forces? Is it beneficial or detrimental to the agency, the workers and the
children the agency serves? Theoretical assumptions of the re-
search hold that media-induced public opinion generates a chain
reaction which influences the entire system of child protection
from management to professional staff, and ultimately, to services
for children and families. Such reaction has the potential to be
either beneficial or detrimental to the delivery of child protection
services. This paper examines these consequences.

Methods

Setting
This research took place in an office inside a warehouse-
shaped building which houses multiple staffs who perform the
many tasks related to providing services for people in need. In
the lobby, there were bolted-down multi-color, plastic chairs, a
reception counter for forms and information, and a guard to
ensure that no one goes beyond the lobby unless accompanied by
a social worker. Often the guard was asleep, and recipients walked
right past him. Inside, peripheral offices and conference facilities
surround rows of cubicles and areas reserved for workers to see
clients. Larger supervisor offices were in the midst of worker
cubicles, with walls that go to the ceiling, and personnel with
higher status were in the peripheral offices.

Media Data

Interviews with informants identified media themes as threats
to their work. Subsequent content analysis underscored the in-
fluential role of the media in adverse reactions of management
to media scrutiny. Data collection targeted media sources (i.e.,
newspapers, and television documentaries on the child protection
system). The media material consisted of seventy-six articles,
taken from three newspapers which served a portion of the large
metropolitan area and included the area of study, collected over
a period of time dating from 1989 to 1997. Content analysis was
employed to analyze newspaper data, which focused on state-
ments of politicians, judges, professionals (i.e., police, doctors,
social workers), and letters to the editor from concerned citizens.
The statements were coded into categories which summarized
media themes (i.e., Protection, Accountability, and Resources).
Media Scrutiny Child Protection

Media data incorporated another component which consisted of documentaries aired on the Public Broadcasting System over a period of three months (January–March 1995). These documentaries examined the child protection “system,” in the area where this study was conducted. They included information on foster care and adoption because of the close relationship between child abuse/neglect and these situations, but only subject matter relevant to this research was included in the data analyzed for this study. Documentary material also included statistical information concerning focal subjects of this study, changes over the past decade, agency reaction to those changes, and system problems involving workers and service provision. Content analysis was again applied, and statements were coded into the same categories as those of the newspapers.

Formal Interviews and Participant Observation

A second data set targeted a staff of child protection workers within the organization. The author engaged thirteen informants in interviews lasting from one to two hours in length. The interview schedule consisted of thirteen open-ended questions regarding the subject’s specific job responsibilities, perceptions of and feelings about those responsibilities, internal and external influences on responsibilities and perceptions, and whether those perceptions, feelings or influences affected job performance. All workers held a college degree (BA to MSW), in areas related to child welfare (i.e., psychology, sociology). Twelve respondents had worked for the agency in various capacities for five or more years, but only three were veteran child protection workers. The objective of the interviews was to assess changes which had taken place in the agency just prior to, and during the period of the research, and which were controversial both to media sources and to workers. In order to obtain historical perspective (i.e., a comparison between the way things were done at present with the way they had been done in the past), three former child protection workers were also interviewed. Their qualifications matched those of current workers, except that none held an MSW and all were veteran workers (at least ten years, with over five years in child protection). Four managers who directly influenced child protection were formally interviewed. All were veteran agency
workers, and it was their longevity coupled with advanced degrees that qualified them for managerial positions. Not all of them had performed child protection. The sample for this study was small, as the goal was to examine feelings, perceptions, behaviors and attitudes toward media reports with some depth, within a complete staff of child protection workers and their managers.

In addition to formal interviews, many other agency personnel contributed to the participant observation data, in fieldnotes collected over a period of time lasting nearly thirteen months. These included non-PS managers, social workers, and some of the clerical staff. Statements of some agency clients were also included in these data.

Archival Material

Also collected were archival materials, which illustrated the job from the managerial viewpoint and explained the organizational objectives of the agency, gave the investigator a sense for organizational culture. These included hundreds of pages of policy directives, manuals and statistical reports.

Results

Content Analysis

Data were analyzed using content analysis (see Holsti 1968; Nachmias & Nachmias 1976; Briody 1989) which entails identification and coding of themes that emerge from the data. Use of the data sources led to creation of data sets representing interacting groups internal and external to the agency (i.e., Public/Media, Management Focus, Employee Behavior, and Service Delivery). Each of the four data sources was coded separately. Subsequently, each individual statement from each of the sources was assumed to represent an independent observation and coded separately. From these statements, data themes were then created as groups of statements that clustered around a similar theme (i.e., “Protection,” “Resources,” “Accountability”). The data flow from sources to sets to themes is depicted in Table 1 below.

Public/Media Data

The category “Public/Media,” was derived from multiple chronicles that were often negatively inclined toward services of
Table 1

Data Flow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Public/Media</th>
<th>Mgmt Focus</th>
<th>Empl Beh</th>
<th>Service Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Notes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Interview</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Interviews</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentary</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Action/Revenge</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
<th>Duties</th>
<th>Defense</th>
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welfare agencies. There were 331 statements taken from media sources, which were collapsed into 5 themes: Protection, Resources, Accountability, Action/Revenge and Communication. The media called, first and foremost for "Protection" (116, 36%) and expressed concerns that the agency protect all children at all times, remove all abused children from their biological parents and never return them to abusive homes. It also blamed the agency, often referring to it as being in a state of "crisis," for its failures (i.e., "the child protection system is in crisis [and] virtually under collapse..."). "Resources" (108, 33%), included demands for increases in the child protection budget, staffing levels, training, programs, respect for worker authority, and a
decrease in workload (i.e., "public and private programs for the prevention of child abuse/neglect are understaffed and underfunded"). The "Accountability" (60, 18%), theme showed that the public was concerned with policies requiring confidentiality, which interferes with public scrutiny of the agency. There were many questions about agency honesty, sincerity, and assumption of responsibility for protecting children (i.e., ". . . based on the department’s policy about disclosure of the documents, it is unlikely they will be providing . . . a true picture of what happened" "Action/Revenge" (30, 9%) statements called for some dramatic reforms including amending the constitution, changing laws to hasten the adoption process, establishing a separate child protection department, prosecuting workers, and firing agency directors (i.e., "major changes are obviously necessary, starting with the replacement of [the agency] director . . ."). Two smaller themes in these data comprised less than 5% of the data and suggested communication of agency limitations, protection of workers from media interrogation, and revealed an emerging public concern with falling numbers of child protection reports which were accepted for services.

Management Focus Data

A second data set called "Management Focus" materialized with a total of 878 statements which came from all data bases (newspaper, documentary, fieldnotes, archival materials, and interviews). Themes of Accountability, Resources, Defense, Protection, Duties, and Communication emerged from this data set. Most prevalent in this data were comments regarding "Accountability" (395, 45%), which incorporated "SDM" (Structured Decision Making—an objective decision-making instrument), a "statistical orientation," worker authority, management support of workers, and monitoring of worker time (time studies, time clock and voice mail). Managers and trainers described the program as "the cutting edge" and said it was "designed to give [workers] tools which would enhance [their] judgment." "Resources" (230, 26%) included comments about the family preservation program, funding and support for adoption and foster care, an agency ombudsman, a shortage of workers, and program cuts. One supervisor when queried on how to "prevent cases from
falling through the cracks,” said “we would probably have to have 25% more workers . . .” The “Defensive” (118, 13%) category showed that management did make attempts to defend workers and agency policies, and also accepted responsibility for some problems, while suggesting societal responsibility for others. In response to contentions that “child protection is in a state of crisis,” one supervisor stated “the [media] focused on a small number of children who died and not on the bigger number of children who were saved by the protection system.”

“Protection” (64, 7%) in the management category, concerned workload, paperwork, substantiation rate for allegations of maltreatment, types of cases accepted, standards of promptness in response to agency referrals, and bogus reports (i.e., managers and trainers described the standard as “the clock starts running when the referral comes in . . .”). Management also discussed their “Duties” (49, 6%), as they pertained to workers, including personnel, hiring, orientation, and evaluation concerns, as well as office festivities and management admonitions. “Communication” (22, 3%), was the smallest theme in the management category and it addressed perpetrator notification, education of the public, cultural awareness, and rules for interviewing children.

Employee Behavior Data

There were a total of 1,011 statements in the “Employee Behavior” data taken from formal interviews of workers and fieldnotes. Themes in this data set included Protection, Consequences, Communication, Relations, Resources, and Accountability. Like the media, employees described “Protection” (243, 24%) as their largest concern, and it was here that workers described what constituted the most important aspects of the job to them; duties involved in protecting children, job difficulties (i.e., dangers, stress, tragedies), decision-making, authority and workload. Many workers said they chose the job of child protection because they “wanted to help kids,” “wanted to make sure kids are safe,” or “wanted to protect children.” Workers also revealed what they believed the “Consequences” (238, 24%) of workplace difficulties might be for their ability to keep children safe, and described the overload which sometimes resulted in “case dumping” (redirecting cases to other workers), as well as their morale, coping
behavior, and turnover. One said “It’s too stressful—we do all aspects, intake, oncall, ongoing, court—it over-extends us.” Another said “we’re too stressed out—there’s too much time spent socializing because frustration prevents us from working.” Still another added “you can’t even take a vacation on this job.” Under “Communication” (234, 23%), workers described their attitudes about the job, their clients, the public, and ways in which they coped. Typical comments in this area included “people talk about newspaper accounts [but] they inform the public improperly and incompletely,” “media coverage has caused more stress because of the negative impact, they always show what we didn’t do rather than what we did do—there’s never any blame on the family . . . responsibility has shifted from family to agency” and “media coverage is sensationalized . . . it makes it more difficult for workers to effectively do the job . . .” Another theme called “Relations” (163, 16%), covered relations between workers and management, including statements about worker attitudes and feelings toward bureaucratic management, supervision, harassment, and anger. One poignant comment was “now [we have] less responsibility for decisions because that has been taken away . . . there’s no skill involved anymore . . . I feel anyone could do the job.” Worker discussion of “Resources” (82, 8%) was in relation to qualifications for the job, remuneration and benefits, training, new programs, and lack of resources to help their clients. To these workers “Accountability” (51, 5%) simply meant time studies and other forms of managerial monitoring of what they did.

Service Delivery Data

There were a total of 1,733 statements in the “Service Delivery” data, and although these statements came from all five data sets, the largest number (810) was found in the fieldnote data. Although clients per se were not included in the data collection, there are remarks from some of them in the fieldnotes. Prominent themes in this data set included Protection, Resources, Communication, Consequences, and Accountability.

There were two main themes which comprised most of this data set. “Protection” was the largest (786, 45%), describing the effect that increased workload, difficulties performing the job, and failures and tragedies had on service delivery (i.e., “[the agency]
is bogged down,” there is an “inadequate number of services for prevention,” “reports [have] increased [and] the types of cases have changed . . . in severity”). In addition, it was noted that “one emergency could take all day or several days [and] each referral could involve up to 10 children”). The category “Resources” (778, 45%), was sub-divided into training, programs, service availability, type, and relevance. Some comments in this area included “[we need] shelters—especially for young mothers . . . we need better housing,” “we should provide transportation—[another agency] furnishes bus tokens, we don’t.” Instead, it was noted that “[SDM] reduces [the clients] and their problems to numbers on a checklist—most of which they really do not fit very well?” “Communication” (115, 6%) concerned education of the public, suggestions for agency change, confidentiality, and worker feelings toward clients. Workers suggested that “better education of the public about what to report . . . and the limitations of the agency in protecting children would be beneficial.” Two very small themes comprised the remainder of the data in this set: “Consequences” (52, 3%), describing potential social “consequences” of agency problems, and “Accountability,” (2, >1%) which simply showed how little significance this issue carried for service delivery.

Potential Strategies for Change

A Vicious Circle

The data show that the public is very interested in protecting children. The data also show that everyone (i.e., media, workers, clients) seems to put this aspect first in their concerns, except agency management. Management seems to have more of a concern with showing accountability than it does with protecting children. Primary constraints seem to entail a negative, hypercritical media, a secretive agency management, a social work staff that is frustrated, bewildered and at a loss, both in areas of resources and in service availability, and maltreated children who are going unprotected.

The data show that media sources are usually very critical of agencies that are responsible for protecting children, often implying that they are not accountable. In attempts to correct this image,
agency management react with restrictions on the one thing that they have control over in the agency—the employees. Many of the changes and restrictions do little toward accountability, and merely undermine the authority and integrity of the employees who are directly responsible for the well-being of at-risk children. As a result, these employees, bogged down with new restrictions and increased culpability, become less able to perform their duties and more frustrated with their situation. As the increased efforts at accountability take time away from provision of services to agency clients (in this case, at-risk children), more children are placed in jeopardy and some suffer dire consequences as a result. This whole scenario sets up a situation in which no one benefits—management is frantically trying to correct a bad image, employees are angry and frustrated over what they cannot manage to do for their clients, the clients are not receiving services that might correct their dire situations, and the media sensationalize every new case that comes to their attention. The vicious circle is lamented repeatedly in the media, with only detrimental rather than beneficial consequences for the protection of children.

Breaking the Vicious Circle

Agreement vs. Adversity. There has never been more of a need for the public and child protection agencies to agree on what is important to keep children safe from harm. Assessing blame in every case of maltreatment should not take top priority over correcting the larger societal problem of what needs to be set in place to prevent such poor treatment of children. Surely, a compromise can be devised to stop this defeatist chain and allow agencies to return to the important business of protecting children. The agencies should issue an immediate educational and official Press Release in response to every accusation or negative depiction in the media, and they should have someone designated with the official capacity to manage this activity—either an employee or a consultant.

Communication vs. Confidentiality. Because child protection agencies are increasingly under public scrutiny, and the media is a fast, effective means of criticizing what they do, there is a need for increased communication between agencies and both the public
they serve and the media information conduit. Agencies must stop hiding behind a veil of confidentiality, and be more forthright in explanations of what they can do, what they cannot do, and what they really need in order to do a better job. Everyone would be better served through explanations of why the program runs the way it does, which has a lot to do with being a bureaucracy, but it also faces problems in resources, public support, and authority. Negative media reports only serve to exacerbate these problems, while a less biased portrayal of the agency, utilizing facts rather than sensationalism, might increase public support and funding for programs, so this information should be made available to both the public as a whole and the media. Perhaps, if the public knew what the job entailed and understood the challenges these workers face, they might be more willing to ensure better funding of services. Media, in the role of an unbiased forum for this communication, would benefit all involved, especially the children.

Accusations vs. Understanding. Better relations might convince news reporters and other media members to aid the cause through a more impartial portrayal of child protection agencies. The negative and accusatory tone of the media material prompts agency management to react by rearranging or modifying policies and procedures in attempts to satisfy media demands and alleviate incriminations. The first step in stopping this spiral of adversity might entail a meeting of media representatives, top level administrators, and child protection agency management designed to increase understanding of the challenges inherent to the field of child protection and child welfare work. If agencies did, as suggested above, lift the long-standing and overrated cloak of confidentiality, and allow workers to talk with media reporters, social work agencies could offer informational/educational forums for members of the press to become informed regarding the programs about which they write. All cases should have comprehensive documentation of all efforts to address the situation which initially brought them to the attention of child protection, and these should be available to the media who cover any case where a child is harmed. Bringing everyone to the same level of understanding might facilitate mutual insight to problems the agency faces in implementing its programs. Then, perhaps, these
problems could be presented to the public in a less accusing and more understandable format.

Support vs. Blame. Increased verbal support of workers by administrators and sufficient funding to realize the stated objectives of various programs would accomplish more toward advancing the quality of service than the current superfluous zeal with which we concern ourselves toward assessing blame. A more favorable depiction of the agency in its sincere concern with keeping children safe might find a public that is more favorably inclined to work toward some alleviation of resource problems with either an increase or a reallocation of tax revenue. Not portraying the agency as “the problem” in media reports, might serve to increase public sympathy and support for agency programs. The media could also promote a more positive atmosphere for child protection by amplification of the public role in keeping children safe from harm, and clarification of the difficulties child protection workers, who care about children, face in their day-to-day work.

In the meantime, if managers could transcend a bureaucratic reaction to every problem, resolution of some of the real problems confronting the agency could be addressed—and these have little to do with worker complacency, and much more to do with contrived, ineffective attempts at accountability. One major problem is overabundance of (often frivolous) paperwork. Management could better spend time refocusing on child (rather than job) protection and devise new, more creative ways of solving the real problems both they and their workers face. Restoration of worker authority would enable those who witness a situation firsthand, to resolve the problems that prevent children from returning to their homes. Time, energy and money spent on solving problems of victims (and perpetrators) of child abuse would go much further toward meeting public, agency, worker and service expectations.

