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## Errata:

### Volume 40, Issue 4, 2013

The Matsuoka and Sorenson article for the Special Issue on Animals, Redefining Social Welfare: Connections Across Species (Human consequences of animal exploitation: Needs for redefining social welfare, pp. 7-32) included a citation of an article by Calvo (2008). Since the time of printing, the author's name has been corrected on the publisher's website. The author's corrected name is Cudworth, and the reference information in Matsuoka & Sorenson's article is correct except for the name change.

### Volume 28, Issue 4, 2001

The Lewis article (A time series analysis of the effect of welfare benefits on earnings, pp. 161-171) included some incorrect dates on the data used for the study. The text of the article references data from 1960-1995, when the data used was actually from 1970-1995.



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# Pathologies of the Poor: What do the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform Have in Common?

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*The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) authorized drug testing of welfare recipients as a criterion for assistance eligibility. This raises the question of a possible confluence of War on Drugs and Welfare Reform policies, as indicated by continuity in policymakers' rhetoric. We examine federal-level policymakers' debates surrounding the authorization of drug testing welfare recipients. The analysis reveals that themes of social pathology were present in both policy areas. Crime, drug addiction, welfare dependency, and drug testing themes are comparable in both debates. Teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock birth, and female-headed households themes were more prevalent in Welfare Reform debates, with the exception of drug-addicted newborns, which crossed both policy streams.*

*Key words: welfare drug testing, Welfare Reform, War on Drugs, social pathology, social construction of target populations, rhetoric*

The idea that politicians make effective use of rhetoric in the policymaking process has been widely acknowledged (Fischer, 2003; Rochefort & Cobb, 1994). It is through the use and manipulation of language that policy problems are defined

and alternative solutions are considered. In the social ordering of relationships, some rhetorical strategies are more potent than others, particularly those that define and promote morality (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). This has far-reaching implications for the social construction of target populations (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

For decades, social pathology rhetoric, which constructs and promotes demarcation between deviance and acceptable behavior, has been used to shape public views of poverty and welfare (Ben-Yehuda, 1990; Chappell, 2010; Spector & Kitsuse, 2001). In public policy, social pathology rhetoric emerged in reference to welfare in 1965 with Moynihan's Department of Labor report *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. In his report, Moynihan describes the social ills plaguing poor black families as a "tangle of pathology" that includes matriarchal family structure and female-headed households, "illegitimate births," teen pregnancy, poverty and welfare dependency, delinquency and crime, and drug abuse (U.S. Department of Labor, 1965). Over the years, the concept of social pathology has been used to describe a range of deviations from mainstream norms and values which are "associated with the development of 'dysfunctional' or 'pathological' patterns of organization and behavior, that is, patterns that impede integration and subvert moral order" (Reed, 1999, p. 187).

The significance of social pathology rhetoric is related to the crucial role it plays in the social construction of target populations, which involves "1) the recognition of the shared characteristics that distinguish a target population as socially meaningful, and 2) the attribution of specific valence-oriented values, symbols, and images to the characteristics" (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 335). Such constructions, presenting groups in either a positive or negative light through the use and management of public and political rhetoric, become widely accepted throughout society, regardless of their accuracy (Brush, 1997; Fischer, 2003; Fraser & Gordon, 1994; Naples, 1997; O'Connor, 2001; Piven & Cloward, 1993). These constructions become so embedded in the public psyche that they can easily be deployed to justify otherwise unacceptable government actions, including those that radically restructure welfare policies (Chappell, 2010).

Research examining poverty and welfare has revealed the intrusive and paternalistic nature of the social welfare system (McCorkel, 2004; O'Connor, 2001; Piven & Cloward, 1993; Soss, 2000, 2005). Recently, the invasion of privacy of the poor in exchange for financial assistance has been legitimized through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), which authorized drug testing of welfare recipients as an additional criterion for eligibility, providing yet another articulation of how "the War on Drugs has become a war on the poor" (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], 2003, p. 1).

The interface between the war on drugs and the poor has been noted by several scholars who identified the connection between drug use as social pathology and the social construction of welfare recipients (e.g., Brush, 1997; Fraser & Gordon, 1994; McCorkel, 2004). Brush (1997), for instance, demonstrated how "conservative policy reformers revived caricatures of single mothers that played on racist stereotypes of profligacy, dependency, irresponsibility, shiftlessness, and chiseling" (p. 739). This connection emerged from the concept of an "underclass," "which included by definition drug addicts, ex-convicts, former inhabitants of mental facilities, and single mothers" (Brush, 1997, p. 739). Brush (1997) argues that including single mothers in the same category as drug addicts and the mentally ill promoted the position that they were undeserving poor who should not receive public support.

Fraser and Gordon (1994) make the connection through the discourse of dependency, which was used in the 1980s as a euphemism for addiction. They maintain, "because welfare claimants are often—falsely—assumed to be addicts, the pathological connotations of *drug dependency* tend also to infect *welfare dependency*, increasing stigmatization" (Fraser & Gordon, 1994, p. 325). This assertion is epitomized by Vice President Quayle's (1992) infamous "Murphy Brown speech," when he stated, "Our inner cities are filled with children having children ... with people who are dependent on drugs and on the narcotic of welfare ... this poverty is, again, fundamentally a poverty of values" (p. 2).

Noting an escalation in the public and political support for attitudes of condemnation, Beckett and Western (2001)



argue that both criminal justice and social welfare policy have become more punitive and exclusionary, reflecting "a larger shift in the governance of social marginality" (p. 44). Earlier, Garland (1981, 1985) observed an increase in social regulatory practices that involve normalization of behavioral "abnormalities" among "marginal" populations, including the poor, through the work of government agencies focused on social welfare which he terms "penal welfarism." More recently, Garland (2001) notes that over time, the two systems have become even more intertwined as they share "the same assumptions, harbor the same anxieties, deploy the same stereotypes, and utilize the same recipes for the identification of risk and the allocation of blame" (p. 201).

Despite growing recognition of the coupling of various punitive systems, much scholarship still focuses on only one or the other of two policy areas, War on Drugs or Welfare Reform. In this context, McCorkel (2004) argues, "separate spheres" scholarship tends to mask "how shared or complementary mechanisms of social control, architectures of claims making and need construction, and institutional conceptions of subjectivity and pathology anchor race, class, and gender arrangements *across* state systems" (p. 387). While others (Brush 1997; Fraser & Gordon, 1994) have argued that the discourse of dependency bridges social pathology and welfare discourses, McCorkel's (2004) institutional ethnography analyzes "how dependency discourses associated with welfare reform were used to justify implementation of get tough policies in women's prisons" (p. 388). McCorkel's study is the only analysis of rhetorical coordination of U.S. welfare and criminal justice policies. Yet, McCorkel (2004) only examines the co-opting of welfare reform dependency rhetoric by a state penal institution.

However, exploring possible rhetorical conflation of the poor and drug addicts in policy debates is a critical task. First, such conflation averts the focus from children, who constitute approximately 76 percent of welfare recipients (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012, p. X-69), and family, however family may be defined. Second, if policy rhetoric coalesces the poor and drug addicts into a single pathological population, this furthers the stigmatization of the poor and the questioning of their worthiness.

Building on and extending McCorkel's (2004) research, this study examines federal-level policymakers' rhetoric surrounding the authorization of drug testing welfare recipients. Specifically, we explore federal-level policymakers' War on Drugs and Welfare Reform debates to establish 1) whether rhetoric used in both debates is similar, and 2) whether social pathology themes that McCorkel (2004) found to be associated with the War on Drugs were present in Welfare Reform debates to justify drug testing welfare recipients. We begin by briefly discussing the background and the context of the two policies.

### Policy Backgrounds and Contexts

President Nixon initiated the National War on Drugs in 1971, and signed it into law in January 1972. This policy approach continued to gain traction through the mid-1980s with Nancy Reagan's slogan, "Just Say No," peaking in 1989-1990 with the passage of additional policies aimed at fighting "the war" on a variety of fronts. During this time span, the focus of the drug war also shifted. The Nixon administration allocated two thirds of federal spending for prevention and treatment and one third for interdiction and enforcement; the Reagan and subsequent administrations reversed the distribution, allocating two thirds to interdiction and enforcement and one third to prevention and treatment (Califano, 2010).

In the context of the War on Drugs, interdiction and enforcement efforts included tougher sentencing (truth in sentencing, mandatory minimum sentences, three strikes laws, and restrictions on sentencing discretion) and increases in prison spending and space (Donovan, 2001; McCorkel, 2004; Sharp, 1994), as well as an effort to implement drug testing for several groups. This latter endeavor began toward the end of the Vietnam War (1955-1975), when returning veterans were found to be addicted to narcotics.

Arguments for drug testing additional groups of U.S. citizens escalated when the focus shifted from veterans to transportation and federal employees. In 1984, the Federal Railroad Administration developed more rigorous and uniform drug and alcohol testing for railway employees in the wake of a number of train accidents involving drug or alcohol use

(Rasky, 1984). Between 1986 and 1998, drug testing was expanded to all federal employees as well as new groups of transportation workers, including airline pilots, flight attendants, and truck drivers ("U.S. to Test Transport Workers," 1988).

Following these drug-testing policies, proposals to test welfare recipients were introduced in 1989, when Louisiana Representative David Duke gained committee passage of a bill requiring welfare recipients to take drug tests. The bill, as proposed, also blocked benefits for anyone testing positive or anyone convicted of a drug offense (*The Advocate*, 1989). While this measure ultimately failed, calls for welfare-related drug testing did not cease.

A few years later, Welfare Reform, or "ending welfare as we know it," rose to the policy agenda with President Clinton's bid for reelection in 1994. The aim was to replace entitlement programs with block grants, implement time limits and work requirements for recipients, and give states greater power and flexibility in providing welfare benefits (Ricucci, 2005). In 1996, this effort was concluded as the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFCD) entitlement program was replaced with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF was authorized by PRWORA, also known as the Welfare Reform Act of 1996.

Drug testing of welfare recipients as an eligibility criterion was authorized by Section 902 of PRWORA. Whereas the ACLU (2003) argues "the purpose of the drug provision was to further the War on Drugs," (p. 4), this has yet to be established. The policy, however, has maintained a place on the legislative agenda in a growing number of states, as states under PRWORA have authority to design and implement cash assistance programs under the parameters they see fit.

### Extant Research: Dependency Rhetoric

Linkages between state institutions are facilitated by rhetorical strategies as well as interpretive frames (psychological, criminological, medical), which operate in one system and are adopted by other systems "to inform institutional conceptions of deviance and pathology, needs, and subjectivities" (McCorkel, 2004, p. 388). One noticeable rhetorical link

between the welfare system and the criminal justice system is that of dependency. Dependency rhetoric was central to the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 (Naples, 1997), and also “played a central role in the implementation and legitimization of ‘get tough’ policies in the criminal justice system” (McCorkel, 2004, p. 388).

McCorkel (2004) argues that the “welfare and criminal justice systems share a set of assumptions, concerns, and stereotypes” (p. 391). The characterization of dependency within the women’s prison system as being an individual foible rather than a systemic problem, as well as a moral or psychological defect that could be resolved, is the same characterization that was espoused in the Welfare Reform debates of 1996 and was subsequently codified in PRWORA (McCorkel, 2004). This was a substantial shift in prison rhetoric, which historically favored a more paternalistic attitude toward women inmates, encouraging dependence and maintaining “women’s place in a larger gender order” (McCorkel, 2004, p. 401). The more recent view of dependency stresses “dependency would be on a man for money, or welfare, or even on (a) drug to feel good about. But you get dependent on one thing, these women in particular, and it leads to all sorts of behavioral deviance” (McCorkel, 2004, p. 401). As such, dependency is equated with pathology, a conclusion also drawn by Fraser and Gordon (1994).

The duration of the dependency issue, on the one hand, and the drug issue, on the other, on the public radar and political agenda is remarkable. Policy issues typically have a limited lifespan due to the sheer number of problems in need of policymakers’ attention (Sharp, 1994). However, “if a problem can be recast or repackaged in a different light, it can continue to capture attention” (Sharp, 1994, p. 102). The boundaries between drug war and welfare policy regimes appear to have blurred further under PRWORA, wherein Section 115 denies welfare benefits to convicted drug felons including TANF, food stamps, and housing assistance. Welfare drug testing also appears to blur the lines, raising questions regarding the possible merging of the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform through the policy rhetoric that recasts welfare reform issues in a new light.

## Method

In this study, we examine federal-level policymakers' debates surrounding the authorization of drug testing welfare recipients and to establish whether, and the extent to which, themes of the social pathology rhetoric are present in the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform debates. The primary sources of data are Congressional Record documents containing debates over the War on Drugs from the 101<sup>st</sup> (1989 – 1991) through the 106<sup>th</sup> (1999 – 2001) Congresses, and Welfare Reform debate documents, particularly those discussing issues of drug use, drug testing, and disqualification for drug related felonies, from the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress (1995 – 1997). Congressional documents and reports were collected via The Library of Congress THOMAS. Availability of documents on THOMAS (from the 101<sup>st</sup> through the 111<sup>th</sup> Congresses) established the range of documents included in this study. Search terms included: "War on Drugs," and "Welfare Reform."

In the majority of the documents in the initial pool (see Table 1), the War on Drugs or Welfare Reform were mentioned but not debated. Only documents containing legislative debates on War on Drugs or Welfare Reform were used in the analysis. Since some of the debate-centered documents included duplicate speeches and statements by legislators, the duplicate documents were also eliminated from the analysis. Ultimately, 26 War on Drugs documents from 101<sup>st</sup> through 106<sup>th</sup> Congresses (see Table 2) and 33 Welfare Reform documents from the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress were analyzed.

Table 1: Number of Congressional Debate Documents Identified in Initial Search

Congress	War on Drugs	Welfare Drug Testing
101st (1989 – 1991)	819	4
102nd (1991 – 1993)	256	0
103rd (1993 – 1995)	155	0
104th (1995 – 1997)	166	345
105th (1997 – 1999)	254	0
106th (1999 – 2001)	214	0



*Ethnograph*, a qualitative data analysis program, was used to analyze the data. Data files were downloaded into *Ethnograph*. Deductive, a priori coding was used, beginning with focused codes. The overarching code in this analysis was social pathology, with sub-categories including: crime, drug addiction, teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock birth, female-headed household, and welfare dependency. Additional codes included in the analysis were poverty, pregnancy, prevention/education, affected infants, treatment, drug testing, enforcement/interdiction, trafficking, civil rights penalty, race/ethnicity, social class, gender, and stigma. The two groups of documents were compared for the presence of the specified codes.

Table 2: Congressional Distribution of War on Drugs Documents Used in Analysis

Congress	Number of War on Drugs Documents Analyzed
101st (1989-1991)	4
102nd (1991 – 1993)	1
103rd (1993 -1995)	1
104th (1995 – 1997)	17
105th (1997 – 1999)	1
106th (1999 – 2001)	2

## Results

### *General Themes*

In general, War on Drugs documents discussed drug use and abuse as a great national problem, and major source of social ills, inextricably linking crime and drugs/drug use. Solutions to these problems centered on enforcement and interdiction. Enforcement rhetoric focused on stiffer prison sentences, truth in sentencing, limiting judicial discretion, and three strikes laws. Harsher penalties were called for, including life sentences and the death penalty for using children in drug trafficking and the use/possession of firearms with drug crimes. Additionally, there was a push to extend punishment beyond the criminal justice system and into the social welfare system by the denial of welfare benefits to individuals convicted of felony drug crimes, the removal of drug addiction and

alcoholism as eligible categories for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits, and moves to implement drug testing for welfare recipients. Examples of the rhetoric follow in subsequent findings subsections (Social Pathology, Crime and Drug Addiction, Poverty and Welfare as Social Pathology, Drug Testing, Teen Pregnancy, Out-of-Wedlock Births, and Female-Headed Households).

The dominant rhetoric in the Welfare Reform documents focused on moving recipients into the workforce, time-limited assistance, collection of child support, devolution to the states, personal responsibility, and self-sufficiency. Welfare itself was referred to as a drug or a narcotic. Alternate or opposition rhetoric included concerns over unfunded mandates, unemployment and lack of jobs paying viable wages, corporate welfare, reductions in school lunch programs and heating assistance, and lack of child care. Issues of economic downturn and the provision of sufficient social support in times of recession were also raised in arguments opposing the welfare reform strategies.

The dominant rhetoric for both sets of documents was generally punitive in nature. The Congressional debate over the War on Drugs advocated greater spending on interdiction and enforcement efforts, along with harsher punishments for offenders. Welfare Reform documents focused on increased restrictions, rules, and regulations for welfare recipients. The overall tone of both debates in regard to the target populations was derogatory and reproachful, with numerous examples of social pathology rhetoric.

### *Social Pathology*

Two of the 26 War on Drugs documents (see Table 3) explicitly contained the phrase "social pathology." First, Senator Hatch (R – Utah) entered into Congressional Record a policy document developed by the Task Force on National Drug Policy: "Setting the Course – A National Drug Strategy." This document states,

The American public recoiled at the social pathologies associated with the illegal drug epidemic then (in the

1960s and 1970s), and recent polls indicate that they are just as concerned today that we are about to repeat history because we failed to learn our lesson. (U.S. Congress, 1996c, S9016)

The Task Force, composed of nine Senators and nine Representatives, asserts that “many of our social pathologies, in addition to drug use, arise from causes directly related to a climate that disparages essential moral and ethical principles of personal behavior” (U.S. Congress, 1996c, S9016).