References


IS INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION ALWAYS A GOOD THING?

RICHARD A. LONGORIA
University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work

The human service literature suggests that the concept and outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration are not well understood. Nonetheless, inter-organizational collaboration has emerged as a statement of direction for social welfare policy and professional practice. In light of an unclear understanding of collaboration, this analysis suggests the concept has powerful symbolic qualities, which perpetuates its continued use. While the general notion of collaboration is promising, human service administrators and stakeholders must couple critical thinking and action to clarify the meaning, intent, application, and outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration. This article raises the question as to whether the popularity of inter-organization collaboration is grounded in its proven efficacy as a means of achieving specific human service recipient outcomes or symbolism and ideology.

Keywords: collaboration, cooperation, symbolism, inter-organizational relations, social policy

Introduction

Policy makers, administrators, and the general public are vigorously promoting collaboration between human service organizations in the United States (U.S.) (Sandfort, 1999). However, the concept and outcomes of collaboration are not well understood (Alter & Hage, 1993; Morrison, 1996; O’Looney, 1997; Reilly, 2001). The promotion of collaboration may have roots in its value as a symbol of rationality, efficiency, legitimacy, and social responsibility (Morrison, 1996; Reitan, 1998; Weiss, 1981). In light of an
array of emerging accountability expectations which link funding streams to an organization's achievement of specific performance standards (Cooke, Reid, & Edwards, 1997; GPRA, 1993), an unconditional and overzealous embrace of inter-organizational collaboration may result in a marked reduction in the already limited resources for human service stakeholders and possibly harm the most vulnerable groups in the U.S. Therefore, agency administrators, service providers, and stakeholders have an ethical duty to clarify the intention, application, and outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration for human service recipients.

The Emergence of Collaboration as Social Welfare Policy

Most human services administrators, interventionists, and an array of public servants that Michael Lipsey (1980) refers to as "street-level bureaucrats" will attest that they commonly encounter the term "collaboration" in their work. Inter-organizational collaboration is promoted as a rational and effective process through which the public expectation for accountability, results, and outcomes from human service organizations can be met (Alaszewski & Harrision, 1988; Austin, 2000; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Gray, 1989; Page, 2003).

Hassett and Austin (1997) and Neugeboren (1990) note that collaboration and coordination in human services reflects a history of reform efforts to achieve "service integration." Harbert, Finnegan, and Tyler (1997) maintain that "interagency service coordination, integration, or collaboration are general concepts used to describe a variety of efforts to reform the existing delivery system of categorical social services" (p. 84) informed by the Social Security Act.

The more recent emphasis on collaboration between organizations reflects a public concern that human service agencies are not effectively "working together" at the national, state, and local levels (Austin, 2000; Gottshall, 2002; Shorr, 1998; Waldfogel, 1997). The predominant form of inter-organizational relations are believed to contribute to a public human service system characterized as fragmented, inefficient, wasteful (Berger & Neuhaus, 1996; Leon, 1999; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; Walter & Petr, 2000), and allows those in need to, at times, "fall through the cracks."
Responding to these concerns, legislative bodies and a growing number of public and private funding initiatives have developed mandates, which require human service agencies to engage in inter-organizational "collaborative efforts," "coordination of services," and "partnerships" (Bush, 2000; CAPTA PL 104-235, 108-36; Farmakopoulou, 2002; Harrison, Lynch, Rosander, & Borton, 1990; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Springer, et al., 1999; USDHHS, 2000; Whittington, 2003). While a "policy space" (Berk & Rossi, 1999, p. 10) has been created for "collaboration," upon closer examination, the literature suggests this concept is far from clear.

What Does Collaboration Mean?

Walter and Petr (2000) observe that collaboration is commonly understood as "working together" (p. 5). Weiner and Ray (2000) maintain that the terms cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are often used interchangeably and have offered distinctions among these concepts. However, attempting to standardize the term "collaboration" is difficult as there does not appear to be a unified understanding of the concept (Alter and Hage, 1993; Reilly, 2001). Thus, how can human service agencies be expected to engage in "inter-organizational collaboration" when the meaning of the concept is not clear?

In a recent literature review, this author identified fifteen definitions of collaboration. However, only the definitions developed by Graham and Barter (1999), Mattessich and Monsey (1992), and Wood and Gray (1989) are presented (Table 1) as they, taken as a whole, capture salient themes which emerge from a review of attempts to define collaboration.

Synthesizing a multidisciplinary literature across social work, education, psychology, sociology, management studies, and public administration, Graham and Barter’s (1999) definition of collaboration suggests four dynamic relational properties. First, collaboration is described as fundamentally a relationship that occurs between two or more entities. The relationship appears to be an emergent property of a larger structure that links stakeholders together, which is the second property. Stakeholders can be conceived as individuals, groups, organizations, or even societies. Thus, collaboration is not an attribute of the stakeholder
A relational system in which two or more stakeholders pool together resources in order to meet objectives that neither could meet individually (Graham & Barter, 1999, p. 7).

A mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment to: a definition of mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 7).

Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures to act or decide on issues related to that domain (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146).

per se, but an emergent property of a relationship, which links a collective body of stakeholders together. The synergistic quality of the relationship is the third property. In other words, that which emerges from the relationship is greater than what each of the stakeholders could have accomplished individually. And fourth, the relationship exists in a bounded structure with systems properties. This is not to say that the system is closed, but to emphasize the structural nature of the system.

In another review of the public administration, social science, education, and health literature, Mattessich and Monsey (1992) examined 133 publications and characterized most of the literature on collaboration as "how to manuals." Eighteen empirical studies emerged from a content analysis, which informed the identification of 19 factors that may give rise to collaboration. These factors were categorized within six conceptual domains, i.e., environment, membership, process/structure, communication, purpose, and resources.

This conceptualization of inter-organizational collaboration captures the idea of an "emergent property" that can characterize a relationship between organizations advanced by Emery and Trist (1965) several decades earlier. Gray proposes that the process of collaboration be conceptualized as building upon successive negotiated stages. Thus, movement from one stage to another is contingent upon the completion of specific "tasks," although O’Looney (1994) has critiqued Gray’s stage model and argues for a more flexible and recursive conceptualization of collaboration.

The definitions offered by Graham and Barter (1999), Mattessich and Monsey (1992), and Wood and Gray (1991) share four broad themes. For example, each definitions stresses that (1) the fundamental nature of collaboration is that of a joint activity in the form of a relational system between two or more organizations; (2) an intentional planning and design process results in mutually defined and shared organizational goals and objectives; (3) structural properties emerge from the relationship between organizations; and (4) emergent "synergistic" qualities characterize the process of collaboration. However, Graham and Barter (1999) and Mattessich and Monsey (1992) maintain that a favorable outcome will occur as a result of inter-organizational collaboration. According to Gray and Wood (1991), the specific outcomes of collaboration should not be incorporated into the definition a priori, but left open to empirical analysis.

While the above researchers have substantively contributed to an understanding of collaboration, it is of particular interest that Graham and Barter (1999) and Mattessich and Monsey (1992) incorporate a positive outcome or consequence within the definition of collaboration. Mattessich and Monsey assume that the outcome of collaboration will be necessarily "mutually beneficial." In the same vein, Graham and Barter assume that the outcome of collaboration will result in an outcome, which neither entity could have achieved individually. The essence of this critique is not to question whether the process of collaboration will result in a consequence, but rather the specification of a particular consequence as an element of the definition.

The definition offered by Wood and Gray (1991) is viewed as superior to those proposed by Graham and Barter (1999) and Mattessich and Monsey (1992) because 1) the outcome of collab-
oration is not specified and 2) it is informed by a conceptual framework of organizational relations. However, as a practical matter, it is believed that the overwhelming popularity of inter-organizational collaboration as a statement of direction for social welfare policy and professional practice is predicated on an underlying assumption that positive outcomes will occur as reflected in the definitions proposed by Graham and Barter (1999) and Mattessich and Monsey (1992). Furthermore, it is proposed that the concept of collaboration has powerful symbolic qualities, which perpetuates its popularity despite the lack of a clear pattern of evidence to support that inter-organizational collaboration results in positive outcomes for human service recipients (Provan & Milward, 2001; Reilly, 2001; Schorr, 1998; Weinstein, Whittington, & Leiba, 2003).

Collaboration as Symbolism

Symbolism is often integral to social welfare policy development (Parsons, 1995) and central to an institutional theoretical framework of inter-organizational relations (Galaskiewicz, 1985; Hall, 1999). Provan and Milward (2001) and Reitan (1998) suggest organizations that reference “collaboration” enhance their legitimacy within the community or environments in which they operate. Oliver (1990) describes the symbolic meaning and importance of legitimacy to organizations within an institutional theoretical framework as follows:

Institutional environments impose pressures on organizations to justify their activities. These pressures motivate organizations to increase their legitimacy in order to appear in agreement with prevailing norms, rules, beliefs, or expectations of external constituents. Legitimacy can originate from an organization’s motives to demonstrate or improve its reputation, image, prestige, or congruence with prevailing norms in its institutional environment. (p. 246)

Weiss (1981) maintains that cultural values of “efficiency,” “rationality,” and “comprehensiveness” are projected through the rhetoric of “coordination.” These same values appear to promote the public’s demand for inter-organizational collaboration. However, merely relying on rhetoric without specificity often distorts
and oversimplifies complex inter-organizational realities that impact human service organizational processes and outcomes (e.g., lack of resources, economic circumstances, issues of power and control, and so on). A salient point advanced here is that during the 1990s and into the 21st century, “collaboration” has supplanted the symbolism of “cooperation.”

Consistent with Wiess’ (1981) formulation concerning the symbolic value of “cooperation,” it is possible that collaboration conveys a “reassuring” quality. Morrison (1996) suggests that certain qualities of concepts are “attractive” to human service practitioners and incorporated into their professional lexicon and rhetoric for aesthetic rather than substantive reasons. Given the frustration, uncertainty, and anxiety some may experience when managing or operating within a human service system, Dye’s (as cited in Parsons, 1995) insight is relevant to the popularity of collaboration as a statement of direction for social policy that informs human services:

Policies do more than effect change in societal conditions; they also hold a people together and maintain and orderly state. For example, a government “war on poverty” may not have any significant impact on the poor, but it reassures moral persons, the affluent as well as the poor that government “cares” about poverty. (p. 612)

In this vein, perhaps the idea of “collaboration” taps a complex cognitive network of relationships within the collective unconscious psyche (Jung, 1964) that compels individuals to uncritically embrace the concept, without question.

The Spirit of Democracy and Collaboration

Alexis De Tocqueville writes extensively about the propensity of Americans to form associations (Heffner, 1956 [English translation]) in his classic study of the U.S. in the early 1830s. While Tocqueville did not use the term collaboration, his “principle of association” speaks to what Emery and Trist (1965) would identify as an “emergent property” of relations between individuals and groups. For example, Tocqueville describes an association as “unit[ing] into one channel the efforts of diverting minds, and urges them vigorously towards the one end which it clearly points out” (Heffner, 1956, p. 96). Tocqueville viewed the process of form-
More recently, "collaboration" has been referenced in discussions concerning civil society and linked instrumentally to actions or activities that promote civic and social responsibility. For example, Putnam (1995) described "networks of collaboration" in civically engaged communities that give rise to "social capital," which he defines as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p. 67). Within communities, Provan and Milward (2001) suggest social capital and an organization's legitimacy can be enhanced through "collaboration." Chrislip and Larson (1994) describe a process of "collaboration" between community and human service groups and link the concept to democratic principles and civic engagement.

Thus, from the plethora of mechanical descriptions that emerge from "how to manuals" identified by Mattessich and Monsey (1992) to the laudable vision of a more active role of community members in civic affairs, a clear meaning of collaboration remains illusive. However, while there does appear to be common themes, which cut across the more comprehensive descriptions of collaboration, should this unclear concept be unconditionally embraced and utilized to inform public social welfare policy and professional practice? For example, while invoking the idea of "working together" appears to promote deeply cherished democratic images, history sheds light on a time in the U.S. when community members arguably collaborated to support oppression and intolerance. Furthermore, Whittington's (2003) synthesis of critical language analysis (see Fairclough, 2001) suggests "the potential of collaboration and partnership to function as ideology by concealing and perpetuating unequal power relations, disadvantage and benefits to sectional interests" (p. 29).

Are the Outcomes of Inter-organizational Collaboration Always Positive?

Courtney (2000) comments that descriptions of inter-agency relations must move beyond an anecdotal "look at what we have been doing lately in our agency" (p. 756) to a more rigorous
empirically based analysis of outcomes. Courtney's observation is pointed as more recent studies and reviews raise questions about the efficacy of inter-organizational collaboration (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Morrison, 1996; O'Looney, 1997; Provan & Milward, 2001; Reilly, 2001; Reitan, 1998; Schorr, 1998; Weiss, 1981; Wimpfheimer, Bloom, & Kramer, 1990). For example, Helling (1998) maintains that the beneficial outcome assumptions, upon which much of the impetus to collaborate is predicated, should be balanced with the inherent impact on limited organizational resources such as "money, time, and effort" (p. 238). As follows, it is plausible that inter-organizational collaboration could conceivably result in fiscal waste and inefficiency, i.e., that which collaboration between organizations is supposed to remedy!

O'Looney (1997) maintains that the disappointing outcomes of inter-organizational collaborations "has occurred because collaboration (among organizations) has been incompletely realized" (p. 33). However, the findings of case studies reported by Reilly (1998; 2001) indicate that "despite many of the purported benefits, inter-organizational collaboration remains an uncertain process" (2001, p. 74). In addition, Schorr (1998) maintains that her study of human service organizations across the U.S. provided no evidence to support the contention that positive outcomes for human service recipients emerge from inter-organizational collaboration, per se.

A series of initiatives have been implemented to reform public child welfare systems across the U.S. that place a particular emphasis on the use of inter-organizational collaboration between federal, state, and local child welfare stakeholders (CAPTA PL 104-235, 108-36; Hoel, 1998; Page, 2003; Reilly, 2001; USDHHS, 2000). However, the ability of state child welfare systems to achieve "substantial conformity" (a minimally acceptable national standard) on outcome measures for child safety, permanency, and well being by state child welfare systems has been disappointing based on findings from the "results-oriented" national child and family services reviews that occurred during 2001-2004 (USDHHS, 2005). Of all the states in the U.S. (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), no state child welfare system achieved "substantial conformity" on key outcomes that measure 1) child permanency and stability in their living
situations and 2) whether families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs. In addition, only 6 states in the U.S. achieved “substantial conformity” on child safety outcome measures (USDHHS, 2005).

Glisson and Hemmelgarn (1998) reported a quasi-experimental longitudinal study that showed inter-organizational services coordinated among 32 children’s service programs resulted in a negative impact on the quality of child and family services and had no effect on key service outcomes. Instead, Glisson and Hemmelgarn found that intra-organizational climate had a positive impact on the quality of services and key outcomes for children and families. Reviews of inter-organizational collaboration initiatives undertaken in Europe that focus on achieving specific outcomes for service recipients have been inconclusive (Gardner, 2003; Thomson, 2003). Although Gardner writes “while the vision and rational for joint work between specialist groups are powerful, there is yet insufficient evidence to argue that greater collaboration between services will necessarily produce better outcomes for all children and families” (p. 156).

Recent studies on inter-organizational collaboration focus attention on the process (and strategies) of “collaboration” among human service stakeholders across agencies (Farmakopoulou, 2002; Harbert, Finnegan, & Tyler, 1997; Page, 2003; Provan & Milward, 2001; Reilly, 2001). However, there is accumulating evidence to question whether inter-organizational collaboration always translates into positive outcomes for those individuals who receive services from organizations that engage in “collaboration.” It is time for human service stakeholders to ask, “whose needs are being met through the promotion and maintenance of inter-organizational collaboration?”

Recommendations

The apparent popular notion that collaboration will enhance human service delivery systems is questionable at best and deceptive at worst. Although the concept offers promise on conceptual grounds, explicating specific outcomes and clarifying the process of an inter-organizational collaborative relationship must receive the same enthusiasm, as promoting the popular and symbolically powerful phrase “let’s collaborate” appears to garner. Therefore,
the following are recommendations for human service administrators and stakeholders to inform reflection, discussion, and action on matters pertaining to "inter-organizational collaboration."

**Dialogue on Meaning and Assumptions**

First, human service stakeholders must actively invite dialogue on what is meant by the term "collaboration" when this concept is presented as an element of social welfare policy and/or human service program design. It is not advisable to assume that a singular meaning of "collaboration" exists in the minds of human service stakeholders. Critical thinking can inform meaningful dialogue about inter-organizational collaboration, and efforts to conceptualize this concept should be nurtured and framed as an effort to inform and strengthen the capacity of human service systems to achieve specific outcomes for their target population. In addition, careful attention must be placed on ensuring that the definition of inter-organization does not incorporate a positive outcome, *a priori*.