Such social pathology rhetoric is directly in line with Welfare Reform rhetoric, without direct use of the term. In support of “true welfare reform,” Representative Shaw (R – FL) lists the horrors of the “killing compassion of the welfare state,” including:

crack babies who start out life from the first day with two strikes against them. The plague of illegitimacy in our inner cities, as high as 80% in some areas. Children giving birth to children who, we know, will be dramatically more susceptible to low birth weight, disease, physical abuse and drug addiction. An epidemic of violence the likes of which this country has never seen before, so bad that by 1970 a child raised in our nation’s biggest cities was more likely to be killed than an American soldier serving on the battlefield during World War II. And the latest phenomenon: police departments in our cities warn of a new generation of ‘super predators,’ children growing up in a shattered society riddled with drugs who have no compunction about taking a human life. (U.S. Congress, 1996a, p. E857)

These examples of rhetoric from both policy areas illustrate a broad view of social pathology, touching on several sub-categories (e.g., crime, drug addiction, teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock births).

### *Crime and Drug Addiction*

Sub-categories of crime and drug addiction were apparent in the majority of both sets of documents (see Table 3). In fact, they represent the greatest rhetorical crossover that occurred between the two policy debates. Both debates discussed crime

and drug abuse in pathological and criminal frames with punitive and harsh solution proposals. Specifically, crime was a rhetorical category in 20 out of 26 War on Drugs documents and 18 of 33 Welfare Reform documents. Drug abuse was a rhetorical category in 25 of the 26 War on Drugs documents and 25 of the 33 Welfare Reform documents. These subcategories of social pathology dominated policymakers' remarks and were referred to in tandem in 18 of the War of Drugs documents, as well as 18 of the Welfare Reform documents. For instance, Representative Solomon (R – NY) states,

Illegal drugs play a part in half of all homicides. In fact, 48 percent of all men arrested for homicide test positive for illicit drugs at the time of arrest. Over 60 percent of prison inmates are there for drug related crimes. Illegal drug use is a factor in half of all family violence. Most of this violence is directed against women. Over 30 percent of all child abuse cases involve a parent using illegal drugs. (U.S. Congress, 1995a, p. E9)

Much of the discussion throughout the War on Drugs documents is aimed at expansion of law enforcement, interdiction efforts, and prisons, as well as tougher sentencing requirements, including mandatory minimum sentences and limitation of judicial discretion. Yet, there are also appeals to:

deny Federal benefits upon conviction of certain drug offenses; ensure quality assurance of testing programs; require employer notification for certain drug crimes; require mandatory drug testing for all Federal job applicants; provide the death penalty for drug kingpins; prohibit federally sponsored research involving the legalization of drugs. (U.S. Congress, 1995a, p. E9)

Senator Gramm (R – TX), a proponent of drug conviction eligibility restriction, argues "if we are serious about our drug laws, we ought not to give people welfare benefits who are violating the Nation's drug laws" (U.S. Congress, 1996b, p. S8498). The call for denial of benefits for drug-related convictions was initiated in the War on Drugs, but ultimately realized under Section 115 of PRWORA.

Most references to drug addiction, in both War on Drugs and Welfare Reform documents, were largely from a punitive criminal justice frame advocating punishment, rather than a medical frame, which views addiction as a medical condition requiring treatment, although there were some mentions of treatment and rehabilitation. The main thrust of medically framed discussion in both debates was a dearth of treatment availability and concomitant funding. However, Senator Kennedy (D – MA), in speaking against denial of assistance for individuals with drug convictions, argued that “it would undermine the whole notion of providing drug treatment as an alternative sentence to a first-time drug offender if the individual requires Federal assistance to obtain the treatment ... if you are a murderer, a rapist, or a robber, you can get Federal funds; but if you are convicted even for possession of marijuana, you cannot” (U.S. Congress, 1996b, p. S8498). Kennedy’s concerns were realized with the passage of PRWORA in that individuals convicted of felony drug crimes, including possession, use, or distribution of controlled substances, are not eligible for SSI/SSDI, TANF, or food stamps; although, States have the ability to opt out of this regulation.

### Poverty and Welfare as Social Pathology

While the War on Drugs congressional documents were replete with drug-related rhetoric, there was also ample discussion of poverty and welfare in a pathological sense; the concern over welfare dependency was raised in 10 of the 26 documents (see Table 3). The distinction between poverty and welfare dependency is not apparent in the War on Drugs debates. Welfare dependency/poverty and drug abuse were linked in 13 documents. Welfare dependency/poverty, crime, and drug abuse were linked in 12 documents. There were several significant statements linking drugs, crime, poverty, and welfare dependency. In one case, Senator Kohl (D – WI) states, “Alcohol and drug abuse costs Wisconsin’s economy \$3 billion a year for medical care, crime, lost productivity, and welfare” (U.S. Congress, 1989a, p. S5950). Representative Moakley (D – MA) asserts that War on Drugs strategy “should include a strong policy to help the many in this country who



are poor” (U.S. Congress, 1989b, p. E3042). Such statements rhetorically connect poverty and drug use/abuse, contributing to the social construction of the poor as drug addicts.

Welfare Reform debates have comparable rhetorical threads making similar connections. In those documents, welfare dependency/poverty and drug abuse were discussed in tandem in 24 out of 33, and welfare dependency/poverty, drug abuse, and crime were discussed in tandem in sixteen documents. Moreover, in one of numerous examples citing welfare dependency, identified in 26 of the 33 documents analyzed, Senator Nunn (D – GA) contends, “The problems we are trying to address in this legislation—welfare dependency and the illegitimacy, violence, and drug abuse that it engenders—are probably the most complex, troubling, and intractable problems facing American society” (U.S Congress, 1995b, p. S14562). Representative Chabot (R – OH) raises the level of the rhetoric, not merely linking poverty and drug abuse, but by equating the use of the social safety net with addiction in his claim,

The lessons of history show conclusively the continued dependence upon relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally disruptive to the national fiber. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit.... (U.S. Congress, 1995c, p. H3704)

Chabot continues with his welfare reform proposal, which “eliminates taxpayer-financed subsidy payments for drug addicts and alcoholics,” arguing, “We have been paying drug addicts’ and alcoholics’ welfare benefits and SSI benefits. It is disgraceful” (U.S. Congress, 1995c, p. H3704). And, in fact, in 1996, as part of welfare reform, Congress removed drug addiction and alcoholism as eligible categories in the Social Security disability programs (DiNitto, 2007). Drug testing welfare recipients would soon be proposed and passed to further these goals.

### *Teen Pregnancy, Out-of-Wedlock Births, and Female-Headed Households*

Other aspects of social pathology, teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock births, and female-headed households, were largely

absent from the War on Drugs discourse based on this analysis (see Table 3). In half of the instances where pregnancy and childbirth were discussed, the rhetoric centered on drug use during pregnancy and drug exposed/addicted infants. Senator Inouye (D – HI) submitted a briefing to address this issue and to further the War on Drugs in light of innocent infant victims. This brief asserts,

The real victims in the war against drugs ... are the children born to today's drug-users and who, tomorrow will constitute a large percentage of the members of our society. The infants being born today that endure the perinatal trauma induced by their parents' drug addictions, may experience throughout their lives the effects of their early drug exposure; the potential costs are incalculable to society. (U.S. Congress, 1990, p. S580)

This problem is linked to poor women in the claim, "The case of large numbers of drug-exposed newborns is straining the resources of hospitals serving poor inner city neighborhoods and is very costly" (U.S. Congress, 1990, p. S580). Representative Shaw contends "as many as ten percent of all babies born in America are exposed to cocaine or crack in the womb," and that "as many as 200,000 drug exposed babies are born annually to mothers on AFDC" (U.S. Congress, 1996a, p. E857). However, recent studies indicate that up to 70 percent of infant drug tests record false positives, which can be triggered by commonly used baby soaps, among other things (Cotton, Duncan, Burch, Seashore, & Hammet-Stabler, 2012).

Furthermore, hospital personnel make determinations as to whether mothers are considered at risk for drug abuse and which infants should be tested, ostensibly based on factors such as admission of prior drug use or lack of prenatal care, but race has also proven to be a determining factor (Kunins, Bellin, Chazotte, Du, & Arnsten, 2007). Researchers recommend that hospitals testing for maternal drug use conduct confirmatory or forensic testing to verify results, but many hospitals do not (Szalavitz, 2012). This calls into question the validity of claims used to bolster the War on Drugs debate, as well as the legitimacy and validity of drug testing, at least in this setting.

In contrast, Welfare Reform documents focused more on bringing men back into the family and reducing teenage pregnancy, topics not addressed in the War on Drugs documents.

Senator Mikulski (D – MD) asserts,

We want men back into the family. We want to remove the barriers to family, the barriers to marriage, because we believe the way the family is going to move out of poverty is the way people move into the middle class, with two-parent wage earners ... The Democratic plan also tackles the growing problem of teenage pregnancy. Under our bill, teen mothers must stay in school and stay at home as a condition of receiving benefits. If they stay in a home that is not desirable, where they are a victim of abuse, or where there is alcoholism or drug abuse, we create a network of second-chance homes. (U.S. Congress, 1995d, p. S11327)

Table 3: Number of Documents Containing Social Pathology Themes

	War on Drugs (N = 26)	Welfare Reform (N = 33)
Social Pathology	2	0
Crime	20	18
Drug Abuse	25	25
Teen Pregnancy	2	10
Female Headed Households	2	14
Welfare Dependency	13	26
Out of Wedlock Birth	1	16

Table 4: Number of Documents Using Social Pathology Themes in Drug Testing Debate

	War on Drugs (101st Congress) (N = 5)	Welfare Reform (104th Congress) (N = 6)
Crime	5	4
Drug Abuse	5	6
Teen Pregnancy	0	2
Female-Headed Households	0	1
Out of Wedlock Birth	0	2
Welfare Dependency	4	5

The plan centers on parental responsibility and “addresses two of the key causes of welfare dependency—teen pregnancy and unpaid child support” (U.S. Congress, 1995d, p. S11327).

### *Drug Testing*

The second part of the research question examines the degree to which social pathology rhetoric is used to justify drug testing welfare recipients. Support for the expansion of drug testing policies was apparent in the War on Drugs debate, and present in five of the War on Drugs documents (see Table 4). Social pathology themes of crime (five out of five documents), drug abuse (five out of five documents), and welfare dependency (four out of five documents) were used to support increased drug testing in a number of venues, including prison inmates and arrestees, state and local governments, and the private sector.

Drug testing was discussed in six Welfare Reform documents (see Table 4), and included the argument that drug testing is prevalent in private sector employment, such as transportation and manufacturing, which was authorized through the War on Drugs’ efforts. The contention is that since the focus is on “welfare to work,” recipients should be job ready. Social pathology themes of crime (in four of the six documents), drug abuse (in all six documents), and welfare dependency/poverty (in five of the six documents) were present in the drug testing debate in Welfare Reform documents. Senator Ashcroft (R – MO) argues,

Since the resources are scarce, let us focus them on individuals who are responsible enough, who care enough about their families, who care enough about their future to be able to benefit from the training program because they are not high on drugs. Let us not stick our heads in the sand, while someone else is sticking a needle in his arm. (U.S. Congress, 1995b, p. S14975)

Welfare Reform documents also include anecdotes to support drug testing for welfare recipients that include social pathology themes. For instance, Senator Bond (R – MO) reported that “some welfare recipients who are turned down

for employment because they flunk an employer's drug test, then turn around and use the results as proof they are actually seeking employment and deserve to remain on welfare" (U.S. Congress, 1996a, p. E857). Representative Shaw (R – FL) uses this anecdote to argue states' rights to require drug testing, and further, to support vouchers in place of cash payments to prevent purchase of drugs and alcohol (U.S. Congress, 1996a, p. E857).

Senator Kennedy (D – MA) was one of a few who stood in opposition to drug testing. In response to Ashcroft, Kennedy states, "Effectively, what this senator is saying is that every worker in this country is somehow under the suspicion of drug usage ... The case has not been made." (U.S. Congress, 1995b, p. S14975). Ultimately, drug testing for welfare recipients was codified in PRWORA, Section 902, which states: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, States shall not be prohibited by the Federal Government from testing welfare recipients for use of controlled substances nor from sanctioning welfare recipients who test positive for use of controlled substances."

However, the prevalence of substance use and abuse among welfare recipients is contested. Studies vary greatly in their findings, presenting rates from four to 37 percent, depending on "data sources, definitions and measurement methods, particularly the different thresholds used to define substance abuse" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2011). The inclusion of alcohol and/or prescription drug abuse also factors into the variance. The general consensus is that welfare recipients are no more likely to have substance abuse issues than the general population (Center for Addiction and Mental Health, n.d.; Danziger et al., 2002; Grant & Dawson, 1996; Metsch & Pollack, 2005; Pollack, Danziger, Jayakody, & Seefeldt, 2002). In practice, welfare drug testing has not yielded a substantial number of positive tests. In 1999, Michigan conducted drug tests on TANF recipients for a five week period before the program was halted by U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts. Of the 268 recipients screened for drug use, 21 tested positive, most for marijuana (Washington Crime News, 2003). More recently, in Florida, in the four month span of drug testing TANF recipients in 2011, 108 of the 4,086 individuals screened tested positive for illicit substances, mostly marijuana (Alvarez, 2012).



## Discussion

The findings of this analysis lend credence to McCorkel's (2004) claim that "welfare and criminal justice systems share a set of assumptions, concerns, and stereotypes" (p. 391) regarding policy target populations. Social pathology rhetoric is present in both War on Drugs and Welfare Reform Congressional debates. Sub-categories of social pathology rhetoric that were prominent in both policy arenas include crime, drug addiction, poverty, and welfare dependency. Drug addiction rhetoric in particular was a focus of both policy debates, and was utilized to support expanded drug testing efforts for multiple groups, including welfare recipients. In regard to teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock births, and single parent households, the common rhetorical themes between the two policy arenas revolved around drug addiction and included a focus on drug-addicted infants. However, these were marginal in both congressional conversations.

It appears that several themes of social pathology rhetoric utilized in the War on Drugs debate were subsequently utilized in the Welfare Reform debate, particularly those focusing on crime, drug abuse, and welfare dependency/poverty. This supports previous studies (Beckett & Western, 2001; Garland, 1985, 2001; McCorkel, 2004) arguing that the criminal justice and welfare systems are intertwined. In fact, social pathology rhetoric contributes to the social construction of target populations of both policies. Evidence of a confluence of War on Drugs and Welfare Reform policies at the Federal level is apparent in welfare drug testing policy, which can be viewed as punishment or penalty. According to Schneider and Ingram (1993),

public officials commonly inflict punishment on negatively constructed groups which have little or no power, because they need fear no electoral retaliation from the group itself and the general public approves of punishment for groups that it has constructed negatively. (p. 336)

With regard to drug addiction and drug testing policies, the aims of both policy debates appear conjoined, and more in line with Garland's (2001) concept of "penal welfarism." Indeed,

between the two policy regimes, common suppositions and inferences are shared, fear mongering is interchangeable, stereotypes are cloned and disseminated, and “the same recipes for the identification of risk and the allocation of blame” (Garland, 2001, p. 201) are put forth. The attachment of the stereotype of a drug addict to the poor may deter some from seeking assistance, in addition to inciting public hostility toward the population. It also has implications for democratic participation, in that such constructions have the tendency to cultivate withdrawal and passivity (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

The rhetorical similarities between the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform debates support an ostensible convergence of the respective target populations in that the drug addicts and the poor are often referred to similarly, and sometimes interchangeably, in the same conversations. However, this work is limited to an analysis of the discourse at the federal level from a social pathology perspective.

Although this study examines Congressional debates from the 1990s, it was these two policy arenas, in tandem, that set the stage for today’s welfare drug testing agenda, indicating that the aims of the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform remain ongoing and conjoined. Proposals for screening recipients of social services, including TANF, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Unemployment Insurance, SSI/SSDI, and Medicaid, for illicit drugs have been put forth in 42 states to date, including 29 states just in 2013 (National Conference of State Legislators, 2013; Pollack, 2013). Also, since the 1990s, several states have passed welfare drug testing legislation. For instance, Michigan implemented welfare drug testing in 1999; however, the law was struck down by the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in 2003. Florida enacted a similar law in 2011, which was halted by U.S. District Judge Mary Scriven. Georgia also passed a welfare drug testing law in 2012, but is waiting for the Florida case to play out in the courts before implementation. This opens an opportunity for research of state level policymakers’ discourse surrounding welfare drug testing legislation, the apparent intersection of the War on Drugs and Welfare Reform.

In all, this research offers insight into the merging of policy debates, particularly those affecting marginal populations regulated by criminal justice and welfare institutions. While

the deservingness of the poor has long been questioned, they are now asked not only to justify their worthiness, but also to prove that they abide by drug laws. Policymakers should be cognizant of the impact of their proposals, debates, and rhetoric on their constituents, particularly marginalized groups. This analysis is perhaps more useful for researchers and those working on social justice, in that it contributes to a growing body of literature on the criminal marginalization of the poor and encroachments on their civil liberties. These threats can only be countered by a strong opposition, which such policies have been shown to stifle and discourage. However, as Soss (2005) contends, "By pursuing this dialog, scholars may yet contribute to public policies that support a stronger and more inclusive democracy" (p. 326).