**Adequate and Sufficient Resources**

Second, establishing and maintaining relationships between organizations can be resource and labor-intensive. A vague notion of collaboration emanating within and radiating from a collective body of agencies could potentially result in a decrease in limited funding for human service recipients as substantive resources are diverted towards the development of an increasing array of administrative structures and processes to maintain the inter-organizational relationship (see O'Looney, 1997). Thus, human service administrators and stakeholders should actively challenge the basis on which inter-organizational collaboration is presented as a cost saving measure, inexpensive, free, and/or a folksy plea for "the right thing to do," particularly when clear links have not been established to human service outcomes.

**Human Service Program Accountability**

The third recommendation is informed by the mandates of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA, PL 103-62). This legislation mandates clear links between the achievement of organizational performance benchmarks and the receipt of federal funding. For organizations receiving direct or indirect
federal funding contingent upon the application of an "inter-
organizational collaborative," the inability to demonstrate spe-
cific outcomes achieved through collaboration could ultimately
result in a reduction of resources for critical human services. 
While grant writers have learned that sprinkling a funding pro-
posal with the term "collaboration" is very attractive to decision-
making funding bodies, public administrators and human service
stakeholders must establish operational definitions and consist-
tent terminology to inform the implementation and realistic limits
of what a specified inter-organizational collaborative relationship
can plausibly achieve.

Data-Driven Decisions and Relevant Evaluation Models

Fourth, the development, maintenance, and evaluation of or-
ganizational relationships should be data-driven. Human service
administrators and stakeholders engaged in inter-organizational
relationships must collect on-going relevant quantitative and
qualitative organizational process and outcome data to evaluate
whether human service recipients are being harmed as a result
of "collaboration" between organizations as many populations
are particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in the availability of
needed resources. While this latter point may appear counter-
intuitive, the history of human service policies and program
outcomes overflows with case studies describing "unintended
consequences" (Berk & Rossi, 1999).

Evaluation models must be developed to study and clarify the
outcomes of collaboration between organizations. The use of logic
models (Kellogg Foundation, 2000) can be particularly helpful
in determining whether the achievement of specific outcomes
are plausible using operational definitions to inform an under-
standing of inter-organizational collaboration. Logic models and
concept maps (Trochim, 1989) can be conducted with stakeholders
to tailor evaluation models to the unique needs and questions
identified by the organization(s).

Sharing Knowledge

Fifth, human service administrators and human stakeholders
must present research findings on the outcomes of collaboration
between human service organizations to policy makers and the
public to inform social policy, programs, and resource allocation decisions. It is imperative that a body of knowledge is developed on how delivering human services, informed by a lucid model of inter-organizational collaboration, impacts the lives of human service recipients.

Conclusion

Inter-organizational collaboration among human service agencies is a statement of direction for social welfare policy, which has informed legislation, service delivery systems, and funding mandates. Unfortunately, the meaning of inter-organizational collaboration is unclear and the outcomes of the application of this concept are not well understood. In light of an array of existing public and private accountability and performance-based initiatives linking human service funding to agency outcomes, the wisdom of overzealously embracing a vague notion of inter-organizational collaboration predicated upon the alluring symbolic qualities of the concept is called into question. An urgent need exists for all human service stakeholders to engage in critical thinking, dialogue, and generating a knowledge base concerning the outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration in the specific context of the lives of individuals who received services from organizations that practice inter-organizational collaboration. The initiation and maintenance of inter-organizational collaboration should be grounded in the results of empirical studies that shows its efficacy as a means of achieving specific human service recipient outcomes, not a practice or political ideology.

References


Inter-organizational Collaboration


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SAVING FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS

MIN ZHAN
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
School of Social Work

MARK SCHREINER
Washington University in St. Louis
George Warren Brown School of Social Work
Center for Social Development

Low-income people have less access to opportunities for post-secondary education, and the welfare reform in 1996 further limited access for welfare recipients. Since welfare reform, there has been an increasing interest in strategies meant to enhance the well-being of low-income people through education and the development of human capital. In this study, we examine how low-income people saved for post-secondary education in Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) in a nationwide demonstration. IDAs provide matches for savings used primarily for home purchase, microenterprise, and post-secondary education. We examine how savings outcomes differed between participants who intended to use their savings for post-secondary education and other participants. We also look at how these differences in savings outcomes were associated with difference in participant characteristics and in IDA design across different programs in the demonstration.

Results indicate that the savings outcomes of “education savers” were different from other participants. Furthermore, savings for post-secondary education moderated some relationships between savings outcomes and other characteristics of participants and of IDA programs. Implications are discussed for policy and social-work practice for using IDAs to promote human-capital development by low-income people.

Keywords: post-secondary education, individual development accounts, assets building, welfare reform

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Both theory and empirical evidence suggest that education has a wide variety of positive economic and social effects on individuals, families and society as a whole (Becker, 1993; Beverly & Sherraden, 1997; Center for Women Policy Studies, 2002). Furthermore, the labor-market returns to education have increased since the early 1970s (Mishel, Bernstein & Schmitt, 1997; Mishel & Burtless, 1995), and the rise in earnings inequality during the past two decades is closely related to differences in educational attainment (Amott, 1994; Bernhardt & Dresser, 2002). In the meantime, despite the fact that the average level of education has increased over the years for both men and women, low-income people and other disadvantaged groups have faced decreasing access to opportunities for post-secondary education (Mortenson, 2000).

Among the many factors contributing to low access is inadequate financial resources (Boldt, 2000; Gittell, Gross, & Holdaway, 1993). In particular, the increasing costs of college and cuts in need-based financial aid have made post-secondary education less affordable for many low-income people (Choitz & Widom, 2003; Mortenson, 2000; Sherraden, 1991). The welfare reform of 1996 has focused on work requirements, further limiting access to post-secondary education for welfare recipients. Low-income people may need to put short-term needs ahead of investment in their long-term development of human capital, and it is important for social policy to help them save and invest for their future education.

Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are an approach to help low-income people save and accumulate financial assets for post-secondary education. IDAs are targeted to low-income people and provide incentives and an institutional structure conducive to saving (Schreiner, et al., 2001). IDAs provide participants with matches for savings used for home purchase, microenterprise, and post-secondary education. This paper investigates the following questions: Do IDA participants who intend to use their savings for post-secondary education have different savings outcomes than other IDA participants? And if so, what demographic factors and program-design characteristics are associated with the differences? Answers to these questions may provide lessons that will help guide modifications to IDA policy and program design in ways that might improve savings outcomes for those intending to use their IDA for post-secondary education.
Background

*Access to Post-Secondary Education for Low-Income People*

The rising costs of college since the early 1980s have made post-secondary education less affordable for low-income households (Milano, 2003). Social investment in higher education for low-income people has also declined. Since the 1990s, the federal government and some states have moved from need-based financial aid to merit-based aid (Clancy, Cramer, & Parrish, 2005; Mortenson, 2000). In addition, the federal government has aggressively expanded educational loan programs in the past two decades, with more of the costs of these programs borne by borrowers instead of taxpayers. Unfortunately, students from low-income families are more likely to view loans as barriers; for example, many low-income students report being afraid of not being able to pay back the loans (Choitz & Widom, 2003). Furthermore, state budget crises in recent years have forced many community colleges—traditionally a popular choice among low-income students—to raise tuition (Choitz & Widom, 2003).

These above factors made college less affordable for low-income people, especially considering that college aid previously had greater impact for the poor than for the non-poor (Dynarski, 2002). Related to these changes, gaps in educational attainment by income level started to widen in the 1980s and 1990s. For example, by the mid-1990s, a student from a family in the top income quartile was 10 to 12 times more likely than a student from the bottom quartile to have completed a bachelor's degree by age 24, but in 1970 and 1980, the gaps were only 6 and 4 times (Mortenson, 2000).

Beyond these changes to college costs and the structure of financial aid, welfare reform made post-secondary education—especially four-year college degrees—more difficult for low-income people. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) with a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant (U.S. Congress, 1996). This law transformed the 60-year-old welfare system into a work-based system which requires states to place increasing percentages of adults in work or work-related activities. Historically, most work-relief programs until the first half of this century
did not offer extensive opportunities for training and manpower development of welfare recipients, primarily to avoid opposition from trade unions (Charnow, 1943). Since the 1960s, however, a few training and manpower development programs such as the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) program, the Work Incentive program (WIN), the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs were implemented with federal funding. The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program, which was the centerpiece of the Family Support Act (FSA) of 1998, permitted the states to support postsecondary education, including two- and four-year college degrees.

TANF's work-participation mandates have shifted the focus of welfare-to-work programs away from education and training toward quick job placement. The new system of welfare provision includes a number of regulations that discourage welfare recipients from pursuing post-secondary education. First, TANF is designed to place recipients directly into jobs. States are penalized unless they put a large share of their adult recipients into work programs. This makes states less likely to provide education or meaningful job training. Second, job programs under TANF are narrowly defined, and most post-secondary education and job training do not count as “work”. For example, recipients enrolled in post-secondary education for longer than a 12-month period are, for the most part, excluded from a state’s calculation of its work-participation rates (Greenberg, Strawn, & Plimpton, 1999). Third, recipients are limited to 60 months of benefits (whether or not consecutive), and states can specify shorter time limits. Poor women with children and limited resources often take longer than four or five years to finish a Bachelor’s degree (Mathur, 1998; Naples, 1998). Fourth, no more than 20 percent of caseload can count vocational training toward meeting the work requirement, including teen parents in secondary school. This cap may further limit the number of those seeking to enroll in higher education.

These factors can greatly reduce welfare recipients' access to post-secondary education, especially 4-year college degrees. Studies show that in the last few years, the college attendance of welfare recipients has decreased (Center for Women Policy
Individual Development Accounts

Studies, 2002; Jacobs & Winslow, 2003; Jones-Deweever, Peterson, & Song, 2003). For example, the Center for Women Policy Studies found that the college enrollment of welfare recipients had dropped by 46%, 60%, and 77% in different states such as Wisconsin, New York, and California. Other studies have also noted a drop in the number of students in universities who receive welfare (Snow, 1997; Spatz, 1997).

The "quick labor-force attachment model" assumes that those who take low-paying or part-time jobs will eventually move up to higher-paying and full-time jobs (Pavetti & Acs, 2001). While welfare reform has decreased welfare caseloads, research has consistently found that those who leave TANF often have unstable jobs and face precarious financial circumstances (Anderson & Gryzlak, 2002; Johnson & Corcoran, 2003; Loprest, 2001). At the same time, studies have found that welfare recipients who had college degrees earned more than those without college degrees (Karier, 1998; Mathur, 2004). This research has sparked an increasing interest in human-capital development strategies to enhance long-term self-sufficiency among welfare recipients, and more broadly, among the working poor (Strawn, 2004). Individual Development Accounts are one approach in this respect.

Asset-based Theory, IDAs, and Post-Secondary Education

Asset-based welfare theory highlights the importance of assets compared to that of income (Sherraden, 1991). According to this perspective, assets bring security, and maybe more importantly, assets may possibly stimulate and facilitate the development of human capital. Consistent with the notion of social investment in developmentalism (Midgley, 2003; Sen, 1999), asset-based welfare theory emphasizes opportunities to build assets that can strengthen human capacities.

Based on this theory, IDAs were designed to help low-income people build assets for long-term development, including post-secondary education (Sherraden, 1988; 1991). Deposits are made in IDAs by low-income participants. Others could also make deposits, perhaps related to milestones such as completing a year of schooling or graduating from high school. Withdrawals for post-secondary education (or other specified asset purchases) would be matched, with higher match rates for poorer participants. In
contrast to the current emphasis on loans to pay for college, IDAs aim to promote a system of savings and assets.

At the state level, asset building and IDAs are already a policy theme. For example, PRWORA allows states to set up IDA programs with TANF funds and to exclude IDAs balances as countable assets for the purpose of qualifying for benefits. As of 2002, 22 states include post-secondary education as a matchable use of their IDAs (Edwards & Gunn, 2002). Some IDA or similar programs outside the United States have also focused on post-secondary education (Boshara & Sherraden, 2004). For example, Canada has embarked on an asset-building demonstration (called “Learn$ave”) that provides matches for post-secondary education and microenterprise. In Western Europe, national Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) resemble IDAs for post-secondary education. Participants in the Saving Gateway, a pilot asset-building program in the United Kingdom, indicated that education and training were the only restrictions on matched withdrawals that they would find acceptable (Kempson, McKay, & Collard, 2003). In sum, matched savings for post-secondary education as a new policy theme is being tested both in the United States and elsewhere.

Purpose of the Study

Can low-income people save for post-secondary education in IDAs? How do their savings outcomes differ from those of participants who are saving for other purposes such as home ownership or microenterprise? Given the current development of IDA programs, these are important questions. This study addresses these questions through an analysis of data from the American Dream Demonstration (ADD), a national IDA project. As far as we know, this is the first quantitative research on how low-income people save for post-secondary education in a structured, matched savings program.

Data and Methods

ADD Programs

ADD was a national demonstration of IDAs for low-income people. The 14 IDA programs in ADD were run from 1997–2001 by 13 not-for-profit host organizations (one host had two programs)
which include community development organizations, social-service agencies, credit unions, and housing organizations. A consortium of private foundations provided funding. All programs in ADD provided matches for home purchase, microenterprises, and post-secondary education, and some programs also provided matches for job training, home repair, or retirement savings. Match rates ranged from 1:1 to 7:1, with the most common rate being 2:1. Eight programs had annual deposit limits, ranging from $180 to $3,000 per year; and six programs had lifetime deposit limits, ranging from $1,800 to $8,000 per participant.

The savings data are unusually accurate, as they come directly from the monthly passbook savings-account records of the depository institutions.

Participants

ADD programs used a variety ways to market IDAs, and ADD participation was voluntary. Enrollment in ADD began July 1, 1997 and ended by December 31, 1999. As of December 31, 2001 (the date at which deposits were ended), ADD had 2,353 participants. A participant is defined as an enrollee with at least one account statement, whether or not he or she later dropped out (Schreiner, Clancy & Sherraden, 2002). Important characteristics of ADD participants are presented in Table 1. Most participants were female (80 percent), and nearly half were African-American (47 percent). Almost half were never-married (49 percent). About 58 percent had attended some college or had some type of college degree, and 82 percent were employed (full-time or part-time) at enrollment. Compared with the general low-income population (Sherraden et al., 2000), ADD participants were more educated and more likely to be employed. On the other hand, compared with the general low-income population, a higher proportion of ADD participants were women, African-American, or never-married. These comparisons suggest that ADD participants tended to be somewhat disadvantaged members of the "working poor".

Measurements

The dependent variable in this study, Average Monthly Net Deposits (AMND), is defined as deposits plus interest minus unmatched withdrawals, divided by the number of months eligible
to participate. Withdrawals in ADD may be matched or unmatched, depending on whether they are used to purchase matchable assets, such as home, postsecondary education, or microenterprises. AMND measures net deposits but also controls for the length of time that a participant has had the opportunity to save. All else constant, greater AMND implies greater saving and asset accumulation in IDAs.

The independent variables include important program-related factors (also known as "institutional" factors) and participant characteristics. Program factors include the match rate, the monthly savings target, hours of required financial education, and whether participants used direct deposit into their IDAs. The monthly savings target is the total match cap (i.e., the limit on the amount of deposits that can be matched) divided by the time cap (i.e., the number of months after opening an account in which a participant may make matchable deposits). IDAs in ADD have both a match cap and a time cap because funds are limited in time and amount. If deposited each month and not removed as an unmatched withdrawal, this level of savings would lead to net deposits equal to the lifetime match cap by the end of participation. Participant characteristics include demographic information (gender, age, marital status, race/ethnicity, number of children, and number of adults), education and employment status, household income, bank account ownership, home ownership, and receipt of AFDC/TANF. Detailed information on these variables is presented in Table 1.

The regression also includes a yes/no variable that indicates whether a given participant was an "education saver" who made a matched withdrawal for post-secondary education or who declared at enrollment that he or she intended to make such a matched withdrawal. There are two major reasons that we include participants who have not made matched withdrawals as "education savers". First, for most participants, savings ended and matches were allowed only for deposits made through December 31, 2001, at which point the most recent data are available. However, matched withdrawals were possible at most ADD programs through June 30, 2002. Therefore, the "time window" for the current data does not catch participants who made a matched withdrawal after the end of the "savings period" (i.e., December
Individual Development Accounts

31, 2001). This group includes a large share of intended "education savers". Second, further analyses indicate that there are no significant differences between "intended education savers" and "actual education savers" in terms of their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

Similar yes/no indicator variables are also included to mark participants who declared an intention to save for home purchase, home repair, microenterprise, retirement saving, or job training. Finally, in order to examine how being an education saver moderates the associations between program and participant factors and savings outcomes, the regression model includes interaction terms between the indicator for "education savers" and all the other independent variables.

Analysis

Following descriptive and bivariate analyses, multiple regression was used to examine how Average Monthly Net Deposits in IDAs might differ between "education savers" and others in ADD. AMND was regressed on program factors, participant characteristics, and interactions between the indicator for "education savers" and each of the other independent variables. After listwise deletion of cases with missing values, the regression sample encompassed 1,979 cases. This model simultaneously estimates how the savings outcome is associated with program and participant factors, with being an "education saver", and how being an "education saver" moderates the associations between AMND and other program and participant characteristics. Specifically, the coefficient on the (non-interacted) indicator for "education savers" is an estimate of the link between characteristics that are omitted from the regression that are associated with both "education savers" and AMND. The interaction effects provide estimates of how being an "education saver" moderates the associations between AMND and program and participant characteristics. Overall, the model intends to examine both whether "education savers" are different from other savers and, if they are different, why.

Researchers often attempt to assess moderating or interaction effects indirectly through subgroup analysis (Coulton & Chow, 1992). The "sub-group" approach runs two regressions, one with
only "education savers" and one with all others. The "interaction" model used here is to be preferred over the "sub-group" approach, mostly because there is no rigorous way to compare coefficients between two different regressions because the sample sizes and error terms differ (Coulton & Chow, 1992; Koeske, 1992). The coefficients across the regressions might look similar or different, but there is no straightforward way to test whether the apparent differences/similarities are statistically significant. With the "interaction" model used here, in contrast, the p-value on a given coefficient of the interaction term immediately and transparently indicates whether being an "education saver" moderates that characteristic, and an F test for all the interaction terms as a group (along with the stand-alone "education saver" indicator) can be used to see whether "education savers" differ overall from other participants.

Results

Sample Characteristics

There were 377 "education savers" in ADD. Of these, 40 percent had made matched withdrawals as of the cut-off date of the data, accounting for 21 percent of all the ADD participants who had made matched withdrawals at that point. Table 1 compares the characteristics of "education savers" and other participants. Compared with others, "education savers" were younger, more likely to be never-married, and had fewer children at home. They were also less likely to be females and less likely to be African-American. "Education savers" also had less income, were less likely to be working full-time, and—in line with the discussion in the literature review—were less likely to receive welfare. These features are also consistent with the fact that a larger share (22%) of "education savers" was already students when they opened their IDAs than other savers (6%).

Bivariate Analysis of Savings Outcomes

Table 2 presents the bivariate analysis of AMND by some subgroups of program and participant characteristics. When other factors were not controlled, male participants, married participants, and participants with higher educational status had higher
Table 1
Characteristics of ADD Participants and Comparisons of Education Savers and Non-Education Savers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Education Savers (N = 377)</th>
<th>Non-Education Savers (N = 1,976)</th>
<th>Comparisons of Education and Non-Education Savers</th>
<th>ADD Participants (N = 2,353)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Variables</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Mean 30</td>
<td>Mean 37</td>
<td>$t / \chi^2$ -11.3***</td>
<td>Mean 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of adults</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-3.36**</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Household monthly income</td>
<td>$1,252</td>
<td>$1,402</td>
<td>-3.80***</td>
<td>$1,378</td>
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<td>Categorical Variables</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Percents</td>
<td>Percents</td>
<td>Percents</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>8.37**</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
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<td>African-American</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26.4***</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>22.9***</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52.18***</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>24.81***</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.59**</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not Complete High School</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.96*</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed High School or GED</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.82**</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some College Education (no Bachelor's Degree)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed 4-year Degree or More</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Full-time</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56.43***</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Part-time</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.56***</td>
<td>23</td>
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</table>

continued
Table 1

Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Education Savers (N = 377)</th>
<th>Non-education Savers (N = 1,976)</th>
<th>Comparisons of Education and Non-education Savers</th>
<th>ADD Participants (N = 2,353)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categorical Variables</td>
<td>Percents</td>
<td>Percents</td>
<td>t / χ²</td>
<td>Percents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working or Unemployed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.01***</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banked</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Owner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of AFDC/TANF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11.0***</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .01.

AMND. Participants who received welfare, those who did not have home or bank account ownership, and African-American participants saved less. The mean value of AMND of education savers ($19.8) and that of other savers ($18.4) was not different from each other in bivariate analysis. Among program factors, participants with higher match rates saved less, and those who used direct deposits saved more.

Regression Analysis of Savings Outcomes

Table 3 displays the results from the regression analysis on AMND. The model as a whole was statistically significant (p = 0.01) and explained about 22 percent of the variance in the dependent variable.

Effects of program and participant factors. Three of the four program factors were positively related to AMND. Participants who had higher monthly savings target and those who used direct deposit saved more. Hours of financial education was also positively linked with AMND. These findings suggest that these three institutional incentives facilitate participants' savings in IDAs.
## Table 2

**Bivariate Analyses: AMND by Subgroups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of Variance (F values) / AMND ($)</th>
<th>t test (t value)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Institutional Characteristics

- **Match Rate**
  - 1:1: 21.5, \( F = 7.15^{***} \)
  - 2:1: 17.6
  - 3:1: 18.1
  - 4:1 to 7:1: 11.5

- **Use of Direct Deposit to IDAs**
  - Yes: 26.2, \( t = 3.44^{***} \)
  - No: 18.5

### Participant Characteristics

- **Gender**
  - Female: 17.6, \( t = -2.73^{***} \)
  - Male: 21.3

- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - Caucasian: 23.1, \( F = 51.4^{***} \)
  - African-American: 12.9
  - Others: 23.0

- **Marital Status**
  - Never Married: 14.5, \( F = 30.1^{***} \)
  - Married: 23.9
  - Divorced, separated or widowed: 20.6

- **Education**
  - No High School Diploma: 13.6, \( F = 20.2^{***} \)
  - High School Graduates: 16.1
  - Some College, Less than Bachelor’s Degree: 19.1
  - Bachelor’s Degree or More: 30.3

- **Employment**
  - Unemployed or not working: 15.4, \( F = 2.54 \)
  - Employed, full-time: 15.4
  - Employed, part-time: 18.7
  - Students, working or not working: 19.2

- **Home Owner**
  - Yes: 28.4, \( t = 7.68^{***} \)
  - No: 16.5

*continued*
Table 2
Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of Variance (F values)</th>
<th>AMND ($)</th>
<th>t test (t value)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Checking or Savings Account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>t = 10.63***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of Public Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF or AFDC Never</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>F = 14.2***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF or AFDC formerly</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF or AFDC currently</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended Users of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>t = 1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .01.

Higher match rates, however, were negatively associated with AMND. Specifically, participants with match rates 4:1 to 7:1 saved less than those who had match rates ranging from 1:1 to 3:1. The study by Schreiner (2004) of all ADD participants found similar results, i.e., match rates was associated with less AMND.

There are a couple of possible explanations for the negative links between match rates and savings in IDAs. First, programs may assign higher match rates if they expect their participants to save less. In this case, cause-and-effect is reversed, and (expectations of) low savings lead to higher match rates. Second, because IDA participants are saving for a specific purpose, and they generally have limited incomes, some participants could be “target savers”. In other words, they may aim to save a fixed amount and stop saving more (for example, they may aim to save $2,000 for tuition, or to save $1,500 for the down payment of a house). For these participants, a higher match rate allows them to reach a given asset-accumulation target with less savings (Schreiner, 2004).
Table 3

Regression Analysis on Average Monthly Net Deposits (AMND)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main Effects</th>
<th></th>
<th>Interaction Effects</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>p-value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4:1 to 7:1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>7.76***</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>6.94***</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>10.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:1</td>
<td>9.67***</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>13.06*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Savings Target</td>
<td>0.18***</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Direct Deposit to</td>
<td>3.95*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>6.69</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDAs</td>
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<td>Hours of General Financial Education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.49***</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.71***</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Participant</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>0.09</td>
<td>-9.05**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Caucasian)</td>
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<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
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<td>0.001</td>
<td>3.50</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>6.23</td>
<td>0.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Never Married)</td>
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<td>0.85</td>
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<td>widowed</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Number of adults</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>(No High School Diploma)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree or More</td>
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<td>10.14*</td>
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</table>

continued
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Effects</th>
<th>Interaction Effects</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Monthly Income</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Owner</td>
<td>3.72**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having Checking or Savings Account</td>
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<td>Receipt of Public Assistance (TANF or AFDC Never)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TANF or AFDC formerly</td>
<td>-2.02</td>
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<td>TANF or AFDC currently</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intended users of education</td>
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<td>Intended users of home purchase</td>
<td>5.88</td>
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<td>Intended users of home repair</td>
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<td>Intended users of microenterprises</td>
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<td>Intended users of retirement</td>
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</table>

*p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .01.

Four demographic characteristics of participants were related to AMND: age, gender, race/ethnicity, and number of adults. Contrary to the findings from bivariate analysis, female participants saved more than male participants. In other words, once other factors associated with being a woman (such as being African-American, being single, having kids, etc.) were taken into consideration, it turns out that being female per se is associated with higher savings. Older participants and those having more adults in households had higher AMND. When other factors in the regression constant, AMND was higher for Caucasians than for African Americans.

Among participants’ socioeconomic characteristics, IDA sav-
ings were higher for those who attended some college or who had a degree. Also, participants with higher household monthly incomes saved more. This association, however, was not strong; a $1 increase in monthly income was associated with about $0.003 more AMND. Home owners and bank-account owners also saved more than participants without such assets.

Savings for post-secondary education. Analyses show that variables related to “education savers” (the stand-alone indicator and the interaction terms) explained about 2 percent of the variance in AMND. As a group, the variables related to “education savers” were statistically significant (p < 0.05) (based on the method of Pedhazur, 1997, p. 109), suggesting that savings outcomes were indeed different for “educational savers”.

What factors were related to the differences? Table 3 indicates that being an “education saver” moderated the associations of several program and participant factors on AMND. Among program factors, the interaction with hours of education was positive and statistically significant. While an additional hour of financial education was linked with $0.49 more AMND for any participant, regardless of whether they were an “education saver”, an additional hour was associated with an additional $0.71 for “education savers”. Apparently, “education savers” derived greater benefits from financial education than did others. Thus, an additional hour of financial education was associated with $1.20 ($0.49 plus $0.71) more AMND for “education savers” but only $0.49 more AMND for others.

The interaction of education savers and match rates was negative and statistically significant. The education savers with a match rate of 3:1 saved much more than those with match rates between 4:1 and 7:1. Perhaps “education savers” are more likely than others to be “target savers” (targeting, for example, to save for tuition) for whom higher matches rates are associated with dampened savings.

Among participant demographic factors, savings for post-secondary education moderated the association of gender with AMND. While females in ADD on average saved $2.56 more than males, female “education savers” saved $9.05 less than female “non-education savers” and $6.49 ($9.05−$2.56) less than male
participants. Thus, while women saved more than men overall after controlling for other factors, female saved less than the average male participant for "education savers".

Similarly, although married participants on the whole in ADD had higher AMND than not-married participants (p-value of 0.30), married "education savers" saved $11.88 less than married "non-education savers" and $10.02 ($11.08–1.86) less than non-married participants. Married participants and female participants who planned to use their IDAs for post-secondary education saved much less than others.

What might explain this? In order to further understand how gender and marital status jointly affect savings, we did some additional analyses. Because these two variables appear in multiple places in the regression model with interactions (see Table 3), evaluating how they affect AMND is not straightforward. Thus, we computed the differences of AMND between the sample when every participant was assumed a single man, a single woman, a married man, or a married woman. Here is the specific method for the calculation: in a case when everyone was assumed to be a single man, we set female=0 and married=0 in the equation model derived from the regression model. The same method was used under three other assumptions. The results from these analyses indicate that single men saved the most for their postsecondary education, followed by single women and married men, and married women saved the least among the four groups. Therefore, it seems that women, especially married women, face more barriers to save for postsecondary education.

Turning to the interactions with participant socioeconomic factors, home owners who were "education savers" saved $7.89 more than home owners who were not "education savers" and $11.61 ($7.89 + $3.72) more than renters. It appears that home ownership may probably help with saving, especially for post-secondary education. Perhaps unsurprisingly, students who were "education savers" saved $10.14 more than did students with different asset-accumulation goals. Perhaps the immediate saliency of the use of IDAs helped students save for post-secondary education. Or perhaps students shifted existing savings or financial aid into IDAs to take advantage of the match. In any case, it is
clear that, among "education savers", students saved more than non-students.

Discussion and Implications

Discussion

We underscore several findings. First, being an "education saver" seems to strengthen the associations of some program factors with savings performance. For example, "education savers" seemed to benefit more from financial education than did others, perhaps because a higher percentage of education savers were students. Being a student might signal a greater motivation to learn and perhaps also better learning skills inasmuch as students are used to classroom learning and homework. The negative association between match rates and IDA savings was also stronger among "education savers". The ADD data cannot reveal the reason for this, but it may be that "education savers" are also more likely to be "target savers" (targeting, for example, tuition).

Second, being an "education saver" also moderates the relationship between several participant characteristics and AMND. Female "education savers" saved much less than other female savers. Why did female "education savers" save less? Probably these women may face unique obstacles (for example, the need for child care) in their pursuit of post-secondary education. If they realize that they face these obstacles only after enrolling in IDAs and declaring their intent to save for post-secondary education, then this may explain their lower savings. Of course, another possible reason is that TANF rules act as limits on the access of welfare recipients to higher education, and low-income women with children are those most likely to be affected by TANF or—even if they are not currently on welfare—those who expect to possibly be affected by TANF rules in the future (Hurst & Ziliak, 2001).

Married "education savers" also saved much less than other married participants. Perhaps married participants who planned for post-secondary education found that going to school (or going back to school) was more difficult than single participants. For example, married participants may face responsibilities (for example, child care) or barriers within the household (for example,
unsupportive spouses) that unmarried men or women do not have. Our analysis further indicates that married women may especially face these or other related barriers.

"Education savers" who were students saved more than "education savers" who were not students. More than half of "education savers" either had some college education (38%) or already had a college degree (22%). Perhaps the pressures of paying for their education make saving for post-secondary education more salient for student savers. They do not have to think very far into the future to see how IDAs will be useful. In contrast, participants who are not already students are saving for a further-off goal and thus may end up savings less.

As a caveat on the interpretation of these results, we note that participants in ADD were both program-selected and self-selected. Therefore, ADD participants are not representative of the general low-income population. We cannot address self-selection into participation through ADD data. Thus, the results in this paper pertain to a particular portion of low-income population and must be tentative.

Implications

Implications for college savings plans. As mentioned, lack of financial resources has been a major barrier for low-income people to attend college. Many new forms of financial aid in recent years have been created to subsidize savings for postsecondary education (for example, Coverdell Education Savings, HOPE Scholarship and Lifetime Learning, and State College Savings Plans or "529 savings plans"), but these policies provide their subsidizes through tax breaks that are most irrelevant to low-income people (Clancy, Cramer, & Parrish, 2005). The findings of our study indicate that low-income people (especially some segments of low-income people) saved for postsecondary education in ADD. Thus, it may be helpful to include more low-income people in the college-finance toolkit.

For example, teaming IDAs with 529 plans may be one strategy to promote more inclusive IDAs for post-secondary education (Clancy, 2003; Clancy & Sherraden, 2003). One of the main features of 529 plans is that participation is not restricted by income, but is available to all. After-tax contributions to 529 plans accumulate
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tax-free and are not taxed upon withdrawal if used for expenses for post-secondary education. All states but one sponsor 529 plans, and some states (Rhode Island, Michigan, and Louisiana) encourage savings by low-income households through matching provisions (Clancy, 2003). Given that 529 plans are run by government and that the government is a potential source of match funds, linking IDAs and 529 plans could help include more low-income households in subsidized savings policies aimed at post-secondary education. Some scholars indicate that 529 plans may carry significant risk for low-income families due to its high investment fees, penalties for non-educational uses, and possible negative interactions with college aid (Clancy, Orszag, & Sherraden, 2004). These concerns may need to be taken into consideration for the partnership of IDAs with 529 plans.

Implications for IDA designs. Our findings indicate that savings outcomes were different for “education savers” and that being an “education saver” moderated the associations of some other program and participant factors. These findings may help programs design IDAs that could improve savings outcomes for “education savers”. These results may also help understand what segments of participants benefited most from IDAs. We highlight several findings and their implications below.