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# Gender Differences in Self-employment of Older Workers in the United States and New Zealand

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*This study examined differences in self-employment of workers age 50+ in the United States (N = 3,948) and New Zealand (N = 1,434). Separate logistic regression analyses were conducted by country and gender. For both U.S. men and women, lower income, higher wealth, and having an employed spouse increased the likelihood of self-employment. Older age, lower income, higher wealth, and household composition increased the odds of being self-employed for men in New Zealand. Women in New Zealand were more likely to be self-employed if they were in a blue-collar occupation, had higher household wealth, higher education, and did not receive pension income. Self-employment can enable older adults to remain in the labor force longer, thereby fostering continued productivity and engagement.*

*Key words: self-employment, cross-national, older workers, New Zealand, gender differences*

Recently, attention has been given to the self-employment of older adults. Yet studies of self-employment of older workers  
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have tended to either focus on older workers in general or on older men in particular, reflecting the employment patterns of prior generations when women's labor force participation rates were low (see Blanchflower, Oswald, & Stutzer, 2001 for a review). Consequently, little is known about how barriers and catalysts for self-employment may operate differently across gender. Also, little is known about how gender differences compare across political and cultural contexts. To address this gap in the literature, this paper examines gender differences in self-employment of workers aged 50 and above in the United States and New Zealand.

As industrialized, market economies engaged in global commerce, the United States (U.S.) and New Zealand (N.Z.) share several broad economic characteristics. Both countries offer varied employment options, including self-employment. In 2012, the two countries reported similar growth rates in industrial production (U.S. 3.2%, N.Z. 4.0%) and real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (U.S. 2.2%, N.Z. 2.5%). In each country, the service sector leads employment (U.S. 79% and N.Z. 74% of the labor force) (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). And, both countries face the same policy concern of identifying effective means of helping individuals attain and maintain economic well-being later in life. At the same time, the two countries have different histories and retirement systems, permitting policy comparisons to be made.

The divergent histories of the two countries (e.g., their relationships with the British monarchy, political structure) suggest that cultural differences exist. Pfau-Effinger (2005) argues that the ideas of a nation's social actors, which are the manifestation of institutional and social factors, influence the reciprocal effects of culture and policy. Gender is one of the most enduring social factors in the U.S. and N.Z., a fact that is particularly evident in differing economic opportunities for men and women and their uptake of self-employment. Pfau-Effinger asserts that cross-national explanations of differing policy effects have seldom factored in the influence of cultural differences. Considering this point, this research gives careful attention to the role the interplay of potential cultural and policy differences may play in gender inequalities in the effects of personal resources and demographics on levels of self-employment in the U.S. and New Zealand.



In both countries, continued engagement in the labor market is becoming an important factor in providing financial stability for older individuals. In recent years, improvements in health and increased longevity have made it possible for individuals to remain in the labor market beyond standard retirement age, either in their career occupation or in a new endeavor, such as self-employment (deBruin & Firkin, 2001; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2011). Retirement can no longer be portrayed as a simple, single transition out of the labor market triggered by age or eligibility for pension receipt. Indeed, older individuals may go through a number of transitions, both in type of work and in time devoted to work before permanent exit from the labor market (Giandrea, Cahill, & Quinn, 2009; Moody, 2000; Quinn & Kozy, 1996).

Declining fertility rates have reduced the actual and projected ratio of younger workers to older adults. This decline has sparked considerable discussion regarding the sustainability of “pay as you go” public and private pension systems. As one response, in the U.S., the 1983 Social Security Amendments mandated a gradual increase in the standard retirement age from 65 to 67 for those born after 1937 (McSteen, n.d.).

Self-employment can be another option that helps older workers stay in the labor force longer. Self-employment offers older workers several advantages, including autonomy. Work hours can be flexible, and one can work independent of the direction and demands of others (Giandrea, Cahill, & Quinn, 2008). Those who have been self-employed in their career job are not subject to a mandatory retirement age (unlike workers in select occupations), so work can continue as long as desired. Older workers who transition from career employment to self-employment have often had the opportunity to amass both the financial and human capital needed to initiate and sustain their own businesses (Giandrea et al., 2008; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007, 2009). Research on those transitioning to self-employment indicates that they want to control their lives and influence their environments; they are self-reliant (Kean, Van Zandt, & Maupin, 1993).

Barriers to entry for self-employment can be lower than for other work arrangements. However, self-employment also

carries a risk of financial loss if the business fails. Older individuals might not be able to recoup such losses. If other assets have been used as collateral for business loans, a business failure could be catastrophic. Married older self-employed workers who have an employed spouse have some "resource insurance" in a sense. In addition to having a steady income separate from their businesses, these individuals might also have access to work-related benefits, such as health insurance via his or her spouse.

Existing research on older workers points to a significant relationship between age and self-employment. The probability of being self-employed is higher for older workers as compared with younger workers (Blanchflower & Oswald, 1998; Blanchflower et al., 2001; Evans & Leighton, 1989; Fuchs, 1982; Quinn & Kozy, 1996). Giandrea, Cahill, and Quinn (2008) note that those who were self-employed in their career jobs tend to remain in the labor market longer than those who were employees. The relationship between age and self-employment appears to hold for ethnic minorities (Clark & Drinkwater, 1998) and cross-nationally (Blanchflower et al., 2001). To understand self-employment, it is necessary to understand the concept of income security and the policy context in which self-employment operates for the United States and New Zealand.

## Background

### *United States Retirement Income Sources*

In the U.S., retirement income sources have long been likened to a 3-legged stool (DeWitt, 1996). Each leg provides support, but no one leg was ever intended to be a sole support. The three legs are Social Security, employment-based retirement plans (which include defined benefit and defined contribution plans), and one's own savings. In recent years, continued labor force participation after the standard retirement age has been named the "fourth leg" of the "retirement stool." For some individuals, continued work is a financial necessity, due to inadequate savings, poor market performance of retirement savings, or an economic downturn. For others, work remains a creative outlet, continued because it remains pleasurable and engaging (Maestas, 2010; Sterns & Dawson, 2012).

Social Security forms a foundation for other retirement income sources and, for those with no or low additional resources, it provides an essential safety net. Social Security is a federal program available to all workers who have contributed into the Social Security system and meet the program eligibility requirements. To qualify for retirement benefits, 40 “credits” must be earned (or one must be the dependent of a qualified worker). Up to four credits can be earned per year (1 credit for each \$1,160 of earnings in 2013) (Social Security Administration [SSA], 2013a).

Benefit calculations are based on Social Security contributions made during an individual’s 35 highest earnings years, and the age at which benefits are claimed. Although Social Security retirement benefits can be claimed as early as age 62, early retirement permanently reduces monthly benefits for recipient and spouse (SSA, 2013b). Those who claim retirement benefits prior to their full retirement age can continue to work, but their retirement benefits are partially reduced if they earn more than a minimum amount (\$15,120 in 2013; the reduced benefits are credited to the worker and their monthly benefit is recalculated upon reaching full retirement age) (SSA, 2013c). Individuals can also continue to work past their full retirement age and delay claiming retirement benefits. In this case, they would receive delayed retirement credits up to age 70, resulting in an increase in monthly benefits of up to 8% per year of delayed retirement (SSA, 2013d).

In addition to Social Security retirement benefits, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides cash assistance to individuals who are age 65 or older and/or blind and/or disabled AND meet all of the following requirements: limited income, limited resources, legal U.S. resident, and not out of the country for more than 30 consecutive days (SSA, 2013e). Individuals do not have to meet the earned credit criteria in order to qualify for benefits, but if they are eligible for both retirement benefits and SSI, they can receive benefits from both programs.

### *New Zealand Retirement Income Sources*

New Zealand retirees also rely on a combination of retirement income sources. New Zealand’s two-tiered retirement

income system includes New Zealand Superannuation (NZS) and voluntary savings schemes that are government- or employer-subsidized (e.g., “Kiwisaver”) or unsubsidized (e.g., personal investments). Similar to the Social Security program in the United States, NZS is an anti-poverty program designed “...to provide an adequate basic level of income in retirement” (Cullen, 2003, p. 3695). It is available to all New Zealanders over 65, provided they meet minimum residency requirements. NZS is not means tested and is unrelated to previous earnings. The level of NZS received is adjusted for cohabitation and/or spouses’ eligibility. A cohabitating couple in which both individuals are eligible for NZS would receive 65% of New Zealand workers’ average weekly personal income, after tax (New Zealand Legislation, 2001). Home ownership is also an important feature of New Zealanders’ retirement wealth, with 83% of older adults owning their own homes (St. John, 2005). However, the reliance on home ownership for personal security and retirement income has been accompanied by a lack of other financial assets for a substantial proportion of lower- and middle-class New Zealanders (Skilling & Waldegrave, 2004). Employer-subsidized pension programs are present in N.Z., but only 14% of workers contributed to these public- and private-sector retirement income sources in 2005, and participation is steadily decreasing (St. John, 2005).

As in the U.S., some older adults in N.Z. continue to work either to supplement these sources of income, or for other reasons such as personal fulfillment. New Zealanders retiring before 65 must rely on their own economic resources (e.g., private pensions, savings) before they are eligible for NZS, or on unemployment or disability benefits if redundancy or poor health have forced them out of work. Unemployment and disability benefits are about 40% less than NZS (Work and Income New Zealand, 2013).

## Literature Review

### *Trends in Employment of Older Workers*

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics typically defines “older workers” as workers age 65 and over, whereas the N.Z. Department of Labour uses age 55 and over. The difference in the definition of “older worker” means that it is difficult

to make simple, direct comparisons between the two countries. This difference must be kept in mind when reviewing published statistics on older workers in these two countries. Despite differences in definitions, some common trends and broad contrasts are evident between the two countries.

*United States.* In the U.S., employment of those aged 65 and older rose 101% between 1977 and 2007. Although those aged 75 and older were only 0.8% of all workers in 2007, they represented a 172% increase in employment for this age group over the 30-year span. Disaggregating the employment trend by gender, the percent change in employment of older women was almost twice that of older men over the same time period (147% versus 75%) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2008). According to the 2011 Current Population Survey, the majority of older self-employed individuals worked in non-agricultural industries (14% versus 4%) (U.S. BLS, 2012). Among older workers in agricultural industries, 73% were self-employed.

The percentage of self-employed workers increases with age. About 18% of workers age 65 and older are self-employed, as compared with 10% of workers age 55 to 64, 8% of workers age 45 to 54, and less than 7% for workers under age 45 (U.S. BLS, 2010). Further, among older self-employed workers, 65% were male and 35% were female (U.S. BLS, 2008).

*New Zealand.* Information on older workers in N.Z. was gathered in the 2008 Survey of Working Life (SoWL) conducted by the New Zealand Department of Labour (Boyd & Dixon, 2009). Fifteen percent of all N.Z. workers were age 55 to 64; 3% were age 65 and older. Survey findings portray the average older worker as male, native born, a rural resident, lacking higher education, and having an employed spouse or partner.

Detailed findings for age, gender, and self-employment are relevant to this study. Fifty-seven percent of all workers age 55 and older were male (Boyd & Dixon, 2009). The proportion of male workers was positively correlated with age. Among workers age 55 to 59, 54% were male. Between ages 60 to 64, 57% were male. Between ages 65 to 69, 59% were male. And, for ages 70 and above, 73% were male. The smaller proportion of female older workers could reflect gender difference in labor market opportunities. Or, it might be the result of cohort differences among women regarding preferences for time in the labor market versus the home, or caregiving

responsibilities. Workers in N.Z. age 55 and older were much more likely than workers at all ages to be self-employed (29% versus 18%; Boyd & Dixon, 2009).

About an equal percentage of self-employed older workers were involved in agriculture and fishery (23%) or were legislators, administrators, or managers (22%) (Boyd & Dixon, 2009). Older self-employed males were somewhat more likely than self-employed males at all ages to work as managers (24% of older men versus 20% for total men). Among all self-employed females, those who were older were more likely to be clerks (10% of older women versus 13% for total women) and less likely to be professionals (9% for older women versus 14% for total women).

About 70% of older self-employed individuals worked full-time, suggesting self-employment offered opportunity for flexible work schedules (Boyd & Dixon 2009). The percentage of part-time self-employed workers increased with age for both genders. However, among self-employed workers aged 55 to 64, females were much more likely than males to work part-time (43% versus 16%).

#### *Factors Associated with Self-employment*

Research indicates a number of factors that are associated with self-employment. Men with more assets have a higher probability of switching into self-employment (Evans & Leighton, 1989), whereas liquidity constrains movement into self-employment. Blanchflower (2004) suggested that those wanting to begin a business might work to build their assets, creating a correlation between assets and movement to self-employment in absence of capital constraints. Alternatively, a correlation between assets and self-employment could exist for adult children who inherit a family business. Blanchflower and Oswald (1998) also found a positive relationship between receipt of a gift or inheritance and probability of self-employment. Using the French Household Survey of Financial Assets, Laferrere and McEntee (1995) found liquidity constraints and family characteristics interact in the choice to be self-employed. Financial help from parents lessened liquidity constraints. The informal human capital that adult children of business owners developed from observing and being involved in a family

business throughout their youth was also an important contributor to the adult child choosing self-employment.

Laferrere and McEntee (1995) identified five types of self-employment: liberal profession (e.g., medicine and law), artisans (craftsmen), shopkeepers, managers, and other self-employed. Interestingly, they found that, except for professions such as medicine and law, higher education had a negative relationship with self-employment (e.g., for craftsmanship or shop keeping), regardless of family background. Sons of self-employed fathers were likely to earn a technical degree, presumably in line with their chosen trade. In contrast, more recently Karoly and Zissimopoulos (2004) found self-employment rates tended to increase with education. Most studies of self-employment have focused on the employment patterns of White males, however. Historically, both females and minorities have been underrepresented among the self-employed (Fairlie & Meyer, 1996).

The route to self-employment among older workers is varied. Some self-employed workers simply “age in place,” remaining active in a business they started years ago. Others may choose self-employment in an occupation either similar to or quite different from prior career employment. For still others, self-employment may provide an opportunity to remain in the labor market when health problems, labor market conditions, or discrimination might limit opportunity to secure work as an employee.

Based on previous literature, we examined whether the “resource model” (wealth, education, income, spousal employment) increased the likelihood of self-employment. The following hypothesis was tested: those with greater resources (higher wealth, higher education, higher income, and having an employed spouse) would be more likely to be self-employed than those with fewer resources. We then explored whether there were cross-cultural differences in the utility of the resource model for predicting self-employment of older men and women.

## Methods

### *Data*

This study employed data from 2010 from two secondary datasets: the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) and the New Zealand Longitudinal Study of Aging (NZLSA). HRS is a nationally representative study of non-institutionalized adults in the U.S. age 50 and over, together with their spouses, regardless of age, with oversamples of Blacks, Hispanics, and Florida residents (Institute for Social Research, 2008). Funding for HRS was provided by the National Institute on Aging and the Social Security Administration. We used version L of the HRS file prepared by the RAND Corporation (St. Clair et al., 2011). NZLSA is a nationally representative study of community-dwelling adults in N.Z. age 50-84 who were randomly selected from the N.Z. electoral roll. Funding for NZLSA was provided by the Health Research Council of N.Z. and the N.Z. Ministry of Research, Science and Technology. For inclusion in this study, U.S. and N.Z. respondents had to be age 50 or older, working full-time or part-time and be White or Black (U.S. sample) or N.Z. European or Maori (N.Z. sample). These criteria resulted in a sample size of 3,948 for the U.S. and 1,434 for New Zealand.

### *Measures*

*Self-Employment (Dependent Variable).* For HRS, those who were working were asked "Do you work for someone else, are you self-employed, or what?" (1 = self-employed, 0 = not self-employed). For NZLSA, respondents were asked whether they had personally earned income from "self-employment, or a business I own and work in" in the last 12 months (1 = yes, 0 = no). For both samples, those who were missing were recoded as zero.

*Resource Model Variables.* Individual earnings from all sources were summed and transformed using base 10 log transformation (after adding a nominal value of \$100 to each response) since data were non-normally distributed. For NZLSA, the household wealth measure was categorical, so data from HRS were recoded to match NZLSA categories: 1 = loss; 2 = 0; 3 = 1 – 5,000; 4 = 5,001 – 10,000; 5 = 10,001 – 25,000;



6 = 25,001 – 50,000; 7 = 50,001 – 100,000; 8 = 100,001 – 250,000; 9 = 250,001 – 500,000; 10 = 500,001 – 1,000,000; 11 = 1,000,001 – 1,500,000; 12 = 1,500,001 – 2,000,000; and 13 = 2,000,001 or more. Education was measured as a categorical variable, with data from HRS recoded to match the coding scheme of NZLSA (1 = less than high school, 2 = high school/general equivalence degree, 3 = some college/post-secondary, 4 = college graduate/tertiary education). Pension income was measured using a dichotomous variable (1 = receive pension income, 0 = no). Respondents were asked if their spouse was employed full-time or part-time (1 = yes, 0 = no or missing).