We found that financial education was associated with greater savings for “education savers” than for others, probably because most of the education savers were already students and thus were better at being students than are non-students. This may imply that financial education in IDAs is not appropriate for adults and other non-students. Adopting the principle of adult education more completely in financial education of IDA programs may help address this concern (Hogarth & Swanson, 1995). The adult education principles in financial education highlight the importance of understanding learners’ (especially low-income learners) life context and experiences and bringing them into the teaching and learning process.

We also found that certain groups of low-income people had better savings outcomes for post-secondary education. First, students saved better for post-secondary education than non-students. This may indicate that salient goals help savings. IDA
programs may be able to encourage greater savings outcomes by helping to make savings goals salient, for example by role-playing the act of making an asset purchase. This may also suggest that participants who were already students benefited more from IDAs to save for post-secondary education than other participants possibly because these students were already “on track”.

Second, it appears that being married and/or being a woman had more obstacles to save for their post-secondary education in IDAs. These findings may indicate that savings for post-secondary education probably are not very relevant for some participants. Due to household or resource related constrains, some participants were not able to save successfully for their college education. Thus, IDA program designs may need to be adjusted to accommodate needs of different segments of participants based on their specific life circumstances (Schreiner & Sherraden, forthcoming). For example, IDA programs may be able to increase their relevance to some participants by expanding the types of matched uses, such as job training, vehicle purchase, or child care, and these uses might provide more practical and immediate benefits to some portions of the low-income population (Edin, 2001). Programs with a different model maybe more appropriate for the post-secondary education of some groups (such as non-students, married women) of low-income people.

References


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http://www.aaup.org/publications/Academe/2000/00nd/ND00MOSE.HTM


This qualitative study uses Patricia Hill Collins' "both/and" conceptual framework to explore experiences of both oppression and resistance among welfare recipients attending college. It examines how children, social networks, integration into campus life, and interactions with caseworkers affect welfare recipients' college attendance and college persistence. As is well established in the sociological literature, having children complicates college attendance and persistence. But this research shows that children also provide the predominant incentive for poor mothers to attain higher education. Moreover, this study reveals complexities in welfare recipients' experiences with their social networks, work-study jobs, and caseworkers that are often overlooked by current research on higher education and welfare reform.

Keywords: welfare recipients, higher education, welfare reform, matrix of domination

When asked to name the most important reasons why she attended college, Seana, a Black mother of one, replied, "because I wanted a career, not a job." Seana and the other participants in this research are among the one-fifth of welfare recipients nationwide with some four-year college or university experience (Peterson, Song, and Jones-DeWeever 2002). Seana is well aware that post-secondary education confers substantial benefits to welfare recipients. Those with higher education are more likely to find jobs, work in their field of study, earn higher wages, and report greater family well-being than welfare recipients who lack higher
education (see Kahn, Butler, Deprez, & Polakow, 2004 for a review of this research).

However, recent policy changes made it more difficult for welfare recipients to attend college. The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), or welfare reform, requires that welfare recipients engage in work-related activities within two years of receiving assistance. Most states allow only one year of higher education to count as work-related activity (Pandey, Zhan, Neely-Barnes, and Menon, 2000). Thereafter, a welfare recipient who attends school must do so in addition to work requirements. Moreover, under welfare reform, states enacted "work-first" programs that emphasized job searches and job placement rather than higher education (Golonka and Matus-Grossman, 2001). After welfare reform, welfare recipients' enrollment in higher education dropped considerably (Center for Women's Policy Studies, 2002); as Jacobs and Winslow (2003) conclude, "the result of welfare reform has been to reduce overall access to postsecondary education for welfare recipients" (p. 212).

Given the unequivocal benefits of college attendance for welfare recipients, and the decreasing numbers of them who are attending college, research on welfare recipients who make it to college is especially important. This research explores college attendance and persistence among seventeen single mothers—most women of color—who receive welfare and attend an urban university in Kentucky. It uses Patricia Hill Collins' (1991) "both/and" (p. 226) conceptual stance to explore the multiple axes of domination and resistance experienced by poor, single-mother college students. As revealed below, these students' narratives question many of the theoretical assumptions and empirical findings of the existing sociological literature on higher education. Their experiences can also enhance the literature on welfare reform, which until recently rarely examined the experiences of welfare recipients attending college.

Collins is one of several multiracial feminists who emphasize that race, class, and gender form a "matrix of domination" (1991, p. 225) such that these three systems of oppression interact to affect people in distinct ways. Most students in this sample are disadvantaged in educational institutions because they are poor, single-mother students on welfare. A "both/and"
stance recognizes that people also resist the matrix of domination: "people experience and resist domination on three levels: the level of personal biography; the group or community level of the cultural context created by race, class, and gender; and the systematic level of social institutions" (Collins, 1991, p. 227). This research uses a "both/and" conceptual stance to explore how single-mother students experience and resist oppression in their everyday lives. I examine the personal experience of having children, the community level of social networks, and the institutional levels of work-study jobs and interactions with welfare caseworkers.

Literature Review

In reviewing the literatures regarding college attendance and college persistence among welfare recipients, I provide a brief survey of the sociological literature on post-secondary education. I focus more attention on the literatures concerning low-income mothers of color, the group of interest here.

The sociology literature on post-secondary education cites numerous predictors of college attendance and persistence. The status attainment theoretical framework noted the impact of one's family socioeconomic background on one's achievement later in life and established that this effect in large part works through the educational system (Blau and Duncan, 1967). While the status attainment framework has been modified over the years, empirical research consistently finds a positive relationship between higher social class background and increased college attendance and college persistence (Baker and Velez, 1996; Conley, 2001). Parents' human capital also affects children's college attendance and persistence; students with parents who attended college are more likely to attend college themselves (Farkas, 1996). Social capital, the "relations between children and parents" (Coleman, 1988, p. 110), including the extent to which parents are involved in children's educational lives and bolster their educational aspirations, also increases college attendance and persistence, especially among minority students (Qian and Blair, 1999). Integration into college life—in social or academic ways—decreases attrition (Tinto, 1993).
Regarding non-traditional female students, the sociological literature clearly shows that marriage and parenthood inhibit women’s college attendance and college persistence (Haggstrom, Kanouse, and Morrison, 1986; Home, 1998; Jacobs and King, 2002; Marini, 1984). Marriage and parenthood exacerbate role conflict, taking time and energy away from academics. However, one recent study noted that welfare recipients cite attaining a better life for their children as a main incentive for them to pursue higher education, suggesting that children can have some positive impact on their mothers’ education (Jennings, 2004). In addition, family and friends can provide support to mitigate role conflict (Home, 1998, 1993; Lechner, 1993). And while many mothers have little time to get involved with campus activities or to form relationships with other students, integration into campus life helps them develop self-esteem and persist in school (Sharp, 2004).

Role conflict is often exacerbated among low-income single mothers who tend to work in addition to attending school and typically raise children without the help of a partner. These women often encounter additional barriers to college attendance and persistence: securing enough money to provide for their families and covering the costs of higher education and childcare (Heller and Bjorklund, 2004; Kahn and Polakow, 2004). Women’s social networks have been particularly important in providing childcare and other means of support to allow low-income mothers to attend school or work (Edin and Lein, 1997; Hays, 2003; Stack, 1974). Among professional women, African American women’s social networks were more likely than White women’s networks to instill expectations for educational attainment; African American women were also more likely than White women to stress the importance of community ties: “Relationships with family of origin, partners, children, friends and the wider community loom large in the way they envision and accomplish mobility” (Higginbotham and Weber, 1992, p. 436). However, more recently welfare reform has eroded social networks in the African American community, because work requirements demand that increasing numbers of women work outside of the home (Brewster and Padavic, 2002).

As mentioned above, several aspects of welfare reform have
reduced college attendance among welfare recipients. State laws allow only limited amounts of higher education to count towards recipients' work requirements (Pandy et al., 2000). The "work-first" orientation of welfare reform has led caseworkers to stress employment over educational attainment (Hays, 2003; Kahn and Polakow, 2004). Because past research shows that some caseworkers are more generous to White recipients than recipients of color (Gooden, 1998), we might expect caseworkers to provide less educational support to recipients of color than to White recipients. Welfare recipients of color are less likely to be enrolled in higher education than White recipients, after controlling for age, marital, and parental status (Jacobs and King, 2002).

The above literatures document several factors likely to impact the college experiences of welfare recipients. Below, I explore which of these factors are salient in the everyday lives of welfare recipients attending an urban university in Kentucky.

Methods and Sample

This study uses Burawoy's "extended case method" in which researchers use qualitative methods to explore micro-level phenomena and advance theory. This method advances theory "by constituting the social situation as anomalous with regard to some preexisting theory (that is, an existing body of generalizations), which is then reconstructed" (Burawoy, 1991, p. 280). While this method does not produce information that is generalizeable to a larger population—or statistical significance—it does allow us to focus on a specific case and what it reveals about society—or societal significance (Burawoy, 1991). With its emphasis on how everyday experience speaks to social theory, this method is useful in conjunction with a feminist epistemology that privileges women's experiences and viewpoints (Smith, 1987). This project relies on feminist epistemology in that it starts from low-income mothers' daily experiences of attending school, parenting, and receiving welfare. Because welfare recipients of color are disadvantaged according to their race, class, gender, and single motherhood status (Collins, 1991), we would expect that these students experience college quite differently than more traditional students. Thus, their viewpoints can help us re-think some
of the existing research on college attendance and persistence that tends to privilege the experiences of traditional-aged, White college students without children.

I conducted in-depth interviews with seventeen respondents, interviewing all but three of them twice. I identified most respondents through their participation in a work-study program on campus, and all but one of the women I contacted agreed to participate. The other third of the sample was found by snowball sampling; the aforementioned work-study participants gave me names of other students they knew who also received welfare. The first interview focused on pathways to college attendance, and the second on college persistence; for a few women with exceptionally hectic schedules, I asked about both in the same interview. Most interviews lasted about 90 minutes, and they ranged from 45 minutes to almost two hours. The interviews included several open-ended questions. For example, I asked respondents to describe the most important reasons they came to college, and the most important factors that helped them stay in college. The interview format was semi-structured, such that I covered several topics in all interviews, but also allowed women considerable leeway to discuss issues important in their own college experience.

After a graduate student assistant transcribed the interviews, I coded them using an open coding process. This identified recurring themes in the data, such as the importance of children and social networks in respondents’ accounts of their college attendance and persistence. In order to provide some degree of inter-coder reliability, the graduate student and I came together to compare codes and revised codes accordingly.

The sample consisted of seventeen women ages 20–45. All women except four were in their 20s, three were in their early 30s, and one was age 45. The median age was 24. All but three participants were African American; the other three were White. Well over half of the sample had one child, several women had two, and one woman had three children. One woman was married; all other women were single—though several had boyfriends and two were engaged. When incorporating participants’ quotes below, I report their number of children and race, given these factors are likely to affect respondents’ college experiences and
their experiences with welfare caseworkers. Most women were in their junior or senior year, and a few were sophomores. Most worked on campus in work-study jobs. All respondents were given pseudonyms.

At the time of their first interview, all women in the sample received Kentucky's Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP), the state-level Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. K-TAP is the main social assistance program available to poor families—in most cases single-mother families. K-TAP allows full-time student recipients to attend two years of post-secondary education without any additional work requirements; after these twenty-four months, students can “count ten hours of class toward the thirty-hour work requirement” (Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children, 2001; Miewald, 2004, p. 179). Most other states are not as generous in allowing post-secondary education to count as a “stand-alone” activity that can take the place of work requirements (Jacobs and Winslow, 2003). One local program also deserves attention. All respondents with young children (except one who did not want her child to attend daycare) had their childcare costs covered by a community-based program, 4 Cs (Community Coordinated Childcare). This program uses a sliding-scale fee structure to cover daycare costs for low-income, full-time students until their children are 13. Because all of the women in the sample were poor, they paid very little for childcare.

Recipient’s Narratives about College Attendance and College Persistence

Children and College Attendance

As described above, because kids require a great deal of time, energy, and money—and because women remain the primary caretakers of children—having children decreases women’s college attendance and persistence. With respect to children and college attendance, only five of the seventeen women went straight from high school to university and did not take any semesters off to spend time raising children or earning wages. The majority of informants had more complicated pathways to university. Six respondents attended a local community college, and a few others
were employed—some for several years—before attending university. Those who were employed before attending university often mentioned the importance of earning enough money to support them and their children; a small number of respondents postponed higher education because it would temporarily decrease their incomes. For example, speaking about the transition from employment to university, Ella, a Black mother of three, said, “it’s affecting my kids . . . It’s a big sacrifice because they were used to me working, so when I went back to school it was a change, ’cause there is not extra income, as you might say, coming in.”

But while these women were upfront in saying how difficult it can be to combine parenthood with schoolwork, children figured prominently in their explanations for why they chose to attend and stay in school. When asked to describe the main reasons they chose to attend university, all but one of the respondents stated that they attended college in order to improve the lives of their children. When asked by the interviewer to give some of the “most important” reasons they went to college, women said the following:

Umm . . . [to] make enough money to support myself and my son. (Sanrdra, White mother of two)

I don’t want to have her [my daughter] to have to be in a bad way, to have to negotiate her standards later on in life because [of] what I didn’t provide for her . . . I want to be able to leave my child something other than just some parables and lessons and, you know, folk tales! (laughing) (Lavinia, Black mother of one)

Several women said that a major reason they attended university was to provide positive role models for their children. Dalia, a Black mother of one, recounted,

He [her father] always tells me I set a good example for my child . . . and she [her daughter] would see me do my homework—and I think she was in Head-start or in Kindergarten—she would do her little homework and would want to sit around and write and mock mommy. So I was like, wow, I’m actually molding somebody!

All but one of the respondents’ narratives about decisions to attend and stay in college emphasized their children. While the most prevalent explanation was to attain a better life, other
reasons—such as providing a positive role model—were given by about a quarter of the informants.

Children and College Persistence: Students' Role Conflicts

At the same time, most respondents experienced marked role conflicts in their own lives; trying to be involved mothers, good students, and completing their work-study jobs on campus led to time crunches and stress. Most of the respondents had little time left in the day for schoolwork. For example, Ella said, "It's hard because... once it's time to go home and try [to] work with them and get their homework done... then cook them dinner and get them ready for bed—it's like I'm studying at 10:00 at night. So by that time I'm tired..." Similarly, one of the most stressed-out respondents was Jonetta, a Black mother of two who was working two jobs while attending school. She said, "once I get home and it's time to study, I'm tired, so I'm falling asleep books wide open."

Most respondents spoke of similar time crunches and said they needed more time to do schoolwork. Aside from a few students with higher grade point averages, most women in the sample had a C average or below. Thus, children seem to exacerbate these women's role conflicts and make it harder to stay in college, and they probably lower parents' grades and possibly decrease college graduation rates—though this study did not focus on college graduation or college success. Having children also probably extends the amount of time it takes for students to get a degree; while several students said that others teased them about becoming "career students," there was little other evidence that these students would take longer than others to graduate. In sum, while children complicate women's lives and certainly take time away from school, children also provide the predominant incentive for these women to remain in college.

Childcare: Community Program

With one exception, all of the mothers with children too young to attend school had most or all of their childcare costs covered by 4 Cs, the community program described above. Many of the mothers felt this program was essential in allowing them to attend school. The following is an excerpt from the interview with Sarah, a Black mother of one:
I: If you had to name some of the most important things that allowed you to stay in school here, what would you say those things would be?

R: Like daycare and my money; I couldn't do without either of those. . . . And if I had the grant and didn't have the daycare, I still wouldn't be able to do it.

The one woman with a young child who did not use 4 Cs was unwilling to put her child in any daycare. All of the other informants with young children had childcare costs covered by 4 Cs, and most said it was important in allowing them to attend college.

Social Networks and College Attendance and Persistence

Parents and other relatives encouraged the college attendance and persistence of most respondents. Most women had at least one parent—typically their mothers—who encouraged university attendance. When asked why she chose to attend college, Anita, a Black mother of one, replied, “because that's the only thing my mom would accept.” Many others spoke of their parents' expectations they would attend university, even though very few of the parents finished college themselves. Several of the respondents said that extended family members, such as aunts, uncles, and grandparents, were also influential in their decisions to attend college.

All respondents, except for one older respondent whose parents were deceased and one woman whose father raised her, had parents—typically their mothers—that would at least occasionally take care of their children. Ella, a Black mother of three, says:

My mother is my backbone, I mean anything I do, she's there to support me; that's my support system. Um, my brother helps out, he has no family and he works for my mother, so [he's] my mom if I need a babysitter. . . . Yeah, I mean I have my mother's sister. My aunts and uncles, they help out. . . .