*Additional Variables.* Age was measured in years, and centered for model interpretation purposes by subtracting 50 from all values. For the U.S. sample, self-defined race/ethnicity was coded as 0 = White/Caucasian and 1 = Black/African American, whereas for the N.Z. sample, it was coded as 0 = N.Z. European and 1 = Maori. Gender was coded 0 = male and 1 = female. Occupation was recoded into a dichotomous measure (1 = blue-collar, 0 = white collar) based on current occupation, using data from longest or main occupation in cases of missing data. White collar occupations were sales, clerical, administrative support, professional, and managerial positions, while blue collar occupations included laborers, services, machinery operator and drivers, technician, and trades workers. Household composition was dummy coded into three variables (living with spouse, living with spouse and others, and living with others but no spouse), with the reference group of those who live alone. For self-rated health, respondents rated their overall health as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor (higher scores = better health).

### *Data Analysis*

We began by running univariate analyses to examine data distribution. Next, we conducted correlations to examine bivariate relationships. Finally, we ran separate logistic regression models for the U.S. and N.Z. to address the research question. Listwise deletion was used to address missing data on the variables used for sample selection (age, race, and working) and the study variables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

	U.S. Males	U.S. Females	N.Z. Males	N Z. Females
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Age	65.59 (7.57)	63.15 (7.15)	62.33 (6.16)	60.46 (5.95)
Black/Maori	13.1%	15.7%	29.4%	26.0%
Blue collar occupation	44.8%	26.5%	51.7%	33.9%
Income	38314 (61K)	29626 (37K)	69926 (76K)	28869 (48K)
Household wealth	8.19 (2.79)	7.68 (2.78)	8.54 (2.38)	8.13 (2.59)
Education	2.86 (1.03)	2.76 (.96)	2.67 (1.09)	2.79 (1.07)
Less than high school	10.8%	8.8%	19.8%	15.7%
High school/GED	28.7%	34.0%	21.5%	23.1%
Some college/ post-secondary	24.5%	29.5%	30.2%	28.3%
College/tertiary education	36.0%	27.7%	28.5%	33.0%
Receiving pension	52.9%	43.3%	32.0%	24.0%
Spouse employed	42.9%	35.8%	63.6%	58.9%
Household composition				
Living alone	12.4%	21.2%	9.0%	17.6%
Living w/spouse	57.4%	43.8%	66.2%	57.6%
Living w/spouse and others	24.6%	17.8%	22.2%	18.6%
Living w/others but not spouse	5.6%	17.3%	2.7%	6.2%
Self-rated health	2.49 (.97)	2.57 (.92)	2.68 (.87)	2.82 (.84)
Self-employed	32.2%	18.5%	39.5%	28.1%

## Results

For both the U.S. and N.Z. males and females, most respondents were White (U.S.) or N.Z. Europeans, living with their spouse/partner, and had at least some college education. Further, most were working in white collar occupations (except N.Z. males), were not receiving pension income (except U.S. males), and were not self-employed. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for study variables for the U.S. and N.Z. samples.

For the U.S. sample, for both men and women self-employment was correlated with all study variables except spouse employment status (men only) and education (women only). In contrast, for N.Z. men, self-employment was only correlated with age, household wealth, pension income, and living with others (correlations of .15, .24, .12, and -.08, respectively, all  $p < .05$ ). For N.Z. women, self-employment was only correlated with occupational status, household wealth, spouse employment and living with a spouse/partner (correlations of .08, .21, .10, and .09, respectively, all  $p < .05$ ).

We conducted separate logistic regression analyses by country and gender to examine what factors predict self-employment. Odds ratios greater than 1.0 indicate factors that increase the likelihood of being self-employed, whereas odds ratios less than 1.0 reduce the likelihood. Consistent with our resource model hypothesis, higher wealth, higher education (men only), and having an employed spouse increased the likelihood of self-employment for men and women in the United States. Contrary to our hypothesis, we found that higher than average income decreased the odds of being self-employed. The model explained 58% of the variance for men and 48% for women in the U.S. sample, with 86.3% and 88.4% of cases being correctly classified, respectively.

For the N.Z. sample, the amount of variance explained was much lower: only 13% for men and 11% for women, and fewer predictors were statistically significant. Consistent with our resource model hypothesis, higher wealth (men and women) and higher education (women only) increased the odds of being self-employed in N.Z., but none of the other predictors supported our hypothesis. Table 2 (U.S.) and Table 3 (N.Z.) shows

the logistic regression coefficient, standard error, and odds ratio for each of the predictors, as well as model fit indicators.

Table 2. Logistic Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Self-Employment for U.S., by Gender

	Men (N = 1,844)			Women (N = 2,104)		
	$\beta$	SE	O.R.	$\beta$	SE	O.R.
Age	.04	.01	1.04**	-.02	.01	.98
Black (1 = yes) <sup>a</sup>	-.07	.23	.93	-.27	.23	.76
Blue collar occupation (1 = yes)	-.34	.17	.71*	.32	.18	1.38
Income (logged)	-.65	.03	.52**	-.67	.03	.51**
Household wealth (categorical)	.22	.03	1.25**	.12	.03	1.13**
Education (categorical)	.18	.08	1.20*	.14	.09	1.15
Receive pension (1 = yes)	-.65	.22	.52**	-.07	.21	.94
Spouse employed (1 = yes)	.50	.16	1.66**	.49	.19	1.63**
Live in household with others <sup>b</sup>	.37	.36	1.45	-.22	.24	.80
Live in household with spouse & others <sup>b</sup>	-.33	.26	.72	-.52	.27	.60*
Live in household with spouse <sup>b</sup>	-.37	.23	.69	-.44	.22	.64*
Self-rated health (higher = better)	.07	.08	1.08	.20	.08	1.22*
Constant	1.86	.48	6.43	2.33	.47	10.28
MODEL FIT						
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.58			.48		
Chi-square (df = 12)	978.57			745.70		
% correctly classified	86.3%			88.4%		

Note. O.R. = Odds ratios. <sup>a</sup>Reference group is White. <sup>b</sup>Reference group is living alone.  
\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Cross-national comparisons combined with gender-based comparisons within each country shed further light on how

differences in cultural and political systems may interact to influence self-employment. Results indicated that working in a blue-collar occupation was a significant predictor of self-employment for N.Z. women (O.R. = 1.88), while it reduced the likelihood of self-employment for U.S. men (O.R. = .71). In contrast, receiving a pension was a predictor of not being self-employed for N.Z. women (O.R. = .58) and U.S. men (O.R. = .52), but was not a statistically significant predictor for U.S. women or N.Z. men.

### Discussion

Our demographic results found that respondents in both countries were, on average, between age 60 and 65, and rated their health as good to very good. These characteristics suggest workers may consider the leisure/work trade off in the context of their life expectancy and their current level of strength. That is, those who rate their health as good may choose to continue working, expecting to live long enough to still have time to enjoy leisure with a later labor market exit.

In the U.S. and N.Z., female workers appeared to have relatively fewer economic resources. On average, they had lower income, were less likely to receive a pension, and were less likely to have an employed spouse. Regarding income, it is noteworthy that the income disparity between male and female workers in N.Z. is almost 2.5 to 1, much higher than the 1.3 to 1 ratio observed between male and female workers in the United States. Wealth was measured in categories, so smaller disparity between groups was observed. Within each country, men reported a somewhat higher level of wealth than women. Comparing countries, N.Z. workers reported somewhat higher levels of wealth than their American counterparts.

Within each country, women were more likely than men to work in a blue collar occupation. This result probably reflects the typical occupational choices and social norms regarding employment for this cohort of workers. Men in each country were more likely than the women to engage in self-employment. This result could reflect a greater willingness of men to take on the risks inherent in self-employment, a larger resource base to buffer business loss or failure, or a greater opportunity for men to engage in entrepreneurial ventures.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Self-Employment for N.Z., by Gender

	Men (N = 712)			Women (N = 722)		
	$\beta$	SE	O.R.	$\beta$	SE	O.R.
Age	.06	.02	1.06**	<-.01	.02	1.00
Maori (1 = yes) <sup>a</sup>	.01	.18	1.01	-.10	.21	.90
Blue collar occupation (1 = yes)	.22	.18	1.25	.63	.19	1.88**
Income (logged)	-.10	.05	.90*	-.08	.05	.93
Household wealth (categorical)	.25	.04	1.29**	.20	.04	1.22**
Education (categorical)	.03	.08	1.03	.16	.09	1.17
Receive pension (1 = yes)	.03	.24	1.04	-.55	.28	.58*
Spouse employed (1 = yes)	.18	.20	1.19	-.09	.24	.91
Live in household with others <sup>b</sup>	-1.43	.71	.24*	.14	.46	1.15
Live in household with spouse & others <sup>b</sup>	-.07	.36	.93	.36	.37	1.43
Live in household with spouse <sup>b</sup>	-.47	.32	.62	.52	.32	1.69
Self-rated health (higher = better)	.03	.10	1.03	.01	.11	1.01
Constant	-2.31	.74	.10	-2.67	.75	.07
MODEL FIT						
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.13			.11		
Chi-square ( <i>df</i> = 12)	72.90			57.86		
% correctly classified	65.3%			72.9%		

Note. O.R. = Odds ratios. <sup>a</sup>Reference group is NZ European. <sup>b</sup>Reference group is living alone. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Having less than a high school education was more common in N.Z. than in the United States. In both countries, workers typically had at least a high school diploma or GED. Having a high school diploma or GED as a terminal degree was more common in the U.S. than New Zealand. In the U.S., more

female workers than male workers completed high school, but more males than females completed college. Conversely, in N.Z., more female workers had completed college, whereas more male workers had stopped with just some college.

Results of the multivariate analysis indicate that, within each country, the factors associated with self-employment were different by gender. In the U.S, predictors of self-employment for men were consistent with previous research: age (Blanchflower et al., 2001), wealth (Evans & Leighton, 1989), education (Karoly & Zissimopoulos, 2004), and occupation (Laferrere & McEntee, 1995). In contrast, women shared only wealth and spouse employment with men as significant factors. For them, age, occupation, and education did not matter, but income, living arrangements, and self-rated health did. In N.Z., it was age, income and living arrangement that mattered for men, but it was occupation, wealth and pension receipt that mattered for women.

The strongest predictor of self-employment in N.Z. was relatively higher levels of household wealth. However, lower income was only associated with self-employment for men and the effect was small. Occupation had no bearing on men's self-employment, but self-employed female workers were slightly more likely to be working in blue-collar occupations.

The influence of age, ethnicity, and household wealth was consistent across countries and was reasonably consistent across genders within each country. Self-employed workers, regardless of their gender or where they resided, tended to be older, wealthier, but also originating from both majority (White/N.Z. European) and minority (Black/Maori) ethnic backgrounds. Model fit was considerably better for the U.S. data as compared with the N.Z. data (adjusted  $R^2$  for U.S. men and women was .58 and .48, respectively; adjusted  $R^2$  for N.Z. men and women was .13 and .11, respectively). The small amount of variance explained in the regression analysis for the gender-disaggregated N.Z. data suggests we know little of what factors are associated with self-employment in New Zealand.

Overall, the findings suggest a complex interplay between cultural (e.g., gender differences) and retirement policy across the two countries, supporting Pfau-Effinger's (2005) argument that cultural and political practices are inextricably linked. For

N.Z. women, a higher status occupation and pension receipt reduced the likelihood of self- versus non-self-employment. However, occupation and pension receipt had no impact on N.Z. men's self-employment. For U.S. men, lower occupational status and pension receipt predicted lower rates of self-employment. However, there were no such effects for U.S. women. Finally, lower personal income was a stronger predictor of self-employment in the U.S. than New Zealand. However, the effects of personal income did not vary according to gender in either country. Interpretation of these findings necessitates the consideration of gendered practices and opportunities, policy differences, and role of financial and non-financial reasons for self-employment. Research suggests that some women may seek to extend their working career to fulfill work-based ambitions that were disrupted by child bearing and family commitments (Han & Moen, 1999). In addition, women are far less financially prepared for retirement as compared with men in both U.S. and N.Z. (Han & Moen, 1999; Noone, Alpass, & Stephens, 2010) and may need to work longer to generate sufficient retirement wealth.

At face value, self-employment may provide the opportunity to fulfill women's (and men's) non-financial and financial goals, particularly in the absence of other employment opportunities. However, findings show that in N.Z., opportunities for women's self-employment are more likely to occur in lower status occupations. The fact that women's self-employment declined with universal pension entitlement suggests that their self-employment is perhaps more out of financial necessity rather than for non-financial reasons. In contrast, N.Z. men appear to not face the same occupational disadvantages in terms of self-employment. Their pursuit of self-employment regardless of pension entitlement and associated lower income suggests that men's self-employment may be more for non-financial than financial reasons—perhaps due to greater opportunity to generate wealth across the life course. This result provides some evidence that women face occupational barriers to self-employment and suggests that New Zealand's universal superannuation scheme is a vital financial safety net, particularly for women.

In the U.S. opportunities for women's self-employment



did not depend on occupational class and did not decline with pension entitlement. Although this suggests that self-employed U.S. women are more advantaged than N.Z. self-employed women—at least in terms of occupation—they face different pension-related decisions. While self-employed N.Z. women tend to work in blue-collar occupations, they have the benefits of a high rate of home ownership and receipt of a universal pension that is not influenced by their other earnings beyond standard income tax deductions. Self-employed U.S. women work equally in blue- and white-collar occupations, but face pensions based on earning history, and may therefore have to work longer to generate sufficient retirement wealth.

Policy differences could also be driving decisions to be self-employed. As New Zealanders cannot receive a pension until age 65, being self-employed may be the best work-based option (e.g., the most flexible) until they reach retirement age. In contrast, early access to retirement income in the U.S. via early receipt of Social Security or pension or early use of one's own financial resources allows workers earlier access to retirement, potentially self-selecting them out of the sample. Although further research is needed to elucidate these findings, it is evident that policy and cultural differences interact to influence self-employment behavior. As such, research that focuses on culture or policy may not be sufficiently equipped to understand why some individuals work in self-employment while others do not.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. First, self-employment positions can vary greatly (e.g., accounting consultant, grocery store owner, plumber, hair dresser, farmer), and our blunt measure of occupation (white or blue collar) does not capture this diversity in positions very well. Second, many forms of self-employment require a social network and networking skills rather than start-up funds. This fact is not captured by the resource model, which focused on economic resources alone. Finally, this is a cross-sectional study that examines the factors associated with self-employment, rather than transitions to self-employment or length of time in which respondents were self-employed. Longitudinal studies could disentangle relationships, such as whether lower income encouraged self-employment, or whether self-

employment tended to yield lower incomes than working for others. There have been longitudinal studies conducted about predictors of transitioning to self-employment in the U.S. (e.g., Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007, 2009), but not in New Zealand.

Results of this research suggest that the traditional barriers to self-employment for older workers are not operating in New Zealand to the same extent as the United States. This fact is important when considering how best to promote self-employment across the two countries. For instance, the small association between self-employment and socioeconomic status, gender and age suggests that a promotional initiative could be equally effective across a broad range of older workers. However, it is important to note that there may be other factors affecting self-employment that are not considered here.

Based on our findings that resources do matter for self-employment ventures in the U.S., American policy makers could reduce barriers to self-employment by offering and promoting small business loans for start-up costs. If older adults delay claiming Social Security benefits, and remain in the labor force and continue paying taxes, some of the pressure on the Social Security retirement system would be reduced. Given most of the predictors for New Zealand were not statistically significant, recommendations for policy interventions would be premature.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study addressed gaps in knowledge regarding self-employment of older adults. Our results indicate that there are both gender and cross-national differences in predictors of self-employment between the United States and New Zealand. There are non-financial benefits of employment, including stimulation and enjoyment (AARP, 1999), better physical health (Curl & Townsend, 2013), and better mental health (Dave, Rashad, & Spasojevic, 2008). If employment is expected and desired in later life, efforts that promote flexible work situations, such as those offered by self-employment, may encourage older workers to maintain their productive engagement.

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# Institutionalization of Children in the Czech Republic: A Case of Path Dependency

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*Despite the development of alternative forms of care, international and domestic pressures for change, and over 20 years of efforts at deinstitutionalization, the Czech Republic has one of the highest rates of institutionalization of children in Europe (UNICEF, 2012). The continuing reliance upon residential care for children by the child protection system, particularly for children who are disabled or of Roma descent, demonstrates a case of path dependency in which a solidification of the system's response is rooted in its past. Understanding the impact of historical precedence is key to reforming the current system.*

*Key words: Path dependency; child protection; residential care; institutionalization; children in care*

With the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989 and the consequent establishment of the Czech Republic in 1993, the newly independent nation was challenged to redefine its political, economic, and social realities. The country moved rather swiftly in terms of economic change as it went from a socialist to a mixed economy, enlarging its market-based features and divesting the state of most of its controls in less than five years (Potůček, 2001). Equally fast were the political changes,

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with the implementation of a representative democracy with the first elections held in 1990 (Potůček, 2001). The activities of domestic reform, though, occur within a larger geo-political context which offers integration into the international community but also obligates the country to international standards of, among other issues, human rights and care for children.

As a member nation of the United Nations (UN), the Czech Republic is responsible for a number of legal instruments regarding rights and care for children. Chief among them are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which the Czech Republic was a successor, as Czechoslovakia had ratified the Convention in 1991 (UN, 2012a) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by the Czech Republic in 2009 (UN, 2012b).

A number of changes have been implemented in recent years in order to be compliant with international agreements. The country has a large number of children (about 23,000) (UNICEF, 2012) in institutional care, an issue that has drawn considerable attention from the international community. The UN has regularly criticized the Czech government for insufficient progress toward the transformation of public care: current critique is focused on the use of “baby boxes” (a system that facilitates safe and anonymous drop-off of a child at a hospital or other care facility) and the relative unavailability of foster care (Committee on the Rights of the Child [CRC], 2011).

The European Court of Human Rights has issued a judgment citing violations against the rights to private and family life in a case where children were removed from parental care (*Wallová and Walla v. the Czech Republic*, 2006), and in another class action case (*DH and Others v. Czech Republic*, 2007), the court found the state unlawfully discriminated against Roma children by placing them in segregated, special needs institutions, regardless of their abilities.

Thus, the reform of child protection in alignment with international policy has been slow, and the country finds itself struggling with the second highest (behind Kazakhstan) rate of institutionalization of children in Europe (UNICEF, 2012). The reasons for this are both structural and cultural. The current system is complex in its bureaucratic structure and firm in its authority. There is a bias toward institutionalization, particularly for Roma children and children with disabilities



embedded within it, all of which can be understood within the analytical framework of path dependency.

According to path dependency, the current state of a system is owed to past events and decisions. "A dynamic process whose evolution is governed by its own history is 'path dependent'" (David, 2007, p. 1). Decisions are made and structures are built in a way that eventually becomes deterministic. That is, patterns of a culture are repeated over time and in such a manner as to become habituated. However, the path dependency model does not imply the inherent inevitability of a given outcome or path. In fact, it requires that along the way, options for variant outcomes exist, but "a degree of narrowing, a closure of some previously feasible paths" (Bennett & Elman, 2006, p. 252) occurs, and these potential alternative paths are abandoned. The selection of the given path may be due to investments that have been made to the path (Bennett & Elman, 2006; David, 2007), e.g., experts of an existing institution are unlikely to seek change that would undermine their positions, or changing the system (creating a new institution, for example) may be, or appear to be, too costly. Over time, a path that may initially have been a functional adaptation can become inefficient and dysfunctional but continue nonetheless. Because the path is institutionalized and alternatives have either been severely weakened or extinguished, the path's legitimacy remains despite its dysfunctionality.

Residential care for children in the Czech territory has a long tradition, one of over 200 years, and its dysfunctionality as a system of care has been known within the country for at least 50 years (see Langmeier & Matejček, 1963). The practice has persisted in spite of widely variant political and economic histories from the Austrian Empire through to present day. The following discussion offers a review of the historical antecedents that have shaped the current system.

### Historical Antecedents of the Current System

#### *Austrian (later Austro-Hungarian) Empire (1700s-1918)*

This period is typified by a paternalistic and expanding authority over children and codification of the primacy of the family. Under the *Codex Theresianus* (1766) children became the legal property and responsibility of the family. The police and

the church became the key actors related to the implementation of these norms. The police offices established special sub-departments for tracing homeless children and children from poor families; in Prague this practice remained in place until the 1930s. Churches were responsible for the registration of children and the placement of children born outside of marriage into shelters (Kränzl-Nagl, Riepl, & Wintersberger, 1998). At the same time, this period gave rise to the institutional care for children. For families deemed unsuitable or unable to provide care, residential services were established to care for children. As in many other European countries, these institutions were typically charitable entities.

One of the first institutions for poor people (*ústav chudinský*), *chudobnice u sv. Bartoloměji*, which was established in 1505 in Prague, started providing care for children in 1782 after the special commitment of the Emperor Josef the Second (Obec Pražská, 1891). By the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, more than 50 institutions (20 of which were in Prague) were in operation with about 4,500 children in care (Schmidt, 2012). These institutions were governed at a local level and placement into care was the responsibility of various authorities; some children were within the jurisdiction of corrections and others were under medical authorities (for children with disabilities).

Industrialization transformed legal regulations toward a more detailed description of parental responsibilities in 1819 when the first Civic Code was established, and rules related to the placement of under-age people in conflict with law, as well as to the responsibility of parents for the inappropriate behavior of their children, were introduced. In 1863 a new law related to poor children was established in order to oblige local authorities to provide care in a systematic way.

Intensifying nationalism increased the "politicization" of children and centralization of the child welfare system (Zahra, 2006). The network of institutions rapidly increased: by 1900 in Brno, the second largest city of the Czech Republic, there were two correctional institutions for minors in conflict with law (*polepšovna*), more than 20 special schools, approximately 30 shelters (*sirotčinec*), and poor children with disabilities were placed into units for people with deformities (*ústav mrzáčků*). During this period, a Bismarckian, corporatist model of social policy also developed (Večerník, 2008).

In 1905, the Ministry of social affairs organized unions of orphan care (*sirotčí spolek*) and introduced the norm regarding a legal order of decision-making in the case of child placement out of the family (Schmidt, 2012). Primarily, these unions brought action judgments made by courts about such placements, and the Ministry prescribed the function of general guardianship (*hromadní poručenství*) to these unions. In addition, these unions monitored substitute families, provided family placement for children put into residential units, supported employment-seeking activities for young people out of parental care, and brought into action legal aid for parents in the case of divorce and other complications (all these functions were fixed in the first commitment of unions, which was issued in 1914). Orphan care unions typically operated on a local level and were established by various charity organizations: in some regions (South Morava and Prague), there were a lot of such unions, and in others, like Ostrava, such unions did not appear until the 1910's.

The system of child protection was separate from the educational system and local services *Kinderschutzamt* supported families with children under 3 and provided medical counseling and day care until 1914. While efforts were underway to integrate different services into a common system, the final reorganization was not completed. In sum, this period established the origins for a number of paths for child protection: institutionalization, family supports, and substitute family care, and continued experimentation in these various forms indicate that an optimal system had not yet gelled.

### *The First Republic (1918-1939)*

This period witnessed a reversal of sorts regarding institutional services. Placement into families was a legal priority and departments of care for minors (*okresní péče o mládež*) were established in 1921. The Act of child protection deemed substitute family care, particularly by kin, as the dominant placement strategy. Relatives of children born out of marriage were eligible for an allowance, and approximately one-fifth of such families received these benefits. In Brno, from 1923-1938, more than 160 children annually were placed into substitute families, and another 100 were placed in foster care homes and special settlements for foster families (Schmidt, 2012). The

model of substitute family settlements was adopted from the Hungarian practice and presented the form of family care: couples without biological children accepted children in their homes with professional assistance. Between 1926 and 1939, six of these settlements cared for between 26 and 48 children each (Schmidt, 2012). In Brno three children's homes were built during this period, but family placement, either in family-of-origin or in substitute families, was the goal (Schmidt, 2012).

While settlements, kinship care, and foster care were available, these services were directed toward children who did not have disabilities. Children with medical disabilities, as well as Roma children, were categorized as unsuitable for such care, and institutional care was the priority for such children. For instance, in 1928, 3855 children with disabilities resided in 41 institutions in Czechoslovakia (Schmidt, 2012), and the number of children in these institutions did not significantly change until the 1940s (Schmidt, 2012). Assessment centers arose during this period, along with professions to implement these services, although they were not widespread. After issuing Law no. 117 (1927), which deprived Roma people without permanent housing of their civil rights, the practice of removing Roma children and placing them in residential settings became a mainstream approach. As Roma were seen to inherit asocial behavior, the medical model was legitimized for intervening with Roma children.

Support for families and alternatives to institutionalization dominated this period. But, for children with disabilities and Roma children, the path became largely set. Due in large part to the eugenics movement (Šimůnek, 2007), professionals were trained in a medical model that focused upon disability, diagnosticians established their expertise, and large investments were made in building institutions to house the diagnosed charges.

#### *The Protectorate (1939-1945)*

During this period, Czechoslovakia was occupied by German forces. The number of minors monitored by authorities more than doubled; parental rights were limited, and courts established procedures for custody of minors (Schmidt, 2012). The Protectorate broke the formation of crisis intervention established by the laws of 1931 and introduced regulations

aligned with the legal priorities of the Third Reich. The practice of family reintegration declined, the number of children placed into substitute families was reduced, and placement into institutions increased. Residential care was provided by charity organizations and governed by German authorities. After the war, a medical focus was maintained: adding to the previous special schools, new ones were opened (e.g., in Brno from 1946 to 1947, five new special schools were established) and the system of residential care for children under three within the Ministry of Health was established (Schmidt, 2012). Thus, during this period, the march toward institutionalization, especially for children with disabilities, continued.

### *Socialist period (1948-1998)*

The communist coup d'état of 1948 ushered in Soviet rule, which would last until 1989. Under the Soviet system, the public's role was foregrounded. It was argued that children were to be raised in the best interest of the socialist state: it was in "the public interest to prevent such situations as breaches of upbringing and lack of parental control of children which leads to the incomplete internalization of socialist morality" (need citation here). During the early years, centralized authority and large-scale institutions were introduced and key forms of substitute care, foster care, family settlements, and kinship care were effectively abolished (Truhlářová & Levická, 2012). As a result, the number of institutions and the number of children in them grew dramatically throughout this period, with 166 institutions housing 10,752 children in operation in 1947 and 760 institutions housing 45,058 children in 1962 (Český statistický úřad 1934-1959 & 1960-1970). The two categories of children targeted by these changes were Roma children and children with disabilities. As part of Soviet efforts to industrialize and urbanize in the 1950s (Castle-Kanerova & Jordan, 2001), the Roma population was forced to resettle, and soon more than 95,000 Roma resided in Czech cities (Canek, 2000/2001). The Roma were marginalized and viewed as unable (due to language and culture) to properly socialize children into Soviet society. For children with disabilities, the growth in care was astounding. By 1962, 428 institutions served this population (Schmidt, 2012).

Beginning in the 1960s, efforts of democratization within the country spread to child welfare. Professionals in the field voiced concerns, and scholars such as Zdenek Matejchik published studies exposing the negative consequences of institutional care. Largely as a result of these efforts, reform measures were introduced and foster and kinship care again emerged as viable alternatives to residential care. By the early 1970s, all regions began recruiting and training foster care families.

Despite such efforts, by the end of the decade, institutional care remained monolithic and by 1990, more than 19,000 children were institutionalized (UNICEF, 2012). As indicated, this was largely due to the increasing use of assessment centers along with streamlined practices that facilitated the removal of children from parental care and hampered the development of alternative approaches to care. The dueling forces—advocates for reform and their counterparts—remain at odds with anti-reformers, succeeding largely for children with disabilities, those in conflict with the law, and Roma children. Underlying this conflict over reform was the complexity of the system. Assessment centers were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, foster care was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Health oversaw certain categories of youth, and the judicial system was heavily reliant upon experts within the system who tended to favor residential care.

### The Current Child Protection System

Substitute care (*náhradní výchova*) appeared as a legal concept by the end of the socialistic era with Act no. 114 (1988) On the Powers of Authority in Social Security (*O působnosti orgánů České republiky v sociálním zabezpečení*), which permitted immediate removal of children from families and placement into substitute care prior to a court judgment. While this aspect (placement prior to a court judgment) was repealed in 2004, substitute care remains commonplace. Experts distinguish between family substitute care (*náhradní rodinnou výchovu*) and residential care (*ústavní náhradní výchova*), although legally there is no such distinction. The various forms of substitute care include more than ten types of institutions for children, as well as various family-type placements, including four

models of foster care. Adding to this complexity, and owing to the Soviet system, is that the oversight and management of children in care is both national and regional, with regional authorities holding direct responsibility for children in public care in their jurisdiction. At the national level, three ministries, Health, Education, and Labour and Social Affairs, each have responsibility over particular types of placements. For example, infants are under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, while children with special needs are under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

These bureaucratic features confound effective data collection and reporting, and the number of children in public care is unreliable. Official estimates indicate that approximately 23,000 children are housed in over 200 institutions (LIGA, 2007; UNICEF, 2012). Younger children are disproportionately likely to be reunified with their biological families (52%), but lengthy terms in care are common: 61% of children brought into care will age out of the system, and the average time in residential care is 14.5 years (LIGA, 2010).

The decision-making mechanism for placement into care is rightfully legalistic but presents a number of complicating features in practice. In cases of maltreatment, special social services for child protection (*sociálně-právní ochrana dětí*) initiate the process, which then proceeds through the courts. For primary custody, the court must rule within seven days, but judgments for permanency actually take much longer (Rychlík, 2008). In 2004, the average ruling took 274 days to place children into foster care and 232 to place for adoption. As they await judgment, most children reside in residential care. In cases in which the court has not issued a ruling, authorities are not required by law to reunify children with their biological families. Thus, these children may remain in residential care absent permanency judgment.

For children over three, decision-making regarding institutional care is a two-step process: first there is a decision whether or not to place a child into residential care, then, if residential care is selected, an assessment center indicates the most appropriate type of institution. (Children under three are placed in a baby home until the court's permanency ruling.) Legally, the court is bound to consider residential care as a last resort. "Until the court has voted on child placement into an

Table 1. Children in Residential Care

Type, Year	Target Population	Number of Institutions	Number of Children
Under the authority of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports			
Children's home, 2010	Children between 3 and 7 years old	151	4704
Children's home with school, 2010	Children older 7	31	787
Correctional schools, 2010	Children in conflict with law	33	1534
Assessment centre, 2010	Children older 3 who should be placed in residential care settings	14	853
Boarding school, 2009	Children with disabilities	n/a	742
Under the authority of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs			
Short-term placement (shelters), 2010	Children who have been noticed as appropriate for placement into substitute families	n/a	844
Centres for minors in conflict with law, 2008	Young people under 15	n/a	172
Centres for children with multiple disorder of development, 2010	Children older than 15	n/a	4924
Correctional institutions, 2008	Minors over 15 in conflict with law	n/a	229
Under the authority of the Ministry of Health			
Units for infants, 2010	Children under 3	34	2077



institution, all options of family placement should be identified and analyzed, the final possibility of child placement into a children's home of family type should be evaluated" (§ 42, Act No. 359/1999). However, in practice this is not the case. The court has only seven days to decide whether reunification or public care is warranted, thereby prohibiting thorough assessments of the family environment. Judges rely heavily, and in the majority of cases (98%) rule according to the recommendations of social services that are likely to opt for residential care (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs [MLSA], 2011).

During the legal process, children are appointed either a candidate for judge or an officer of the court to serve as their primary guardian to represent their interests. These officers also tend to prefer residential care as opposed to reunification. Parents may represent themselves in the courts, but often lack the skill and education to adequately and effectively present a viable case regarding the families' interests. In sum, there is not a safety net to protect families once the case is brought to authorities and to help them navigate through the legal system.

Along with the courts, assessment centers wield a great deal of power in determining placements for children over three. There are 14 assessment centers operating within each of the 13 regions of the country, with Prague housing two centers (Dvořák, 2007). Each center has at least three groups of children, often grouped by age and sex, with each group typically consisting of between four and eight children, in order to facilitate close observation by staff. Assessment centers are charged with observing children for a period of eight weeks and then determining the optimal care environment given the child's developmental needs. The assessment centers focus on three major issues: children's special needs and the impact of disability upon development and behavior; asocial behavior and the risk of criminality; and children's emotional and behavioral ability (e.g., risk of reactive disorder) to join a family environment (Dvořák, 2007). Assessment centers employ the highest rates of helping professionals, with seven to twelve specialists, compared to other residential institutions with two to three helping professionals. Assessment center staff include developmental psychologists, special education experts, and speech therapists.

The mission and quality of assessment centers are the subject of fierce criticism among some experts. In 2000, monitoring by Ladislav Zamboj, a committee of the Council of Human Rights, identified numerous cases of violations of children's rights within the centers.

Two-beds rooms have the square not more than 7-8 square meters, there are two narrow made of iron beds and no other furniture. Windows are blocked by bars from external side and can be open only by staff permission. In larger spaces more children are placed. If the child would like to go to toilet, they should notify a caregiver with a knock on the door, and if they haven't achieved success in knocking, they need to relieve themselves on room floor. (LIGA, 2007, need pp.)

In addition, publicity in the press about children running away from centers to escape their conditions triggered public debate about the quality of care provided by the centers (Zbyněk & Novák, 2008).

Further critique focuses upon the orientation of staff. Assessment procedures focus upon children's developmental and educational deficits. This deficit model of assessment is common throughout Eastern Europe and problematizes child functioning in ways that strengths-based assessment techniques do not. Moreover, staff do not assess children in their natural familial or educational settings. So, children's functioning is assessed independent of their social context. This lack of appreciation of systemic functioning of a child combined with the aforementioned deficit model predisposes decisions towards institutionalization. The order of the process also impacts placement decisions in that when the court has already determined residential care as the custody solution, the assessment centers function merely to determine the type of residential care placement. These factors have been key to the substantial increase of the number of children in institutional care over the past 20 years.

In addition to the flaws regarding placement, observers levy concerns regarding the conditions of the institutions. International organizations' monitoring of homes for young children has produced reports of conditions that severely compromise the well-being of children. Children are raised

in groups of ten with minimal contact with adults. They are rarely under the care or supervision of a psychologist or other helping professional other than nurses. The nursing staff have primary contact and responsibility for care and are frequently rotated, thus limiting the children's ability to develop secure relationships with their caregivers.