Like Ella, many of the respondents also had sisters, aunts, grandparents, or the child's father to help out with childcare or to provide emotional support. This seemed especially important when children were very young.

For about one-third of the respondents, the fathers of their children helped out with childcare, though some were not very
consistent in their help; one said, "he helps out when he wants to help out." Four women (including the one married respondent) had consistent childcare help from the fathers of their children, from which they benefited; all of them had more free time than other respondents, and one was able to travel abroad to study in France while the father cared for their child. But for all other respondents, family members and friends provided more consistent childcare than the fathers of their children.

In this sample, the two students with the least help from their parents and extended families were White, though both had consistent help from the fathers of their children (one was married). Almost all of the Black participants received more help from parents and extended families than did these two White women. But the very small sample size of White women makes it impossible to generalize from these experiences.

Social networks' provision of emotional or "moral" support was also important in keeping many respondents in school, as evidenced by Ella's quote above. Many were grateful for the emotional support of their families, particularly their mothers; Sarah, a Black mother of one who had just graduated at the time of the interview, stated that

They don't send me money or anything like that—my parents don't. It's pretty much like moral support basically. It's good to have . . . they are like, 'oh, we're so proud of you' and that just keeps me going.

Social networks provided important emotional support for at least half of the respondents.

Of the seventeen respondents, only one relied on parents to help pay her college tuition (and her mother did so only for a short time period); all others pieced together some combination of student loans, Pell Grants or other grants, scholarships, or work-study income to cover tuition and other costs of living. About a quarter of the women said that parents and other relatives would occasionally help out with some of the costs of school, such as books. But by and large, parents and other relatives did not cover the respondents' higher education costs. While this research did not include those who have left college, it is well-established
that students who are struggling financially, like all of these
respondents, are more likely to drop out of college than students
who are not (Baker and Velez, 1996).

In the few cases where parents did help pay for college costs—
typically books—the respondents did not feel good about having
to ask for help. Describing what it's like to ask parents for help,
Sandra (White, mother of two) states, “you know, when I have
money problems and I have to ask them for something—I hate
to do that, it's like the worst.” None of the respondents gave any
indication that they wanted or expected more help from their
parents; a few suggested that since they were adults with children
of their own, they felt responsible for their own educational costs.4
And all of the respondents had trouble making ends meet—
though the degree of their financial hardship varied.

Thus, all of the respondents built webs of support, comprised
of family members, extended kin, and occasionally the fathers of
their children, who provided childcare and/or emotional support
and were instrumental in facilitating college attendance and per-
sistence. However, parents and other relatives almost never paid
for respondents' college tuition.

Social Integration and College Persistence

Many respondents said they did not feel connected to campus
in any way, save an isolated activity during a short time period,
such as belonging to the choir for one semester or being active in
one's dorm for one year. Some women said that they did not have
time for extracurricular activities. For example, when asked why
she did not participate in groups on campus, Ella, a Black mother
of three, said,

“I don't feel like I'm on the same level . . . the people in my classes
are a lot younger than I am so I have different activities than they
do and my main [activity] is to go home and take care of my kids.
So they have more free time than I do.”

About half of the students had very little social integration into
campus life, which could increase their attrition rates.

Three of the respondents were active in at least one extracur-
ricular activity for an extended period: one was on the debate
team, one was in the History Honor Society and French Club,
and one was in a sorority. All of them said that these groups were important to them; Nadia, a Black mother of one who was in the sorority, said, "It's nice to be recognized and . . . to have a certain set of people that you can go to and be like, look I'm having this problem, you know, and I need to talk to somebody about it." These three respondents enjoyed their participation in these groups, and it seems their participation kept them more connected to university life. However, most other respondents did not have time for campus groups.

Yet over half of the respondents reported substantial social integration and enjoyment in an unexpected place: their work-study jobs. Seana, a Black mother of one who graduated around the time of her second interview, said, "I think the best thing about transitioning from high school to college [was] the Postal Services on campus. My sister worked there her whole four years, so these people were like family to me, so when I got there I got the same job with them." In addition, Lavinia, a Black mother of one who had recently transferred to university from a community college, said her work-study job was "my cornerstone because it gave me a place to be when I wasn't in class . . . and it gave me really a sense of belonging on campus." Another student spoke of the baby shower her co-workers threw her, and two others spoke of their close relationships with their co-workers in their work-study jobs. Over half of the respondents spoke highly of the relationships they formed in their work-study jobs, which suggests that social integration can take different forms among low-income, non-traditional female students than among traditional students.

In terms of more academic kinds of integration—such as relationships formed with students or professors in the classroom—there was little evidence for this among these respondents. A few of the women mentioned professors who had helped them out with their classes or work-study jobs, but this was not common.

Welfare Caseworkers and College Attendance and Persistence

In this sample, there was substantial variation in the informants' experiences with caseworkers—some had very supportive caseworkers, others had "do-nothing" and "hateful" caseworkers, and a few reported more neutral experiences. Several
informants sang the praises of their caseworkers. Andrea, a Black mother of one, claimed

My previous worker was absolutely wonderful. This man . . . said 'I don't want to hear about you quitting school! You've come this far,' and . . . I think threatened me bodily harm [if I were to quit] (laughing) but he was absolutely wonderful.

Close to half of the sample said they had caseworkers who supported their college attendance—though a couple of these women said they went through bad caseworkers before ending up with a helpful one.

In contrast, the other half of the sample reported more negative experiences with caseworkers, including several African American respondents and two of the three White respondents. Perhaps due to the small sample size, I did not find evidence of a pattern of racial bias among caseworkers, though this has been confirmed by quantitative research on caseworker bias (Gooden, 1998).

A frequent complaint was that caseworkers did not know the benefits for which students qualified. (There were several special benefits available to students, such as payment of summer school tuition and book costs, and transportation vouchers.) Sandra, a White mother of two, says that a woman who worked with welfare recipients at her community college (Leslie) was much better than her caseworker at keeping her informed of the benefits for which she was eligible:

They didn't tell me a lot of the benefits that would like help me pay for school—that would help me pay for books . . . Leslie would actually tell me and I would ask my worker and she would say no. And so Leslie would have to send an e-mail to her supervisor on several occasions. So anytime I had a problem I would call Leslie and she would call them and get it straightened out.

Close to one-third of the respondents complained that their caseworkers did not know enough, or do enough, to help them in their pursuit of higher education.

Somewhat surprisingly, very few informants reported that caseworkers stressed employment over education. One exception was Dalia, a Black mother of one, who said:
Welfare Recipients Attending College

The workers were like... you're going to have to stop going to school and get a job, but then... welfare reform kicked in allowing people to work and go to school for 20 hours to better themselves and I had already been doing that. A lot of them [caseworkers] were giving me crap, and then I finally got a good one that understood what I was doing.

One or two other respondents implied that their caseworkers would prefer that they leave school for work, but this was not a common experience among these respondents.

Thus, few caseworkers emphasized finding a job rather than attending college. The more common experience was that caseworkers did not provide enough information about the several benefits for which the women were eligible, which could certainly hurt recipients' chances of completing college—especially among those having the hardest time making ends meet.

Conclusion

Collins' "both/and" conceptual stance stresses that women experience both oppression and resistance due to their positions in the matrix of domination. Most women in this sample were poor women of color; and all but one woman in the sample experienced another barrier widely believed to curtail college attendance and persistence—being a single mother receiving welfare. In many ways, this research has shown that welfare recipients indeed face substantial barriers to attending and persisting in college, but they also used several strategies to resist the multiple forms of oppression they confronted in their everyday lives.

The experiences of single-mother students in this research are not consistent with some of the theoretical assumptions of and findings from the existing sociological literature on higher education. The status attainment model and human capital frameworks emphasize the importance of both family socioeconomic background and parents' college attendance on students' educational outcomes. However, almost all students in this sample came from low-income families and very few students' parents completed college, but nonetheless these students attended and persisted in college. The social capital perspective emphasizes the importance of parental support of students' college attendance, which was
confirmed by this study. In general, however, a "both/and" conceptual framework reveals the complexities in welfare recipients' experiences of higher education that largely go unnoticed by the sociological literatures on higher education and welfare reform.

For example, the sociological literature finds a clear negative effect of having children on college attendance and persistence. But this research reveals that while the informants did experience role conflicts due to having children, which probably lowered their grades and extended their time in school, children also provided the main incentive to attend and remain in school. In addition to examining the problems children pose for mothers' college attendance and persistence, research should further explore how welfare recipients envision their role as provider and how this affects their educational and career paths. These aspects of motherhood are largely overlooked in research on motherhood and higher education and welfare reform (but see Jennings, 2004 for an exception). A "both/and" conceptual stance shows that embracing their provider role helped these respondents resist some of the disadvantages associated with being a single-mother college student.

Collins' "both/and" perspective is also useful in understanding complexities in the ways these women's social networks affected their experiences of higher education. Consistent with past research on low-income women in African American communities, social networks were crucial in allowing many of these women to attend and stay in college. Most respondents relied heavily on their parents—and in some cases, on extended family members—for childcare and "moral" support. However, while welfare recipients' social networks certainly helped defray the economic and time costs of childcare, social networks generally did not help them pay for college. A "both/and" perspective illuminates the substantial benefits conferred by social networks, but also the inability (or unwillingness) of these social networks to help cover tuition costs.

Like much earlier research, this study confirms the importance of social integration into campus life. But this study reveals that among welfare recipients who have little time for campus activities, integration can occur in an unexpected setting: work-study jobs. A "both/and" perspective also recognizes the draw-
backs of participating in work-study jobs: less time for studying, family responsibilities, and leisure time. Thus, while these women were often forced to take work-study jobs due to their financial needs, they typically found satisfaction in these jobs.

Unlike some prior research, this study did not find a "work-first" mentality among welfare caseworkers that inhibited respondents' college attendance and persistence; this is likely due to the small sample size—and that all members of the sample made it to college so were probably more likely to gain support from their caseworkers than less educated students. Some respondents certainly had negative experiences with caseworkers, but several also had extremely supportive caseworkers. A "both/and" conceptual stance takes notice of experiences of oppression and empowerment in the respondents' interactions with caseworkers.

While patterns in experiences of oppression and resistance associated with single motherhood, class, and welfare statuses emerge from these women's narratives, it is much harder to ascertain racial differences in their experiences due to the very small sample of White respondents. Further research on larger samples of both women of color and White women is needed to assess how caseworkers inhibit success in college, and how women of color resist unequal treatment.

While the small sample size and qualitative nature of this research cannot provide a test any of the sociological theories of higher education, it has revealed the inadequacies of this literature in understanding the college experiences of students who are welfare recipients. It also points to several areas for further research in the areas of both higher education and welfare reform. The women in this sample resisted their oppressions due to race, class, and welfare recipient status by turning to both "private" means of support, such as family and friends, and by using more "public" kinds of support, such as the community childcare program and other resources and benefits from the welfare office. Many used an interesting combination of both forms of support, such as the woman who used a personal contact to force her caseworker to learn more about the benefits for which she qualified. More qualitative research on student welfare recipients could help identify the more successful strategies using "private" and "public" supports, and the combinations thereof.
In addition, these women have little to no time for additional on-campus activities, so attempts to increase their social integration into college life might be most useful in the context of their work-study jobs. Placing women in the same work-study jobs year after year could strengthen the relationships they form with faculty, staff, and students. Likewise, placing welfare recipients into work-study jobs in departments in which they are majors, or in places such as the advising center where they could become more versed in university policies and requirements, could also improve their ability to persist and succeed in college. Lastly, while welfare recipients attending college are pressed for time, attending meetings or support groups with other single mother students could help them feel more integrated into campus life. These interactions could help recipients learn useful strategies from others who are also working hard to be good students, mothers, and employees.

References
Welfare Recipients Attending College


Notes

1. One respondent had just become eligible for K-TAP by her second interview but was receiving Food Stamps at both interviews.

2. Graduation rates at this urban university are low when compared to those at its benchmark institutions; only about 33% of students graduate in six years. Many students work part- or full-time while attending school, so only take classes part-time. But these students were all full-time students (they must attend school full-time to qualify for the 4 Cs program).

3. Social networks often provided money for the respondents' children: about half of the respondents said that parents would sometimes pay for some of their children's activities, such as dance or music classes or sports activities.

4. While only a few students brought up the amount of debt they accrued by taking out loans to cover tuition and living costs, those who did realized
how staggering this debt could become. Sarah, who had just attained her B.A. and was about to start her M.S.W., said that after she finished all of her higher education, she would be $80,000 to $100,000 in debt. Amanda, the one married respondent said, “we’ll probably be paying back money for the rest of our life.”

Dominelli’s latest work belongs in the league of prior work by Jim Ife, Jan Fook and Karen Healy, all of whom attempt to help the reader understand the changing context of social work practice in a globalised world by offering a critical perspective on the profession. Drawing heavily from the British experience, Dominelli attempts to enables us to understand the contemporary context of social work practice so that we are fully conversant with the all too familiar changes we encounter on a daily basis. She wants to enable practitioners to meet these challenges and to oppose structural inequalities and oppression. In chapter 2 she examines the context of these challenges and in chapter 3, discusses the values underlying social work before going on in chapter 4 to focus on contradictory relations within families. In chapter 5 she examines older people’s plight and in chapter 6, that of offenders. She then turns her attention to the potential of community work and considers new directions that social work might take to enhance interdependence, reciprocity, citizenship, and social justice. Her concluding chapter examines social work as a force for change at an individual and structural level.

Although there is much of interest in this book, one scarcely can hardly believe after reading this book that there is any hope for social work in the harsh cruel world of ‘workfare’ which Dominelli paints. Domenelli argues that ‘Social work is a troubled and troubling profession’. So begins her deficits approach to social work that could be more aptly named *Social Work: Theory and Practice for a Dying Profession*. The notion of anti-oppressive practice theory is turned inwards on the profession itself: social work is now marginalised, excluded and oppressed. It has become the victim of Taylorisation, Fordism, managerialism, and globalisation, and it has been reduced to routinized, technocratic and bureaucratic tasks where evidence and competency-based practice and risk assessments are the order of the day irrespective of whether or not they improve the lot of clients. Dominelli, clearly
disillusioned by British social work, harkens back to ‘happier days’ when ‘Father Biesteck’ handed down the values tablets. Elsewhere she gives the impression that the grass is greener on the other side. She cites Southern Africa as an example where social workers are said to have made a major impact on local communities and reconstruction development programs. However, the Reconstruction and Development Program in South Africa scarcely lasted beyond two years of the democratic transition and no-one is free to do anything in Zimbabwe right now, let alone social workers. Furthermore, just as social work is giving way to social care in Britain so too has it given way to social development in South Africa. How can a profession which ‘endorsed the rule of white middle-class elites’ through ‘gendered, classist, homophobic, disablist and racist orientations’ ever have a future in a new social order?

Dominelli believes that social work is ailing everywhere. Social workers in Britain are leaving the profession in droves, and are being imported from other countries. What can we conclude about international social work if British social work is more attractive than social work in other parts of the world given Dominelli’s critique of her home turf? With her sociological background, Dominelli is armed with the intellectual tools needed to mount her critique and no-one does this as well as she does. She is adept at pointing out what’s wrong with the system and from her analysis there is not much right with it.

I would keep this book away from eager beginners in social work who come in with the full flush of optimism, excitement, wanting to help people, and ready to change the world. It is a book for the more jaded among us and it will certainly have a strong following for there are many in social work who share Dominelli’s perspective. My view is far more optimistic for I believe that no profession is more resourceful and skilled at double-guessing the system than social work.

I honestly wonder why anyone would want to be a social worker when it is approached so pessimistically from a critical perspective. Theory is an intellectual tool. It is not the reality. Dominelli makes it a big stick with which to beat ourselves. I can’t stand the pain so on with my rose-tinted spectacles—the
world of social work looks bright. Always remember when the going gets tough, the tough get going!

Mel Gray
The University of Newcastle, Australia


*Voices From the Edge* presents a refreshing and innovatively organized look at the disability literature in the context of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. While the field is replete with excellent collections of personal narratives of the experience of disability, and, though fewer, with legal analyses of court cases, the ADA, and American disability rights history, O’Brien’s skillful blending of the two genres offers readers the best of both: powerful personal narratives and a thorough grounding in legal cases, issues, and precedents which touch upon the lives of each of the people who share their experiences. Through this unusual approach, O’Brien makes an excellent contribution to the field of disability studies.