The untenable conditions are not confined to infant and children's homes, as other investigations found such problems in institutions throughout the system. In 2001, the Children's Rights division of the Advisory Board of Human Rights (*Sekce pro práva dětí, Rada vlády pro lidská práva*) reviewed 42 institutions. They found that four of the homes limited family visitations to one meeting per month, in violation of regulations. Three homes had more than ten children in a bedroom. A significant number of children reported being physically abused by their peers (10%) or caregivers (10%). They also concluded that staff were poorly screened. Caregivers had not passed the required psychological assessments, and administrators failed to gather the required information regarding criminal violations and mental health status of their staff. Monitors also noted high burnout and turnover rates of staff, and no support programs existed for staff in order to prevent such problems.

A final area of concern regards the circumstances for placement. Less than 14% of children are placed due to abuse (Ruxton, 2012). The majority of children (over half) are placed for social (e.g., homelessness, poverty, etc.) or educational (e.g., failure to attend school) reasons (Eurochild, 2010; Mulheir & Browne, 2007). An equally significant number (close to 50%) are placed in residential care due to a medical condition or disability, which are typically beyond the families' ability to provide proper care (Eurochild, 2010; Mulheir & Browne, 2007). There is also an issue of ethnic disproportionality in the public care system. Roma children are disproportionately in residential care, comprising less than 5% of the general population but one quarter of the institutionalized population (Eurochild, 2010).

## Reform

Prompted by public concerns, by international law, and by criticism, both foreign and domestic, the Czech government

passed several acts aimed at improving child protection in the early 2000s. The Act no. 359/1999 On the Social and Legal Protection of Children (*Zákon o sociálně-právní ochraně dětí*) established the general organizational framework for communication among services, parents, and children during crisis intervention. Special local authorities, SPOD (*organy sociálně-právní ochrany dětí*), were designated to identify families at risk, collect information among various actors, treat parents, provide options for the right to be heard, and initiate legal action. The administration was defined with local authorities in districts and regions subordinated under the special department in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In institutional terms, the structure repeated the previous socialist order of child protection, but without the ideological component. The law identified crisis intervention and after-crisis placement of children as the main activity of local authorities, focusing on intervention with minors who are in contact with asocial adults, children from vulnerable families, and infants and toddlers of mothers in jail. Such prioritization inhibits primary prevention, as services are directed to children's situations when they are already in the crisis stage.

In 2002, Act no. 109 (*Zákon o ústavní výchově*) was issued. The Act's principal purpose is to comply with the guidelines of the CRC and echoes much of its language: determination regarding custody and care must be made in the best interest of the child, and maintaining children with their biological families is the highest priority under the law. Initiating new forms of care and restructuring some services have occurred as a result. The law provides additional guarantees regarding rights of children in institutions: the rights to be in contact with friends and relatives, express their own opinions (and with respect to their dignity?) and that local authorities are to provide oversight of these guarantees. As the criticism was aimed largely at the number of children in institutions, the new laws established restrictions for residential care. Homes are to be limited to six groups of no more than eight children each, and new services are to be implemented.

One such service, the Klokanek Project, is offered by a nongovernmental organization, the Foundation for Children without Protection. The Klokanek Project consists of a network

of short-term foster placements while children await the initial court ruling. Over 1300 children have been placed in one of thirteen of the project's centers in the country. Six of the centers are houses with gardens, and in the others, children live in flats with caregivers. The majority of children (80%) return home to be reunited with their biological families.

Critics, however, have charged the system as inefficient, noting that half of the children who remain under care are eventually placed in assessment centers because the foster care staff cannot cope with their behavior (Dvořák, 2007). Other measures have met with similar mixed results. For the past 20 years, 2350 families have received early intervention services free of charge which are designed to keep children with impairments in their homes (Hradilková, 2009). These services include parental counseling and guidance on child behavior and development, as well as direct therapeutic services targeting developmental issues for the child. Currently, the country has seven early intervention centers, employing 62 professionals and serving over 600 families (Hradilková, 2009).

Despite their success, early intervention centers are limited, underfunded, and unable to meet demand. The centers are only able to provide services to children with audio and visual impairments, so the majority of children with disabilities, such as intellectual disabilities, are placed into residential care. Another similar service, which began in 2004, is the children's center (*Detské centrum*) that provides services to children with special education needs. There are five *Detské centrum*s in the country that offer short-term placement with families, counseling for parents, and therapeutic care for the children (Schneiberg, 2007). But again, the availability of services fails to meet demand, and the majority of children with special education needs are placed in residential care.

Despite the early intervention efforts and new regulations on residential care, the rate of children placed in institutions and the number of institutions has actually risen over the past two decades. The number of children placed into institutions, as compared to those placed in alternatives to residential settings, provides evidence of the continuing priority of public institutional care. While seven centers of early intervention with a staff of 672 professionals provide regular assistance to 624

children with disabilities (Hradiloková, 2009), two thousand infants and toddlers are placed into 39 units for children under three with more than a thousand specialists (Český statistický úřad, 2008). Similarly, education for children with disabilities remains more focused on boarding schools than integration into mainstream schools: in the stage of primary education, 35,000 children with Special Education Needs (SEN) study at mainstream schools (and 38,000 at boarding schools), but this number of children decreases during secondary education—approximately 5,000 continue study at mainstream schools, 14,000 at boarding schools, and a significant number of children over 10 are placed into settings of social care (Český statistický úřad, 2008).

Probation services assist fewer minors in conflict with the law than correctional institutions do: 600 adolescents are monitored by probation services, while more than 2,000 minors are in jails (Probační a mediační služba Czech Republic, 2009). Only two centers, in Ostrava and Brno, assist Roma children in connecting with substitute families, and Roma children remain the majority of students in boarding schools (more than 60% of users are Roma children) (European Roma Rights Center [ERRC], 2011).

Subsequent action by the Czech government has produced some changes in an effort to increase providers of care for looked-after children as well as families at risk. Act no. 108, on the Social Services (Zákon o sociálních službách, 2006), introduced rules for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community services that provide services for families and children. The purpose of the law is to establish a system of regulation for these services and presumably encourage the development of NGO activity to support families. The law established that organizations must get a license for each type of service activity. But, it also limited the possible number of licences to be issued. So, while organizations theoretically should be within a common network of mutual cooperation, they are actually in competition with each other for licenses. In addition, organizations end up implementing particular programs versus implementing a set of activities. For example, one service prepares looked-after children in institutions for independent life, and another provides support after graduating such institutions, instead of having an organization offer both

types of programs. Experts from the non-governmental sector consider that this regulation has inhibited the development of consistent and comprehensive child protection services.

Table 2. Placement in residential settings from 2004-2009

Type of institution	Year					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Under authority of the Ministry of Education</i>						
Children's home	4657	4867	4869	4815	4618	4739
Special correctional institution for children in conflict with law ( <i>výchovný ústav</i> )	1544	1479	1420	1404	1430	1546
Assessment centre ( <i>detský diagnostický ústav</i> )	494	501	537	516	705	793
Boarding school for children with SEN	555	743	795	724	674	742
Total	7250	7590	7621	7459	7427	7820
<i>Under authority of the Ministry of Health</i>						
Settings for children under three ( <i>kojenecký ústav, detské domovy pro děti do třech let</i> )	1871	1847	1673	1741	1981	n/a

Under tremendous external pressure, the most sweeping reform effort came in 2009 with the National Action Plan for Transformation and Unification of the System of Care for Children at Risk (NAP) (*Národní akční plan k transformaci a sjednocení systému péče o ohrožené děti na období 2009 až 2011*, MLSA, 2010). NAP placed the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as the central authority to coordinate an inter-ministerial effort to change the system. NAP is focused on networking and case-management as core elements regarding the new organizational design of child protection: ostensibly both vertical and horizontal dimensions of child protection should be transformed towards better interdepartmental cooperation (MLSA, 2010). The plan emphasized the necessity of investigating

regional experiences in order to specify individual plans for each region. The plan indicated the insufficient level of data collection within the system and called for special actions targeted to reform the existing approach towards it. Within the plan, the ideology of child protection stresses the idea of a healthy family "which is able to provide its own needs and solve issues independently" as the most desirable outcome of intervention (s.10). Procedures of decision-making, as well as the monitoring under services, are not mentioned as priorities for the transformation of the child protection system. To date, the ministries continue negotiations regarding elements of NAP, and the system has remained largely unaffected by NAP.

According to the League of Human Rights (LIGA), a key factor for this failure is that the system has produced merely "cosmetic" rather than substantial change (2010). LIGA found that despite the weighty expense of institutionalization (e.g., in financial terms, more than five to seven times that of substitute care), the judicial system's bias toward institutionalization and a deficiency of specially trained service providers (e.g., while the number of families in need of services increased, there was a decrease in the number of trained social workers) continued unabated. LIGA's central concern, though, regards the lack of any real power by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, indicating that it is merely a position of title, noting that the Ministry possesses no authority to implement any of the plan's elements, and that the other two ministries (Education and Health) refuse to submit to systemic changes. In a recent review of the Republic's progress in human rights, LIGA (2011) repeated its previous assertion regarding NAP's tragic inertia, indicating that the residential care system remains much the same since NAP's inception.

As stated, reforms in the child welfare system were initiated in large part to reduce institutionalization, but they have clearly been ineffective for certain groups of children, particularly for Roma children and children with disabilities. Despite its profound human and financial costs and inefficiencies and despite the international critique of the Czech child protection system, institutional care remains the primary mode for care of children removed from parental care. We conclude that the system is culturally entrenched and that a path dependence model offers an explanation for the sluggish repair of the current system.



Unlike others (see for example, Tobis, 2000), we do not argue that the ascendancy of residential care is due to sovietization, but rather that the socialist period represents a critical juncture in Czech history. The Soviet system favored large-scale institutions over family supports, vested inordinate powers to bureaucrats, and weakened civil society (Večerník, 2008). Thus, political changes during this period ushered in expansion and entrenchment, or lock-in, of institutional care, but the elements of the pre-war system, notably that of paternalism and a system of institutions, provided fertile ground for this to occur. As discussed, in all of the periods prior to Soviet authority, alternatives to care existed. And, in one period, the First Republic, alternative forms of care were broadened and could have conceivably surpassed institutionalization as the standard. But the succeeding rule by German forces, and the eugenics movement and its related pathologizing of children in need of care, interrupted that development. As a result, the following Soviet period sealed its fate. Institutionalization then became the only viable path.

Now, more than 20 years after de-Sovietization, democratization, and economic liberalization, the residential care system remains ensconced. Albeit, it has a different form from the large-scale institutions of the Soviet period, but residential care continues in its dominance for care (for certain children) outside the family of origin. As in other areas of social reform, the Czech welfare system holds an “institutional and attitudinal resistance to change” (Potůček, 2004, p. 265). Despite pressure and attempts to change, the path persists: the rate of children in residential care actually increased from 1990 to 2010—from 704 to 1268 per 100,000 of the child population (UNICEF, 2012).

Successful diversion from this path demands a new culture of child protection: one that envisions children with disabilities as capable of functioning in society; one that values Roma identity and culture; one that does not pathologize poor families; and one that upholds the rights of children to community and family. Just how such a cultural change could occur is beyond our analysis. But, within the framework of path dependency, some initial claims can be made here: the structures that support institutionalization have to be weakened and the key actors (i.e., experts in the system) have to be reoriented.

The dismantling of this system would entail, at minimum, the following: (1) reorganization of the legal process in a way that presupposes and protects familial rights; (2) reconceptualization of assessment to a strengths-based model that incorporates a child and family-centered approach; and most crucially, (3) dramatic expansion of support services to children and their families in order for children to remain in parental care.

In the Czech case, the state's willingness to change course is evident, but the structure of institutionalization is dependent upon more than just current political authority. It is a deeply embedded and firmly established cultural practice, the deviation from which challenges current beliefs, knowledge, patterns, and processes. The discussion is not only relevant for the Czech Republic, but for any number of countries that continue, despite the enormous human costs, to segregate certain types of children from society for long periods, limiting their ability to form close human relationships and inhibiting them from reaching their full potential.

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# The First Faith-Based Movement: The Religious Roots of Social Progressivism in America (1880-1912) in Historical Perspective

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*This re-evaluation of the published writings of Richard T. Ely, Josiah Strong, and Jane Addams during the Progressive era (1880-1912) explores the themes of religious idealism and nationalism that figured prominently in the early formulation of modern liberal reform ideology in the United States. A specific focus will be placed on tracing themes of the America's millennial destiny and how they gradually evolved into prophesies of social transformation through the applied use of social science knowledge. Beyond merely satisfying historical curiosity, this inquiry provides a new perspective from which to consider the fierce clashes over social welfare policy which occurred in the twentieth century.*

*Key words: Progressive era, religious idealism, Richard T. Ely, Josiah Strong, Jane Addams, nationalism, social welfare policy*

At the dawn of the Progressive era, the first generation of modern social reformers in America constructed compelling arguments for activism in the social sphere that were replete with the intertwined symbolism of nationalism and liberal Protestantism. In the closing decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the boundaries that distinguish disciplines within the social sciences had not yet been established, and there was a remarkable degree of collaboration between academics, Protestant clergy and prominent figures in the settlement movement. Whatever their primary institutional allegiances, reform-minded individuals attended the same conferences, worked together on completing studies and were united by the shared vision that the so-called scientific study of social problems could bring about a new era, where poverty would be

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gradually eliminated, along with its attendant social pathologies.

The seminal study on the social gospel emanating from the mainline Protestant churches was penned by A. M. Schlesinger, Sr. (1930/1967), who later encouraged one of his students at Harvard, Henry F. May, to pursue a more extensive study of the topic as a doctoral dissertation. May (1949/1967) later published the dissertation as the monograph, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, where he concluded that the progressive clergy of the mainline Protestant denominations provided "intellectual and moral leadership" that "left permanent effects on American social thinking" (p. xvii). Charles Beard (1934) was more emphatic in drawing the connection between the Progressivism of 1912 and the New Deal: "the Christian Soldiers at the Bull Moose convention wrote a platform. If anyone wants a background for the New Deal, let him read that platform from preamble to benediction" (p. 14, see also Morone, 2003). While numerous prominent historians and political scientists, both past and present, have explored the development of the reformist thought that coincided with emergence of the modern social sciences (Carson, 1990; Chamberlain, 1932/1971; Chambers, 1963; Frederick, 1976; Greek, 1992; Smith, 2000), this article revisits forgotten or neglected religious roots of American social progressivism that are foundational to the development of reformist thought among modern liberals.

The paper opens with a brief exposition of the historical, religious and intellectual context from which the social gospel emerged, followed by a textual analysis of the published writings of three prominent leaders of social reform movement during the Progressive era (1880-1912): Josiah Strong (1847-1916), Richard T. Ely (1854-1943), and Jane Addams (1860-1935). A particular emphasis will be placed on examining their discussion on the leadership roles of social experts in American society and their prophecies for the eradication of social problems through the applied use of social science knowledge. In the concluding section, I suggest that certain characteristic modes of thinking and speaking among later generations of modern liberals retained the postmillennialist hopes for social transformation through the applied use of social science knowledge which these representative figures of



the Progressive era first articulated. It is my contention that by re-examining the religious foundations of American progressivism and liberalism, it is possible to obtain a broader historical perspective from which some of the developments associated with the recent period of conservative backlash against welfare state expansion can be better understood.

### The Context: Liberal Protestantism and Social Reform in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The religious historian Robert T. Handy (1971/1984) observed that native-born Protestants in late 19<sup>th</sup> century America “saw themselves as belonging to both a denominational tradition and to the national religion, a religion of civilization—[and] they experienced little or no tension between them” (p. 99). In regard to the “national religion,” the prevailing faith in the inevitability of social progress in America was predicated on strict adherence to classical liberal economic principals, rather than a preference for affirmative government. This “ideological amalgamation between Protestant denominationalism and Americanism” (Mead, 1956, p. 67) continued long after the Civil War era and remained a strong ideological force throughout the period of our interest (see also Schlesinger, 1930/1967; Wuthnow, 1988). Correspondingly, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, liberal Protestants played a dominant role in American philanthropy and social reform efforts; their justifications for embarking upon various endeavors of social improvement ranging from abolitionism to temperance were closely linked to Christian theology and civil religion (Leiby, 1985).

Given the zeal with which liberal Protestant abolitionists had previously attacked the national sin of slavery, it is not surprising that a subsequent generation of reformers in the post-Civil War period would turn their attention to a new set of social problems which they believed threatened the nation's progress toward its millennial destiny. In 1894, the prominent social gospel minister Washington Gladden tellingly commented, “now that slavery is out of the way ... the questions that concern the welfare of our free laborers are coming forward ... It is plain that the pulpit must have something to say about them” (as cited in Dorn, 1967, p. 10). But, the turn

of liberal Protestants toward the problems of urbanization, industrialization and immigration was not immediate; instead, a triumphal mood prevailed for nearly two decades after the war's end that was characterized by a renewed sense of the adequacy of the American political system.

May (1949/1967) referred to the period between 1861 and 1875 as the "Summit of Complacency," when the Protestant orthodoxy continued to assure the "churchgoing middle-class" that "America was still being guided by the Unseen Hand" (p. 63). However, by 1875 the political participation of immigrants was beginning to shift the balance of political power, with machine politicians of the Democratic party taking control of many large cities and helping elect the party's candidates in three of four presidential elections after 1876 (Marty, 1970). Nonetheless, the prevailing belief in America's millennial destiny was so strong that it would take a series of violent labor battles (Haymarket, 1886; Homestead, 1892; Pullman, 1894) and severe economic downturns before native-born Protestants recognized ameliorative interventions were necessary to quell the simmering unrest among the immigrant working classes in the nation's burgeoning cities.

Coinciding with the emergence of social consciousness in American Protestantism during this period was an enormous growth in religious participation in general. Wuthnow (1988) estimated that between 1870 and 1918, the total number of churches in the nation grew from slightly over 70,000 to more than 225,000. Although it was an era of proliferating sects, it was also increasingly apparent that the main division within American Protestantism was between what Marty (1970) has labeled as its "private" and "public" parties (see also Fox, 1993). The private party generally held to a premillennial eschatology, where God's kingdom would be established outside of history (typically by virtue of a catastrophe or apocalyptic process), while members of the public party associated with the social gospel subscribed to a postmillennialist perspective where the mundane sphere would gradually be transformed by the efforts of humankind.

Maintaining a fidelity to the post-millennialism and social activism to which they were by nature predisposed, members of the public party constructed arguments employing religious and secular rationales for setting the nation on the right course

after being subject to the vagaries of the historical process. They envisioned a new dispensation where the applied use of social knowledge would hasten progress toward a perfected society. In this study, I will refer to these tendencies of thought among social progressives as the "reformist faith" (Hollinger, 1989; Niebuhr, 1944; Niebuhr, 1957). Perhaps Bruno Lasker (1922), an associate editor of *The Survey*, provides the best summation of the heterogeneous characteristics of these carriers of the reformist faith,

His [sic] aim is not only that of preventing hardship but, more frequently and more important, that of trying to carry into the new era the essential gains of the old. He deepens and strengthens the streams of idealism from one generation to another. ... In short, the social reformer is not only a crusader but also an engineer. His functions permit comparison with those of the artist and the husbandman, the scholar and the priest. (p. 159)

Although academic and public intellectuals with progressive social agendas would gradually abandon the use of Protestant symbolism to legitimize their aims as the twentieth century unfolded, their idea of social progress retained the stamp of their predecessors, who imagined a world undergoing "gradual redemption" through the development of social policy and programmatic interventions based on research. Quandt (1973) coined the apt phrase "the secularization of Postmillennialism" to describe this cast of mind (see also Tiryakian, 1993). In the next sections we will examine the careers and social thought of several of the figures that played central roles in shaping the reformist faith.

### Josiah Strong, Walter Rauschenbusch and the Social Gospel

While he is not presently recognized as one of the main intellectual leaders of the social gospel movement, Josiah Strong's (1847-1916) published writing provides an opportunity to comprehend the connections between liberal Protestantism and sociological study. Although Strong lacked

the intellectual gravitas of his better-known colleagues within American Protestantism, he played a central role in organizing the conferences and publications where key figures in the social reform movement presented their research and articulated their visions of social change (Towes, 1976).

Strong completed his divinity studies at Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, where Lyman Beecher served as President until 1850 and whose influence apparently reverberated long after his tenure ended. Beecher was the author of a widely distributed and influential tract entitled *A Plea for the West* (1835), a work that was notable for both its animus toward Catholicism and his prophecies for America's central role in the Protestant evangelization of the world. Strong's most recognized work, *Our Country* (first edition published in 1885), is characterized by the prevailing theme of the danger to "American civilization" posed by the immigrant masses, and as such it is correctly viewed as within the same tradition of thought as Beecher's earlier tractate.

It is worth noting that Strong completed and published *Our Country* with support from wealthy capitalists under the auspices of the American Home Mission Society, whose goal was to convert the nation to Protestant Christianity through the distribution of Bibles, books and the funding of domestic missions (Griffin, 1957). The first edition of *Our Country* was published two months after the labor violence of the Haymarket riot, an event that deeply shocked the native-born middle classes and lent a heightened sense of urgency to Strong's alarmist message (Boyer, 1978, p. 131).

*Our Country* is significant because it stands as one of the earliest examples of a book targeting a popular audience where descriptive statistics were used to buttress a morally charged call for social reform. Another important feature of the book is the centrality of the war metaphor as a means to draw attention to a social "crisis" and to generate popular support for policies and interventions to eradicate the crisis (see also Addams, 1907; James, 1906/1971; Leuchtenburg, 1995). A conservative theologian who penned the introduction alludes to Strong's use of the military metaphor:

Our whole history is a succession of crises. Our national salvation demands in supreme exercise of

military virtues ... This volume presents ... with a power which can scarcely be exceeded ... the truth that the Christian enterprise the moral conquest of this land needs to be conducted with the self-abandonment which determined men would throw into the critical moment in the critical battle of the critical campaign for a nation's endangered life. What the campaign in Pennsylvania was to the Civil War, what the battle of Gettysburg was to that campaign ... such is the present opportunity to the Christian civilization of this country. (as cited in Strong, 1891/1963, p. 9)

Strong's contemporaries testified to the book's wide influence, with Walter Rauschenbusch (1957) describing *Our Country* as lifting "the entire home mission problem to a higher level" (p. 105). Another colleague recalled the book as "in a way, epoch-making" (Matthews, 1927, p. 378). Elsewhere, Reinhold Niebuhr (n.d.) was less flattering and referred to a later edition of the book as "religio-empirical theology."

At the outset of *Our Country*, Strong emphatically stated, "the progress of civilization meant the increasing centralization of human affairs and a growing interdependence of society's members on statistical data" (Strong 1891/1963, p. xxi; see also Strong, 1910, p. 41). In the book, Strong repeatedly and explicitly linked the importance of social science inquiry with the project of keeping America on its millennial course. For Strong, the task of recording accurate and detailed social data had a metaphysical importance. He referred to statistics as "God's alphabet," which would allow men to prophesize about the future by reading "their tendencies" (as cited in Muller, 1959, p. 189). In his peculiarly reverent attitude for statistics, it is possible to augur the origins of the belief in the transformative potential of social research that would animate the efforts of more secularly-oriented social progressives throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In a later tract entitled *The New Era; or, The Coming Kingdom* (1893), Strong reiterated the view that social knowledge was an indispensable aid for the reorganization of society and that educated, native-born, Protestants should lead the effort.

Our close relations with the ignorant, the degraded, the vicious, which it is impossible to escape, are forcing us

to do them good in self-defence [*sic*]. The very progress of civilization will yet make it impossible for good and respectable men to live in peace and comfort unless other men are good and respectable and comfortable. ... *It has been shown that we have come upon a sociological age of the world; that we shall not have social peace ... until we have social righteousness ... a higher and more complete organization of society would be in harmony with the laws of historical development* [italics added] .... [the church] must adapt new methods to new conditions and enter on the work with a burning enthusiasm for humanity. (Strong, 1893, pp. 345-348)

The implicit notions of race superiority found in Strong's call for management of the immigrant working classes were all too common among leaders of the Social Gospel movement; even Walter Rauschenbusch, the most eloquent theologian of the Social Gospel, believed the new professional class of social experts should be led by the "sure-footed Anglo-Saxon" and that ceding political power to the indigenous leadership of the immigrant working classes was a risk to be avoided (Rauschenbusch, 1896; see also Rauschenbusch, 1907/1910, p. 410). Elsewhere, a colleague of Rauschenbusch wrote more explicitly on the social control function of this new type of ethical reformer, "a democracy without expert guides presents an open field to demagogues ... there is a grave danger to the State when government is exposed to the caprice and contagion of the least intelligent but most numerous portion of the community" (Batten, 1909, pp. 191, 208).

Although brief, the preceding discussion of Strong's views provides a window from which to understand the religious basis for the belief in the providential potential of social science inquiry. The reader may rightly wonder to what degree these views prevailed among social reformers during the Progressive era; one need only review issues of a periodical edited by Strong, *Studies in the Gospel of the Kingdom* (published by the American Institute of Social Service), or *The Survey* to recognize that the reformist faith was also a commonly shared characteristic among a large number of mainstream academic social scientists and prominent leaders of the settlement movement.

## Morality, Economics and Social Service: Richard T. Ely

Until the mid-19th century, colleges in the United States were established by Protestant denominations and were primarily concerned with preparing men for the ministry. For those without a plan to enter the ministry, these colleges provided an education that was predicated “on the assumption that nature and society could best be understood through the prism of Christian theology” (Roberts & Turner, 2000, pp., 20, 33; see also Jencks & Riesman, 1968; Veysey, 1963). As the century came to a close, the trend toward secularization within American higher education was gaining momentum and truth claims arising out of the academe were increasingly based on the ethic of scientific inquiry. However, during this transitional period it was not uncommon for professors and public intellectuals to voice an expectation that social science research would invariably confirm biblical truths. The experience and writings of economist Richard T. Ely (1864-1943) will provide an exemplary opportunity to understand the early development of the reformist faith and how it was associated with the idea of using social research in the development of social policy.

While Ely’s social thought hasn’t been subjected to the same degree of scrutiny as his better known and more eloquent contemporaries who authored books that are now recognized as the seminal texts of modern liberalism (such as Walter Lippman, *Drift and Mastery*; Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*; or Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics*), it would be a mistake to discount his influence on reformist thought. Among his students were a considerable number Progressive era luminaries, including future president Woodrow Wilson; Albion Small, appointed department head of Sociology at the University of Chicago in 1893; and the renowned labor economist John R. Commons.

At Johns Hopkins, Ely developed strong connections within the Social Gospel movement, in particular with Walter Rauschenbusch, who described the young lecturer as “a simple and serious man, a convinced Christian and one of the top experts on national economy” (as cited in Minus, 1988, p. 64; see also Frederick, 1976, p. 150). And while it cannot be proven, it seems very likely Jane Addams became acquainted with Ely during the two winters she spent in Baltimore in the late 1880’s and attended lectures at Hopkins.

The young Ely was one of a growing number of Americans who traveled to Germany to complete a doctoral education, an experience which left an indelible imprint on his social and economic views. Under the tutelage of German professors, Ely was introduced to a historicist approach to economic analysis, which would become the hallmark of his academic research and popular writings. Ely was also highly impressed by the power wielded by the German professorate, who in addition to their academic responsibilities served as experts within government bureaucracies and on investigative committees (Ely, 1938; Rodgers, 1998). Perhaps not surprisingly, throughout his career Ely strove to establish spaces for social and economic experts in American government, where public administration remained the province of political appointees under the patronage system.

Two years after earning his doctorate degree, Ely was hired as a lecturer at the recently established Johns Hopkins University. There he taught courses in political economy in the Department of History and Politics, chaired by Herbert Baxter Adams, which was an environment that undoubtedly reinforced the young professor's tendency toward a historicist approach to the study of economics (Cunningham, 1981). Early on it was clear that Ely was intent on exerting his influence as both an academic and a public intellectual. The ambitious young lecturer was a tireless researcher and a prolific writer, whose works were published in both academic journals and popular magazines.

Ely wrote two types of articles for popular audiences, the first being abbreviated versions of his academic pieces, and the second concerned with generating enthusiasm among reform-minded audiences. In these he made frequent use of biblical themes and Christian symbolism to justify and emphasize his positions, features that were noticeably absent from his academic publications. While Ely's inspiring popular writings attracted enthusiastic supporters, they rankled many of his peers who found his rhetoric and policy activism inconsistent with the rising ethic of detached scientific inquiry in the academe.

In an early popular article, "The Past and Present of Political Economy" (1883), Ely took aim at laissez-faire capitalism and the abysmal conditions of industrial laborers that he associated with its practice. Written as a polemic against the prevailing



orthodox views of American economics, the piece catapulted him toward notoriety and controversy. Present in the essay are themes that would consistently recur in his writing: the need for a revitalized Christian ethic among public servants and academic leaders to resolve class conflict; the development of a social science knowledge base by a professional class of investigators; and the argument for an activist role of the state in the social and economic realms, based on the findings of social science research.

In a later monograph, *The Social Law of Service* (1896), Ely more pointedly argued that the social teachings of Christianity should serve as a guide to social and business ethics. The publication consisted of several lectures Ely gave to audiences of religious reformers where he defined "social solidarity," a construct based on biblical teachings, where the interests of the community prevailed over those of the individual. The idea of creating social solidarity was a central theme among leaders of the social gospel movement, and it was also found in more secularized form in the social ethics later articulated by Jane Addams (1902) and Edward A. Ross (1907). In the excerpt below, Ely (1896) explained the concept:

Social Solidarity means the oneness of human interests; it signifies the dependence of man upon man, both in good things and evil things. Social solidarity means that our true welfare is not an individual matter purely ... we thrive only in commonwealth ... [it] signifies not only that man needs association with his fellow-men, but that he shares with them their sins and sufferings ... There is no such thing as purely individual sin, or purely individual righteousness. (pp. 127-128)

In *The Social Law of Service*, as elsewhere in his early writings, Ely's rhetorical style is not unlike the exhortations of an evangelist, appropriating phrases from the "Lord's prayer" and the "Sermon on the Mount." He rebuked the Protestant churches for their failure to provide instruction for ethical conduct in "worldly matters" and lamented the prevalence of unethical behavior in business dealings, especially among "professed Christians" (as cited in Everett, 1946, p. 82).

In Ely's Christian-oriented model of political economy, the profit motive was to be replaced by the "law of service." Ely

argued that when the members of society grasped the social component of Christ's message to love one's neighbor as oneself (as informed by the findings of the social sciences and sociology) and acted accordingly, the nation would "be regenerated" and "exalted by righteousness" (Ely, 1896, p. 276). Ely envisioned a central role for the academically trained expert in effecting this social transformation. This new type of expert would pursue the rigorous study of social and economic phenomena out of a deep commitment to the social teachings of Christianity. Ely (1896) believed this type of leadership would eventually prevail over the partisan politics that impeded social progress.

If we encourage those who have the opportunities and the brains to carry on studies designed to show what the Gospel means in all the details of modern life, if we take pains to keep in touch with them ... feeling our way cautiously, but advancing at the same time fearlessly, we shall find our vision growing continually larger. (pp. 272-273)

Ely pursued his reformist vision with relentless energy and enthusiasm; although only a lecturer at the time, he played a central role in establishing the American Economics Association (AEA) in 1885. Ely envisioned the AEA as a body of progressive economists that would "accomplish in America what the Verein für Socialpolitik has done in Germany" (as cited in Rodgers, 1998, p. 102) by establishing a system of governance based on social and economic research that would inform an activist role of the state (Ely, 1936, 1938).

At the inaugural meetings of the AEA, Ely pushed hard to establish the association according to his activist vision, which provoked opposition from members who sought a professional body to air and debate economic viewpoints. While many members within the fledgling association were sympathetic to the Ely's reformist views, they opposed his plan to make the AEA the vehicle to achieve them. In contrast, Ely's conservative enemies were unabashedly derisive of Ely and his agenda. Simon Newcomb, a member of the Hopkins faculty and bitter opponent of Ely, characterized the initial incarnation of the AEA as a "sort of a church, requiring for admission to its full communion a renunciation of ancient errors,

and an adhesion to a new creed" (as cited in Coats, 1959, p. 558; see also Newcomb, 1884).

Despite having published prodigiously, having supervised a large cadre of graduate students, and playing a central role in establishing the AEA, Ely failed to secure a tenured position at Johns Hopkins. Although Ely was stunned by the rejection, it set in motion a chain of events that would position him to become a key figure of the reform movement in the Midwest. Largely due to the efforts of a former student, Frederick Jackson Turner, Ely was hired as the Department head of the School of Economics, Political Science and History at the University of Wisconsin, a position created specifically for him. At Wisconsin, Ely found what were perhaps the most ideal conditions from which to pursue his reformist vision.

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was still common for the settlers of the territories west of the thirteen original states to view the region as a second opportunity to establish a perfected social order within the republic that corresponded more closely with the founder's vision of a roughly egalitarian American society (Jencks & Riesman, 1968; see also Greek, 1992, p. vii; Tiryakian, 1993). Similarly, the discourse of Midwestern professors tended to focus on themes which also figured prominently in Ely's thought and experiences, such as the corrupting influence of entrenched wealth on the production of research at the nation's elite universities and the importance of producing usable knowledge, which for many was tantamount to a religious calling (Jencks & Riesman, 1968; Richardson & Fisher, 1998; Veysey, 1963; Vidich & Lyman, 1982).

Thus, in comparison to the entrenched social and economic orders of the Eastern seaboard, Ely no doubt considered Wisconsin an open field for his state-centered vision of social and economic management. Ely also happily found himself in a state where the citizenry was composed almost entirely of German immigrants, who were perhaps more inclined to accept the idea of establishing a central role for experts in government (Rader, 1966; Rodgers, 1998; Schlesinger, 1921).

On a personal level, Ely's move to Wisconsin represented a second chance to achieve prominence in the academic social sciences, and under his direction his department effectively became the first modern school of public policy in the United States, establishing the university as the main center for

progressive social reform (Furner, 1975). It was under these ideal conditions that Ely (1894) elaborated upon his heady vision for the expert management of society by “agents” with strong commitments to liberal Protestantism.