O’Brien sets the stage by providing us with a brief history of disability and disability rights in the United States from colonial times, when people with disabilities were often hidden away by ashamed families in a world that valued self-reliance, to our present-day disagreements over the interpretation and intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act and issues of judicial oversight affected by the new federalism. While self-reliance continues to be a strong national value, mitigating circumstances tempered public attitudes, beginning with the disabled Civil War veterans, on whose behalf the first programs in support of people with disabilities were developed. World War I veterans were similarly supported, and programs were later extended to cover non-veterans with disabilities. While concern with the needs and conditions of people with disabilities in the United States grew, there was a simultaneous effort by the government’s immigration authorities to keep disabled people from entering the United States, fearing that they would become a public burden. There was also a medicalization of disability, where physicians’ roles
as gatekeepers to benefits increased, and the disabled individual was viewed as the locus of the "problem". The end-of-century shift to a social context for considering disability continues to challenge individuals, institutions, and government agencies today.

While there were isolated civil actions early in the 20th century, the major changes in disability rights laws occurred in the latter half of that century. The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Mass Transportation Act of 1979 were among the earliest, but they were not fully implemented for many years. The landmark Rehabilitation Act of 1974 with its 504 regulation prohibited discrimination in employment of people with disabilities in all sectors that received federal funding. The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act further supported 504, and is divided into sections ("Titles"), three of which are developed in this book. Title I addresses employment issues, Title II addresses rights for people with disabilities to government services, such as education, access to public areas and buildings, and mass transit, while Title III addresses an area not covered in any previous legislation: access to private entities such as restaurants, theaters, hotels, stores, gyms and daycare centers. Title IV, which is not covered here, addresses rights in terms of common interstate carriers of telephone and related services.

In Part 1, Joan Aleshire challenges our thinking about what constitutes a disability by sharing her special life experiences as an advantaged person with a disability. Understanding what constitutes a disability is a necessary pre-condition to the rest of the book's presentations, and O'Brien encourages the reader to consider the subject and to recognize that this in itself is one of the most difficult issues upon which to arrive at a consensus.

Part 2 addresses Title I's employment issues by presenting three very different narratives, two of which focus on disclosure issues: Nowak's on disclosing HIV status, and Atkins on disclosing a paralysis that has an exacerbating-remitting pattern. Two of the narrative's, Atkins' and Kwsisto's, occur in the context of university settings. The ensuing in-depth presentation of the legal issues around workplace hiring, firing, promotions, and accommodations aptly illustrates the vast complexities of this field, and provides a discouraging statistic: between 80 and 90% of lawsuits filed under this section of the ADA found for the employer.
Part 3, Title II issues, includes three separate areas: Kriegel and Hockenberry take us for a walk and a ride, respectively, in New York, followed by an interesting presentation of the legal issues in regard to mass transit and curb cuts; Tollifson shares her experiences with getting a driver’s license, which is followed by a discussion about testing and disability which challenges readers to explore their own beliefs - should people with disabilities be tested differently than people without disabilities? Stewart shares her experiences in trying to get a deaf interpreter for her daughter in an ER, while O'Brien shares frustrations over a copy machine, followed by a complex discussion of the impact of the new federalism on the Supreme Court on the enforcement of ADA provisions.

Part 4, which relates a frustrating if wryly amusing story about handicapped parking places on private property, includes an insightful analysis of the complexities of enforcing Title III of the ADA: the lack of direction of responsibility leaves everyone - police, mayor’s office, government officials - unsure and unwilling to ensure this code is followed.

This book is a “good read”, and it presents a great deal of useful legal information in a very accessible manner by connecting the personal to the legal spheres in a very immediate sense. Concerned first about the person in the narrative, the reader eagerly peruses and absorbs the applicable sections of law and the challenges that directly impact each individual’s life.

Juliet C. Rothman
University of California, Berkeley


Susannah Ottaway, a professor of history at Carlton College, Minnesota, has written an important monograph that is one of books in the Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time. It examines provision for the elderly in eighteenth-century England, a time of population growth and the beginnings of the industrial revolution. The well-being of the elderly, generally seen as those over the age of sixty, was
determined not simply by such obvious factors as personal health, but by the intersection of custom, tradition, community values, social class, gender and changing social conditions. Primary sources—eighteenth century correspondence, memoirs, wills, diaries, parish and administrative relief records—reveal socially constructed meanings of old age and document care for the dependent elderly in the parishes of Terling, Essex; Puddleton, Dorset; and the township of Ovenden, Halifax parish, West Yorkshire.

Throughout the 18th century, most of the elderly did not need public relief under the Old Poor Law, indicating the strength of community and family values to provide support for the aged. Early in the century, no more than ten percent of the elderly received relief under the Poor Laws. The elderly most often wanted to remain independent and self-reliant as long as possible. They did not want to burden their families. When they could no longer care for themselves or depend on family support, they turned to the community for assistance. Parish officials determined eligibility and awarded relief that attempted to match individual needs. In-kind “outdoor relief” such food, fuel, clothing and medical care were often given to the elderly in their homes. Parish owned housing was used to provide shelter. At times, the elderly were expected to work in return for assistance if they were able to do so. Over the course of the century, the ability of families to care for elderly members declined in hard economic times, forcing the elderly to turn to the community for relief. Quantitative data drawn from extant relief records reveal the “Old-old”, those over the age of seventy, received more relief than the “young-old”, those between sixty and seventy, reflecting community commitment to support those with the greatest need.

As the 18th century progressed, the ages of relief recipients were more frequently listed in parish records, indicating increasing awareness that old age was a unique stage of life when dependency could be anticipated. While some scholars have characterized relief to the poor in this period as residual, especially for the able-bodied, the author argues that for much of the century the elderly poor could reasonably expect long-term support from the community if needed. Relief functioned, in effect, as a safety net for the “deserving” elderly. Contrary to the assertions of some
historians that relief shifted from the old to the young over the century, the number of elderly relief recipients increased in the parishes of Terling and Puddleton. Towards the end of the century, when more elderly needed public relief, parish relief funds could not keep up with demand resulting in the decreasing value of relief awards. This meant that the quality of care for the indigent elderly diminished. The poor became stigmatized and feared and their care was perceived as a community burden.

In the mid-eighteenth century, workhouses provided relief to the middle aged and even to children. Able-bodied workhouse inmates were expected to work in return for care. Parish relief officials supplemented outdoor relief with indoor relief in workhouses, a portent of the Poor Law reforms of 1834. By the end of the century, workhouses had become, in effect, poorhouses for the elderly. Appropriate care of the indigent elderly was debated by social reformers. Some argued against sending the elderly to workhouses, fearing removing them from their homes and families would be harmful. Others believed relief could be provided most efficiently and parsimoniously in the tightly controlled workhouse setting.

The author provides a detailed analysis and description of parish workhouses. The inventory of the Ovenden workhouse listed stocks and thumbscrews suggesting punishments were used to enforce rules and conformity. The elderly poor often resisted being sent to the workhouse, evidence that it represented a loss of independence and carried social stigma. Parish data show that age and gender influenced relief awards. Generally, more elderly men than elderly women received relief in Terling and Puddleton although women received support at earlier ages than men. Women were generally expected to work in the home in keeping with community values, although evidence shows many worked outside the home. Inheritance laws and social class often determined whether or not women could maintain independence as they aged. The author concludes with a call for recognition that "old age" is an important and neglected construct for studying the early modern period and that it deserves more attention from scholars. Her book is an important contribution to our understanding of the development of societal attitudes towards the poor and elderly in the Anglo-American world. Its
careful use of quantitative and qualitative research techniques is a model of innovative social history.

John M. Herrick
Michigan State University


Technology has always been a central aspect of the American cultural ethos toward progress and innovation. The ideas of Yankee Ingenuity and American Inventiveness are among the United States most cherished cultural images. This raises the question of both the accuracy and completeness of our understanding of the role of technology in the evolution of both America's culture and its place in the world. Bruce Sinclair and his colleagues question if historical accounts of technology fairly treat African Americans and what impacts this has had on the quality of the history of American technology. These essays examine the role of African Americans in how technology developed and how racism affected not only their contribution but the ways that historians have chronicled their involvement with technology.

The book begins with an essay by Judith Carney on the role of slaves in transferring rice growing technology from West Africa to Georgia and South Carolina. She argues that Africans learned the technology in their homeland and brought it to the American South, training their owners to use the techniques. Portia James then reviews the role of African Americans in the growth of technology. Particularly interesting is her discussion of the role of patent law in enforcing racist understandings of the technological competence of nonwhites. Sinclair then offers a brief examination of attempts to change the prevailing historical view of African American contributions to technology via newspaper comics.

Nina Lerman provides an excellent discussion of the industrial education movement and its impact on African Americans. This is an extremely rich discussion, full of subtle but profound insights. Barbara Garrity-Blake then provides an examination of work songs of African American fishermen. This is a fascinating
discussion but seems to provide less progress toward the theme than other essays in the book. A set of pictures from the 1900 Paris Exposition, with commentary by Sinclair, is provided to illustrate some of the points made throughout the book. Kathleen Franz discussion of the automobile in the development of the African American middle class is a treat. She explores the role of race, technology and progress in a well-crafted argument that illustrates the frustration of individual achievement within a progressive time that still suffers from the sin of racism.

In the final three chapters, Rebecca Herzig nicely lays out the major points of interaction between race and technology in recent history, Amy Slaton reviews the development of minority engineering education and Lonnie Bunch looks at the depiction of technology and race in museum depictions of history. These are brief and concise, though meaty chapters. The final section is a rather extensive topical bibliography and resource guide.

This book provides a useful introduction to the history of technology and race as it developed in the United States. It deals well with the impact of racism on distorting the record of African Americans as inventors and innovators. It also deals with the roadblocks that racism creates in the path of inventive African Americans who, absent this constraint, would have given us untold riches in technological advances. However, it is troubling that the potential for oppression in technology was not explored more deeply. There are sections in the topical bibliography on environmental racism and the digital divide, but the role of technology in the service of oppression is hard to find in these pages. More discussion of this theme would have made a stronger book.

Having said that, this is a good book which makes a strong contribution to the scholarship on the history of race and technology. For the most part, the essays are well developed, lively and informative. The editing was skillful and well executed. The book should be very helpful to those who are interested in the intertwining of race and technology in the history of the United States.

John McNutt
University of South Carolina

While the juvenile justice system was developed to provide a more therapeutic and nurturing response to adolescent delinquency, young offenders increasingly are being transferred from the juvenile courts and prosecuted as adults. Clearly, the public has embraced the myth of the dangerous juvenile superpredator and legal policies have been changed accordingly, further blurring the line between juvenile delinquent and adult offender. For these minors, their criminal act alone dictates their status as an adult to the exclusion of factors like age, developmental level, intellectual abilities, and life experience. Perhaps there is no better example of this misguided policy than the juvenile sex offender. Despite increasing evidence that these youthful offenders are dissimilar to their adult counterparts, legal responses to adolescent sex offending remain derivative of policies for adult sex offenders. These legal strategies assume the young offenders to be dangerous deviants, ignore the developmental aspects of their unlawful conduct, and fail to properly assess need and risk.

Beginning with the first chapter, it is clear that Franklin Zimring aims to provide a comprehensive and thorough critique of these assumptions that have previously absent from the literature. In illustration of the misguided legal actions that have marked legal responses to adolescent sexual offending, he reviews three disturbing cases and the troubling legal reactions that followed. The cases include a 10-year-old boy caught mostly nude with his younger sister and a female cousin, the reported kidnapping and rape by seven male middle school students of a 12-year-old learning disabled girl, and an especially disturbing Idaho statute that fails to meaningfully differentiate between adult and juvenile sex offenders. This statute, as Zimring notes, allows that adolescents caught in consensual sexual activity with a same-age partner or even adolescents caught masturbating alone could technically be forced to register as a sex offender.

Chapters 2–4 then address the scope, nature, and characteristics of sex offending in the United States. Chapter two reviews the laws, arrest and incarceration trends, and policy changes per-
taining to general sexual misconduct in the United States through the past 30 years. This chapter also gives the reader an orientation to legal terms, definitions, and official sex offender classifications thus making the book accessible to lay persons as well as legal scholars and academics. The next chapter (chapter 3) then moves to focus expressly on sex crimes by juveniles while chapter four considers varied approaches to juvenile sex offender treatment.

These latter two chapters are perhaps the most interesting and important in the book. While chapters one and two set the tone for the book and give background on American sex offending, Chapters 3–4 give a much needed injection of critical scrutiny to the current discourse about legal responses to juvenile sexual offending. For example, chapter 3 does not simply review prevalence estimates and annual arrest data but rather offers an insightful appraisal of the strengths and limitations of the various methods used to measure sex crimes by juveniles. Likewise, Zimring’s extended critique of the National Adolescent Perpetrator Network’s revised report of the National Task Force on Juvenile Sex Offending (published in 1993) is a remarkable example of the insight that can be gained from a thoughtful and judicious approach to policy analysis. Despite the report’s popularity and influence, Zimring notes numerous omissions and misguided recommendations. For example, the report advocates for the extended tracking and registration of juvenile sex offenders. Such an erroneous directive assumes that these offenders pose a long-term risk for sexual reoffending though there is growing evidence that juvenile sex offenders pose a bigger risk for nonsexual reoffending than for any further sexual delinquency.

The second part of the book moves the discussion into the juvenile court. Chapter 5 chronicles the historical response to sexual offending in juvenile courts and concludes by describing current responses and contexts. Chapter 6 outlines juvenile court reforms that are needed in the face of growing evidence about juvenile sex offenders and offending. This chapter also poses three key questions to be considered in any reform efforts. Specifically, what are the risks for reoffending for different types of juvenile sex offenders? What characteristics are associated with higher rates of reoffending? And, what impact does sex offender treatment have on sexual reoffending among juveniles? Finally, chapter 7 sheds
light on controversial topics affecting legal policies for juvenile sex offenders, including mandatory sex offender registration and community notification requirements.

Two consistent themes in the final section of the book (especially in chapter 6) are the pressing need for empirical research that will bridge the gaps in juvenile sex offender knowledge and the importance of reforming existing policies and developing new policies that are reflective of these research advances. In fact, the repeated push throughout the book for more and better empirical research, and the incorporation of this research in policy development, is one of the great contributions of this remarkable work. Clearly, legal responses to crime are often driven more by public or political pressures than by sound scientific research. As Zimring demonstrates, this is certainly true of juvenile sex offenders. Yet, by giving directions for future research, outlining proposals for reforms in the juvenile court, and repeatedly modeling thoughtful, critical policy analysis, the author shows why such misguided responses are no longer acceptable. Franklin Zimring is one of the preeminent legal scholars in the United States today and this exceptional, meticulous book shows why such status is so richly deserved.

Matthew T. Theriot
The University of Tennessee


This volume of readings by two pre-eminent international authors, M.C. 'Terry' Hokenstad and James Midgley, incorporates a splendid collection of ideas from the contributions of leading thinkers in the field of global social work and social welfare. Superbly conceptualized and excellently executed, this collection challenges the reader to view familiar issues with global lenses. An introductory chapter by Hokenstad and Midgley brings the collection together well and sets the reader’s expectations for the feast that follows. Seven chapters from well-known contributors review topics central to social work and social welfare such as
child welfare, mental health, welfare and poverty, aging, as well as introducing material less familiar to social workers with chapters on social development and human rights. This is a timely volume of stimulating and challenging ideas. It is timely because the Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) encourage social work programs to include a global perspective in their curricula. This approach needs to be reinforced by comparative literature which supports courses taught in a global context. The volume has the advantages of being concise and of focusing on issues central to the social work curriculum. Students will not be daunted by highly technical language and abstruse ideas, but will be inspired by global comparisons and information and the possibility of innovation, all presented in a highly readable package.

Guseilo, Curl and Hokenstad use a strategy of giving us a glimpse into the future of the United States through a review of pension policy in Sweden, one of the demographically oldest countries in the world with approximately 17% of the population over the age of 65. It will be some years before the United States reaches this level, and so to examine the experiences of a country which has already met the challenges of maintaining income security for a graying population is a useful device for policy analysis and planning. This excellent chapter on aging further discusses the growing issue of elder suicide and takes an analytic look at Long Term Care in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Van Wormer reviews global child welfare issues and provides examples and analysis, which while acknowledging important US innovations in the field, also questions accepted views and practice. She reviews the international origins of kinship care, family group conferencing and points to important international programs relating to children’s rights and child abuse. Van Wormer argues that institutionalized deprivation and violence or social abuse is more pervasive than care-giver abuse, thus challenging the bio-psycho-social model dominant in the delivery of US child welfare programs.

Along the same line of thought, Wetzel-Wood argues that oppression and socio-economic development are intrinsically linked with mental health. Both Van Wormer’s and Wetzel-Woods chap-
ters' serve as salutary reminders that the bigger picture may cause us to see social and individual problems in a different perspective.

In a very timely analysis of privatization of Social Security, Midgley reviews pension reforms in Chile, Singapore and Britain and the lessons learned. This is an analysis that deserves wider circulation in the current debate and should be regarded as essential reading for all students of social work, public policy, and human services administration and planning.

Writing on Welfare, Poverty and Social Services, Gilbert reviews the global trend to implementing policies encouraging 'active' participation in the workforce, otherwise known as 'workfare'. He considers important questions such as 'should caring for children, the elderly and infirm relatives qualify as a form of work?' (p. 83).

Livermore and Midgley discuss Social Development in the context of lessons from the global society: micro enterprise, social capital and human capital are concepts which have not yet made their way into mainstream social work and human services practice and literature, but which have great potential for facilitating an empowerment model of practice for the social work profession.

At a time when the US is challenged by other nations for its ambivalence in the area of the Geneva Convention, what can be more appropriate than Lightfoot's excellent summary of international conventions pertaining to human rights, child welfare and women's issues and their implications for social work and social welfare in the United States?

While Social Work as a profession owes much to the United States in the twentieth century for the growth of theory, research and professional identity and direction, this book is a salutary reminder that we have already imported many good ideas and still have much to learn from the rest of the world. It is invaluable for courses wishing to respond to the EPAS exhortation to add a global perspective to the social work curriculum and it will undoubtedly find a place on the reading list of numerous courses in the next few years. It is a must read for every thinking social worker, students of social work, human service and public policy planners.

Doreen Elliott
University of Texas at Arlington

*Migration and Immigration* provides a broad overview of global migration. Through fourteen case studies from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, North and South America and Australia, it illustrates different patterns and trends in international migration. Presenting a truly global view, it reaches beyond the conventional dichotomies in the migration literature of core and periphery and sending and receiving countries. While it recognizes that historical colonial relationships still shape migratory flows, it also highlights the effects that globalization has had on population movements. For instance, women have become a greater part of the migration stream, moving from rural areas to cities to fill jobs in the global assembly line. This is largely a phenomenon of internal migration, as the concentration of manufacturing and production has shifted from developed countries to developing ones. Women have also joined the international migration stream to become domestics in economies based on finance and technology.

While the vast majority of migrants occupy low-skilled jobs, educated professionals also migrate. Large numbers of well-educated Ghanaians, for example, have migrated to Canada, the United States and Western Europe in search of economic opportunity. According to the editors, these two types of migrant flows comprise "two sides of the same coin in the global economy." Yu Zhou's excellent chapter on China illustrates this phenomenon with two case studies of Chinese immigrants to the United States.

In Africa another phenomenon, "circular migration," is occurring in which relatively prosperous and peaceful nations such as Tanzania accept migrants and refugees from neighboring countries. Other intraregional migratory patterns include the movement of people from underdeveloped economies such as Cambodia and Indonesia to work in Japan, Singapore and the other "tiger economies."

Finally, the costs and benefits of guest worker programs to both sending and receiving countries are addressed in several
chapters, including one on the Philippine Overseas Employment Program and ones on France and the Netherlands, both countries with declining populations. Their approach contrasts to Australia’s, which has an immigrant policy that helps to incorporate newcomers into society.

As in most edited volumes, the quality of the contributions is uneven. The editors’ attempt to create a coherent whole by having the authors follow a template, including a country profile a vignette, is unsuccessful. The vignettes are not integrated into the text and the profiles often provide far too much information, leading readers’ attention to wander. However, the breadth of the migration experiences described is indispensable to understanding the complexity of migration in a global world. Nobuko Adachi’s story of Japanese Brazilian migration to Japan, for example, will be new to many readers and adds insight to the intergenerational dynamics of migrants’ lives. Migration and Immigration does a service by exposing readers to new trends in the rapidly changing state of global migration.

Clare Sheridan, University of California, Berkeley


International and comparative social policy scholarship has made significant strides in recent times. Just a few decades ago, comparative social policy research was regarded as a highly specialized field pursued by specialists who analyzed the welfare systems of both familiar and unfamiliar societies. Today, comparative social welfare inquiry has become commonplace. Social policy scholarship in Europe and North America now makes far more references to developments in other parts of the world and, in other global regions, the dependence on social welfare ideas emanating from the industrial nations has lessened. International issues are now much more frequently discussed in mainstream social welfare publications; international content is being incorporated into social work and social policy curricula far more extensively and social work and social policy educators have far more contact with colleagues in other countries.

Despite these achievements, comparative social policy inquiry
is still challenged by numerous problems and it is with regard to some of these problems that Patricia Kennett has brought together some of the leading scholars in the field to discuss and debate some of the most pressing and interesting issues facing comparative social policy today. The book begins with a useful introduction by the editor and then focuses on five major topics (organized into five parts). These include the role of the state in a globalizing world; concepts and definitions international social welfare; inequality, redistribution and social policy; comparative social policy research and finally a catch-all category entitled "themes and issues." The chapters comprising these five parts of the book are wide-ranging and are indicative of the many issues, problems and challenges that characterize the field. While most of the chapters present new ideas, others restate well-established themes. One recurrent theme is the implicit equating of social welfare with governmental provision so that many of the chapters approach the subject from a Western, welfare state perspective. This tendency is reinforced by the way many chapters rely on Western welfare typologies. On the other hand, some chapters directly challenge these notions and question their global validity. Similarly, while the concept of globalization is used in a conventional, negative sense in many chapters, others offer a more nuanced and balanced account.

By bringing these diverse perspectives together in one volume, Kennett has made major contribution to the comparative study of social policy. The book will undoubtedly serve as a major resource for social policy scholars, and the editor is to be commended for taking on what must have been a herculean task. Unfortunately, the book is expensive and will probably be beyond the means of most students. It is to be hoped, however, that the book will be available in many university libraries. It deserves to be widely consult not only by those interested in international issues but by anyone concerned with the challenges facing the academic field of social policy today.


Social work and social policy are now well-established academic subjects. In addition to applying sophisticated research methodologies, both are making far more use of theory than
ever before. However, in the early days, the founders of social work and social policy were suspicious of theory. Many embraced the positivist view that social welfare institutions could best be analyzed through observation and scientific verification. Pragmatism reinforced this perspective and theoretical speculation was generally disdained. Although social work and social policy scholarship was historically characterized by an anti-theoretical stance, the situation is very different today and a wide range of theoretical perspectives now inform social work and social policy research. Psychological and sociological theories are now widely used, and there is far more familiarity with political economy and major normative social science perspectives.

It is in this context that Charles Lemert’s book should be regarded as a major resource for social work and social policy students and scholars. Focusing primarily on social theories, the book presents an extremely comprehensive collection of excerpts from the writings of leading contributors to social theory since the mid-19th century. The material is organized chronologically into six parts. Part one is concerned with the classical social theorists including Marx, Durkheim and Weber but interestingly Lemert also includes an excerpt from the writings of Jane Addams who is seldom regarded as a theoretician. Part II, which spans the first half of the 20th century, contains excerpts from the writings of Keynes, Mead, Merton, Du Bois and Gramsci as well as political and literary figures such as Virginia Woolf, Gandhi and Mao. The next two parts of the book focus on the writings of late 20th-century scholars such as Parsons, Goffman, Habermas and Galbraith but here again, except from the writings of political and literary figures are included. Part five deals largely with the work of postmodernist and multicultural writers of the 1980s and 1990s and, reflecting the title of the book, multicultural and postmodernist excerpts dominate the final section which is concerned with the social theories of the new century. Appropriately, a significant proportion of these excerpts address issues of globalization.

As suggested earlier, Lemert’s collection should be viewed as a source book rather than a basic text. Its major strengths is its comprehensiveness and the way the editor presents short but representative selections that will appeal to students. Many students, and indeed many educators, do not have the time or
inclination to plow through heavy theoretical tomes and many rely on secondary sources when seeking to understand theoretical writing. Lemert’s collection makes original writings accessible and manageable. This is a valuable book which should be extensively used in social work and social policy classes.


This volume examines the impact of welfare reform on low income women’s access to and experiences in post-secondary education and training. The editors have assembled a collection that integrates policy analysis and qualitative research examining the experiences of low income mothers on welfare. While there is an extensive body of research literature on welfare to work programs, produced primarily by large research institutes and funded by federal or state government entities, the majority of the studies have been quantitative, often drawing upon administrative data collected by government agencies. Research that explores the perspective and daily lives of welfare recipients, particularly individuals participating in higher education or vocational training programs, has been limited. This book therefore offers an important contribution to the field.

Many of the large quantitative studies have employed an experimental design, leading policy makers and researchers to attribute a high degree of validity to their findings that welfare to work programs promoting education and training are less effective than work-first programs aimed at moving recipients immediately into the workforce. A closer reading of this literature reveals that these findings are problematic. The differences in employment rates and earnings achieved by education oriented programs, on the one hand, and by work-first programs, on the other, are minimal, and neither type of program has been demonstrated to reduce poverty rates significantly for participants. Moreover, education oriented programs are typically focused on GED acquisition or limited vocational training. Welfare to work programs offering higher education opportunities for women on welfare have been rare. Consequently, we know much less about their
potential effects. However, studies have consistently shown an association between higher education and higher employment rates, higher earnings, and reduced poverty rates.

The first chapter of the book reviews the research on welfare to work programs, arguing persuasively that the quantitative, experimental design studies suffer from a number of flaws. In particular, they employ narrow outcome criteria, omit the perspective of program participants, and assume that individual rather than structural characteristics are the critical barriers to employment for welfare recipients. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 present compelling examples of low income mothers' experiences in education and training programs. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 examine higher education policy and practices and offer illustrations of their impact on low income women. The detailed analyses of local policies and practices at specific educational institutions are especially valuable in the context of welfare reform's devolution of welfare policy to the states. Chapters 8 through 11 describe examples of advocacy campaigns to enact policies designed to improve access to and increase supports for higher education for low income women. These experiences depict the serious obstacles facing welfare policy reform efforts, but also offer hope. Overall, the contributors make a strong case for higher education and training for low income women. In some instances however, where qualitative data are presented, more comprehensive discussion of research design and methods would give greater confidence in the conclusions reached.

Sarah Carnochan, University of California, Berkeley


In this informative new book, Professor Ralph C. Brashier of the University of Memphis School of Law presents a fascinating analysis of how the changing structure of the family is impacting inheritance laws. Many different family arrangements are considered in this book including families headed by single parents, gay and lesbian couples and step-parents, as well as families with children born with the help of advanced reproductive technology.
Brashier has significant experience in the area of probate law, and this book’s extensive legal and secondary source citations reflect the depth and breadth of his considerable knowledge. It is evident that Brashier is trying to exercise some influence on policy makers, but the book is written in a clear, easy to understand prose that would be understood by social workers, public health nurses, or those who simply wish to gain more knowledge on this topic.

In each chapter, Brashier presents the current law and its history in a balanced manner, although he does not hesitate to state his own views. According to Brashier, the fundamental problem facing states trying to adapt to the many different family structures that now exist is to create clear and predictable rules, particularly rules about who to include in the definition of family. Allowing judges to make a case by case decision about what is a family could result in different and inconsistent laws, and Brashier asserts that states should develop default probate laws that better reflect modern American families, without sacrificing the objectivity and efficiency.

The book is composed of six chapters focusing on inheritance issues that arise with legally married couples, couples that are not married, adopted children, and those children born with the help of reproductive technology. A separate chapter on the complexities of determining paternity is also provided. Brashier’s compassion and concern for families is evident throughout the book, but nowhere more so than in his chapter on children were he condemns the ability of parents to completely disinherit their children, calling such parents "moral villains."

Brashier expresses concern for married mothers who live in “separate property” states where the wage-earner spouse is the sole owner of his wages during the marriage and literally must die before the law recognizes that the mother has any interest in his wages. In another chapter, Brashier makes intelligent and impassioned arguments supporting the right of gay and lesbian couples to enter into legal marriages and enjoy spousal inheritance rights, stressing fairness. Brashier’s discussion about advanced reproductive technology, including cloning, also helps the reader understand the difficult issues involved. Challenging issues include who owns sperm or eggs; should sperm and eggs be inheritable and how long after the deceased is dead should
sperm and eggs be used to create a child? Brashier also briefly addresses human cloning and takes a fatalistic but practical position. Human cloning, he believes, is inevitable, and states should, therefore, pass laws regulating cloning to protect the children produced.

Brashier addresses controversial issues in an informed, articulate, and thoughtful manner. His book raises issues which will undoubtedly confound legislatures for decades to come. It will be a useful starting point for legislators facing the daunting task of resolving those issues. But the book is also very accessible to those who work in the social services. It is fine addition to the library of anyone wishing to provide financially for their families.

Karen Jones-Mason, University of California, Berkeley


Social work and social policy are often presented as disparate fields. Many commentaries stress their divergent focus, separate methodologies and different normative commitments. However, the two have close links which can be traced back to the 19th-century. Despite social work's individualistic focus and concern with treatment, the profession's founders were mindful of wider social problems and of the need for interventions that transcended casework and brought national resources to bear on these problems. During the 20th century, the link between social work and social policy strengthened as governments expanded the social services and provided an organizational and institutional framework within which social work practice could be pursued. Today, social policy is regarded as a key element of social work, and social work students are more exposed to social policy issues than before.

This book focuses on social policy practice which is a subfield of social policy concerned with the mechanics of policymaking, the implementation of policy decisions and the evaluation of outcomes. As such it comes closest to integrating the two fields, specifically linking social work's professional commitments with the demands of policymaking, administration and outcome as-
essment. However, the book is not narrowly concerned with these issues and it presents policy practice in a wider social and political context. The first part of the book is designed to frame the discussion by examining the role of the helping professions in this wider context. The authors point out that social policy analysis takes place within a cultural and ideological climate and that the helping professions cannot ignore the broader societal forces that impinge on their work. On the other hand, they reject the idea that the helping professions are inevitably shaped by these wider forces and believe instead that a commitment to scientific inquiry can promote the formulation and implementation of objective and rational responses to social problems. Part II of the book is concerned with the concept of human need and with understanding populations at risk. Part III specifically addresses issues of policy analysis and practice focusing respectively on needs assessment and program evaluation methods. Two chapters are devoted to each topic and the authors are careful to explain the limitations of these methods as well as other issues that affect needs assessment and program evaluation activities.

The chapters in this book are wide-ranging and discursive and some readers may feel that too little attention is given to the technical aspects of policy analysis and practice. Part 1 of the book, which contains almost a half of the chapters, is particularly general and while it raises important issues, students may find that it detracts from a detailed explanation of what policy analysis and practice actually entails. Nevertheless there is much in the book that will be of interest to students, educators and practitioners. It is well written and accessible and should be a helpful addition to the literature in the field.
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS
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JSSW welcomes a broad range of articles which analyze social welfare institutions, policies, or problems from a social scientific perspective or otherwise attempt to bridge the gap between social science theory and social work practice.

Submission Process
Submit manuscripts to: Robert Leighninger, School of Social Work, Arizona State University, P.O. Box 877802, Tempe, AZ 85287-1802. Send three copies together with an abstract of approximately 100 words. Since manuscripts are not returned by reviewers to the editorial office, the editorial office cannot return them to the authors. Submission certifies that it is an original article and that it has not been published nor is being considered for publication elsewhere. Receipt of manuscripts will be acknowledged by email.

Progress reports can be obtained by emailing the editor at rleighn@asu.edu. Reviewing normally takes 120 days.

Preparation
Articles should be typed, double-spaced (including the abstract, indented material, footnotes, and references) on 8½ x 11 inch white bond paper with one inch margins on all sides. Tables may be submitted single-spaced. Please provide a running head and keywords with manuscript.

Anonymous Review
To facilitate anonymous review, please keep identifying information out of the manuscript. Only the title should appear on the first page. Attach one cover pages that contain the title, authors, affiliations, date of submission, mailing address, telephone number and any statements of credit or research support.

Style
Overall style should conform to that found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition, 2001. Use in-text citations (Reich, 1983), (Reich, 1983, p. 5). The use of footnotes in the text is discouraged. If footnotes are essential, include them on a separate sheet after the last page of the references. The use of italics or quotation marks for emphasis is discouraged. Words should be underlined only when it is intended that they be typeset in italics.

Gender and Disability Stereotypes
Please use gender neutral phrasing. Use plural pronouns and truly generic nouns (“labor force” instead of “manpower”). When dealing with disabilities, avoid making people synonymous with the disability they have (“employees with visual impairments” rather than, “the blind”). Don’t magnify the disabling condition (“wheelchair user” rather than “confined to a wheelchair”). For further suggestions see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or Guide to Non-Sexist Language and Visuals, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Book Reviews
Books for review should be sent to James Midgley, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

Founding Editors
Norman Goroff and Ralph Segalman