Looking into the future we may contemplate a society with real, not merely nominal freedom, to pursue the best; a society in which men shall work together for common purposes and in which this wholesome co-operation shall take place largely through government ... *managed by the nation, through agents who appreciate the true glory of public service, and feel that it is God's work which they are doing, because Church and State are one* [italics added]. (p. 352)

Despite the highly favorable circumstances at Wisconsin, in 1894 Ely came under attack there because of his ties to George Herron, a radical Congregationalist minister and professor at Grinnell College. Ely's association with Herron prompted an investigation by the University of Wisconsin after one of the regents published a letter in *The Nation* magazine under the title, “The College Anarchist” (Rader, 1966). While an investigative committee cleared Ely of radicalism, his survival exacted a high cost, as he disavowed any connection to, or sympathy with the grievances of the labor movement (Furner, 1975).

Although he proclaimed his exoneration a victory for academic freedom, from this period forward Ely and his reform-minded academic colleagues adopted the role of “relatively conservative experts capable of advising legislators about the efficacy of social and labor reforms ... not as leaders of a crusade for social justice” (Sklar, 1993, p. 58; see also Ross, 1991, p. 117; Rodgers, 1998, p. 109). Notably, this episode also coincided with Ely's move away from the use of religious rhetoric in his popular writings. Therefore, at least in regard to Ely, the turn toward becoming a secularly-oriented public policy analyst was largely a defensive reaction to conservative political pressure.

### Jane Addams and the Settlements: The First Faith-Based Agencies?

As it was for many woman who gravitated toward the settlement movement, strong currents of religious idealism stirred a young Jane Addams to establish Hull House in Chicago. While Addams was at the vanguard of a broader movement with deep religious roots, the focus on Addams's religiosity in this section should not be mistaken for an argument that religious idealism provided the sole impetus for her efforts at Hull House (Carson, 1990; Crocker, 1992; Gordon, 1992; McClymer, 1991). While early portrayals of Jane Addams tended toward sentimental and hagiographic portraits that deified her as a sort of secular saint, more recent scholarship on the life and work of Jane Addams has focused on her pivotal role in the development of the social sciences, feminism, and a respect for cultural pluralism in America (Deegan, 1988/2000; Ross, 1998; Sklar, 1985, 1998). While a broadened perspective on her career and social thought is a welcome development, there is a general tendency in these later studies to ignore or de-emphasize the religious roots of her social idealism and lifelong associations with liberal Protestant reformers. While in comparison to Ely, the religious symbolism was noticeably absent in Addams social thought, she did share her sociological grandfather's (as she had once referred to Ely) reverence for the transformational potential of rigorous research.

Even at an early point in her public career, it is clear Addams envisioned that Hull House would become an important center for social research. In "The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements" she pointed to the institutional limitations on research faced by social scientists based in academe, and proposed the settlements as an alternative setting where a "reconstruction and reorganization of ... knowledge" (Addams, 1893/2002, p. 19) could be pursued. When placed in its historical context, this was truly a bold proposal, since until that time, gender discrimination had limited the participation of women in the research enterprise to the collection of data, which male sociologists considered a lower form of labor than analysis and theory development (Deegan, 1988/2000; Joyce, 2003; Ross, 1979).

Thus, it is all the more remarkable that a year after writing the essay, Addams and Florence Kelley conceptualized a project and coordinated a team of researchers (including University of Chicago sociologist, Charles Zeublin) that resulted in the completion of the ground-breaking study *Hull House Maps and Papers* (1895). Although the study was not widely circulated at the time of its publication, the maps included in the monograph were modeled after those in Charles Booth's *Inquiry into Life and Labour in London* and were based on Kelley's research funded by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (O'Connor, 2001). Curiously, the maps were nearly excised by the editor, none other than Richard T. Ely, who was irritated over delays and costs associated with their inclusion in the volume.

Even though the use of empirical data to determine policy priorities was gradually replacing religious arguments among progressive social reformers, within Addams' writing there is ample evidence that a quasi-religious orientation remained associated with the research enterprise. In a later essay, "A Function of a Social Settlement," Addams (1899) echoed Ely and Strong, arguing that the development of accurate social knowledge was a prerequisite to the optimal functioning of a democratic society. Keeping in mind that Addams was no doubt aware of the persecution that Ely and his academic colleagues had recently faced, she was adamant that settlement-based research should remain free of any funding constraints that would compromise the goal of establishing laws and regulation to tame what she referred to as "the ungodly industrial relation" (Addams, 1899, p. 40). Since the essay was written at a time when women remained excluded from "political, professional, academic, religious careers ... by reason of their gender" (Sklar, 1993, p. 67), Addams' argument should also be interpreted as a proxy argument against male dominance in the academic social sciences. Implicit in her argument is that settlement-based researchers produced a superior product because they were engaged with the communities they studied and free of the taint of self-interest (Addams, 1899).

It is inarguable that a survey of Addams's published writing demonstrates her adoption of a humanist perspective over the course of her long public career; however, it would be incorrect to conclude that she had become entirely secular in her outlook or had dismissed the importance of religious

idealism as an important force driving the social reform movement. Seventeen years after the publication of *Hull House Maps and Papers*, Addams' involvement with *The Men and Religion Forward Movement* (MRFM) was in many respects emblematic of how she continued to collaborate with liberal Protestants.

While the MRFM was originally conceived as a means to recruit men back into religious participation, the influence of a large contingent of reform-minded luminaries (such as Washington Gladden, Walter Rauschenbusch, Graham Taylor, Charles Stelze and Addams herself) generated an unanticipated enthusiasm among participants to pursue social reform as a form of Christian service. The instructions in the MRFM *Program of Work* recommended that attendees read *The Survey* (a publication containing the views of prominent spokesmen in the emerging social work profession) and gather data in order to complete a social survey of the cities where rallies were held (Bateman, 2001; Robins, 1912).

In *The Second Twenty Years at Hull House*, in the same breath Addams (1930) gave credit to the MRFM, social workers and the leadership of the Social Gospel movement assembled within the Federal Council of Churches for stoking the popular enthusiasm that brought the Progressive Party to prominence in 1912. Although its candidate, Theodore Roosevelt, was defeated in his bid for the presidency, Addams remained hopeful the party would continue to grow in political significance through efforts coordinated within the fledgling Progressive Service Department.

Addams (1930) described the department as a "scientific party organization" where experts were charged with completing studies and presenting findings to a legislative department headed by Addams along with Walter Weyl, an editor at the *New Republic*. Subsequently, the research-based findings would be crafted into legislation by a coalition of progressive congressmen; simultaneously, a speakers' division within the department would deploy a group of "lecturers" to specific regions of the country to rally public support for the initiatives.

While the fortunes of the Progressive Service Department waned along with those of its sponsoring party, the impetus for its formation and the hopes for its success were clearly based on the reformist faith. It would be nearly two decades before the idea of the next iteration of the reformist faith

would re-emerge during the watershed period of the New Deal era (Leuchtenburg, 1995; Rodgers, 1998). By this time, Ely's popular influence was negligible and Addams's interests had turned elsewhere. However, the reformist faith which they had a central role in establishing was firmly imbedded in the American progressive tradition, albeit clothed in a more secularized and nationalistic form.

### The Reformist Faith in Historical Perspective

The individuals who have been the focus of the foregoing investigation played central roles in establishing the intellectual foundation of social progressivism in America. As the preceding analysis has demonstrated, a central characteristic of their thought was a deep faith that the applied use of social knowledge would hasten social progress. Their faith in the transformational potential for projects of social engineering is all the more remarkable when one considers the crude state of social science research methodology at the dawn of the 20th century. These first generation carriers of the reformist faith were prone to two conceits traceable to the post-millennialism of liberal Protestantism: first, the fervent belief that social science research would confirm the effectiveness of their policies and interventions; and second, a broad political consensus in support of their progressive aims would result. Through further consideration of these two conceits associated with the reformist faith, a valuable perspective from which to consider the recent period of disillusionment with progressive social welfare policy initiatives can be gained.

While it is beyond the scope of this inquiry to provide a detailed examination of how the reformist faith evolved during the twentieth century, it is argued here that not only did the central aspects of the reformist faith survive into the New Deal era, but they also re-emerged with particular force when the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA) was enacted and the Johnson Administration declared what became known as the "War on Poverty" (Beard, 1934; Morone, 1993). Despite the passage of over half a century, it is possible to hear the echoes of the first generation carriers of the reformist faith in the rallying cry of President Johnson's "poverty warriors."



The public discourse of the Johnson administration officials responsible for prosecuting the *War on Poverty* reveals they promoted a vision of social change based on the promises of social science knowledge. Their rhetoric gave rise to expectations for the creation of a virtuous cycle of successes that would generate popular and political support for the expansion of progressive policy initiatives (Aaron, 1978; Glazer, 1988; Nathan, 1986). This tendency of thought among the Johnson Administration “poverty warriors” was strikingly similar to Ely’s (1894) vision of what he referred to as an “all classes socialism” (p. 179), where all strata of society recognized the desirability of pursuing pragmatic policies of social amelioration after a track record of success for social intervention was established.

While one would expect no less of any proponent of a policy agenda than to strenuously advocate their recommended course of action in the public sphere, it has been widely observed that the rhetoric used to rally popular support for the EOA legislation fostered unattainable expectations. After all, President Lyndon Johnson had declared a war, and his top lieutenant in the effort, Sargent Shriver, delivered the heady promise “to end poverty in the United States, as we know it today, within a generation” (as cited in Califano, 1991, p. 79; Zarefsky, 1986). Tellingly, Labor Secretary Willard Wirtz alluded to the social gospel reformers in the following comments:

This war on poverty is not going to be fought in the tradition of emotional crusades. H.R. 10440 [the EOA of 1964] is a carefully worked out battle plan based less on praising the Lord than on passing the ammunition. (as cited in Zarefsky, 1986, pp. 26-27)

Although Wirtz’s quote gave the impression that the EOA programs would be generously funded and based firmly on the foundations of social science, in fact they were neither. During the time that the EOA legislation was being rapidly shepherded through Congress, Nathan Glazer observed the bill lacked “the powerful political pressure and long-sustained intellectual support that produced the great welfare measures of the New Deal” (as cited in Moynihan, 1969, pp. 23-24; see also Rodgers, 1998).

In retrospect, the gap between rhetoric and the actual scale of the effort was probably enough to insure that conservative critics would have ample opportunity to portray certain programs and policies as "failures." However, beyond the problem of fostering unachievable expectations for policy success through the use of heightened rhetoric, this subsequent generation of the reformist faith encountered a problem neither they nor their predecessors could have anticipated—the outcome data measuring their efforts was less than compelling.

The passage of EOA occurred at the same time as the advent of computerized statistical analysis and methods of program evaluation to measure the effects of government policies and interventions. This was a development that individuals such as Strong, Rauschenbusch, Ely and Addams could only have dreamed of when envisioning the potential for benevolent and activist role for the state a half century earlier. Not surprisingly, the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) which was conceived to be "a kind of academic Rand Corporation" (O'Connor, 2001, p. 217) for the development of anti-poverty measures, was initially located at the economics department at the University of Wisconsin.

Similar to the first generation carriers of the reformist faith, the poverty warriors in the Johnson Administration expected that program evaluations and outcome data would generate popular and political support for their ongoing efforts. However, the lackluster results of certain programs would instead become a source of systematic doubt about the enterprise of progressive policy activism. The reflections of two prominent members of the era's social science establishment shed light on the development of this unexpected state of affairs.

Peter Rossi formulated what he sardonically called the "Iron Law of Social Program Evaluation" to describe the tendency of programmatic social interventions to have weak effects, and concluded, "in short, most programs when properly evaluated turn out to be ineffective or at best marginally (able?) to achieve their aims"(as cited in Cohen, 1986, p. 22). Bruce K. MacLaury, a former Brookings Institution president, explained that "research tends to become a conservative force

because it fosters skepticism and caution by shifting attention from moral commitment to analytical problems that rarely have clear-cut or simple solutions" (as cited in Nathan, 1986, p. 164).

The general problem of demonstrating effectiveness was further complicated by the design and administration of the Community Action Programs (CAP) which were arguably the most prominent component of the anti-poverty effort. While there was a great deal of heterogeneity among CAPs, they were primarily settings where various efforts aimed at improving the opportunities for education and employment (Headstart, Legal Aid, community organizing) in low income neighborhoods were coordinated. While the interventions and services coordinated within the CAPs provided tangible benefits to their communities, demonstrating direct effects on reducing poverty was also highly problematic because of the varied nature of their efforts (O'Connor, 2001).

These conditions, in all likelihood, left CAPs increasingly more vulnerable to criticism, as they became perceived as hotbeds of African-American radicalism. Furthermore, despite the fact they presented fewer methodological problems, the less controversial flank of the War on Poverty, which aimed at changing the characteristics of impoverished people through rehabilitation, job training, and education programs produced outcome data that did not demonstrate them to be particularly effective in reducing welfare dependency (Berkowitz, 1991; Gilbert, 2002).

Albeit briefly, the preceding paragraphs identify the central weaknesses associated with the reformist faith which contained the seeds of demise for liberal policy activism from the late 1960s to the present. Perhaps Smith (1991) best explains the reason for the magnitude for the backlash against the reformist faith in the War on Poverty's aftermath and its ramifications:

The failures of social science went far beyond mere disappointment over specific programs ... Knowledge itself seemed to have failed. And the political consequences proved to be as profound as conservatives, holding different ideas about knowledge and its uses, ascended to power. (p. 18)

Just as the first generation of the reformist faith could not have countenanced that the wide availability of outcome data could undermine the prospects for the continued effort of using social science to develop policy, their more recent heirs came late to the realization of the profound consequences of conservative intellectuals adopting the "conventions" of social science "to subvert liberal ends" (O'Connor, 2001, p. 247). This new generation of conservative intellectuals found their homes at well-funded think tank organizations, such as the Heritage Foundation (established in 1973), where they began to develop their critiques of the contemporary welfare state (Brown, 2002).

Whereas traditional foundations, such as Ford, Carnegie and Russell Sage, fund academically-based social research focused on the analysis of program outcomes and the development of interventions and policies grounded in empirical findings, conservative intellectuals sought a more direct impact on policymaking through mining extant data and studies in search of ineffective programs and perverse outcomes of liberal policy interventions.

The seminal example of this new type of conservative intellectual effort was Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* (1984/1994), which was underwritten by the Olin Foundation and the Manhattan Institute. More recently, the best example of this effort is work of Robert Rector at the Heritage Foundation, who, along with a colleague, published *America's Failed \$5.4 Trillion War on Poverty* (Rector & Lauber, 1995). In the year and a half leading up to the passage of the landmark 1996 welfare reforms, Rector described his role: "the congressional Republicans still aren't staffed up to address their legislative goals. So they lean on conservative think tanks [*sic*] like Heritage for ideas and assistance" (Stout, 1995, p. 1). A review of the bill's text reveals that its language bears a striking resemblance to fact sheets and other publications on welfare reform published by the Heritage Foundation.

One cannot deny the irony of the idea that conservative policy intellectuals housed in activist think tanks are pursuing a strategy which bears a remarkable resemblance to the one envisioned by Jane Addams and Walter Weyl for the short-lived Progressive Service Department. Since the 1970's, conservative intellectuals have found much success by taking aim at many of the fundamental assumptions of the reformist

faith. The consequences of their success cannot be understated, since not only have they succeeded in thwarting the efforts of liberal and progressive policy activists, but more importantly they have created a profound sense of doubt that social science knowledge can be used to shape policy.

## Conclusion

Comprehending the connection between liberal Protestantism and the subsequent development of the reformist faith provides an important perspective from which recent clashes over social welfare policy can be understood. While most present-day liberals and progressives involved in the enterprise of social science research and policy advocacy do not pursue social reform as an explicit expression of their religious faith, it has been argued in this paper there are certain qualities of mind that identify them as inheritors of the same reformist faith held by Josiah Strong, Richard T. Ely and Jane Addams.

However, unlike their predecessors, the more recent adherents of the reformist faith have tended to pursue research without paying full heed to the political uses of their production of knowledge. In contrast, as discussed in the preceding section, conservative policy intellectuals working in think-tank settings have not been at all reluctant to package their ideas and engage in the political process.

While the decline of the reformist faith has many sources, in the preceding section I have outlined what appear to be the central reasons for its demise in the closing decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is no small irony in the fact that instead of the triumph prophesized by the initial carriers of the reformist faith, for many the War on Poverty era has come to be viewed as a repudiation of the project of policy activism based on social science knowledge that arose in the Progressive era. While conservative intellectuals have effectively undermined the reformist faith, their victory has come at the cost of engendering a widespread sense of futility regarding the success of policy initiatives aimed at improving economic and social conditions.

When it is recognized that there is a sort of quasi-religious faith associated with the impulse to pursue progressive social reform, we can better understand the countervailing force of political conservatism that arose after the War on Poverty

period, which, not coincidentally, was strengthened by a resurgent conservative Protestantism. Furthermore, if Martin Marty's binary categories of Protestantism are revised to distinguish the chasm between those adhering to more traditional views of all faiths as members of America's "private party" and secularly-oriented liberals whose faith rests on managing society through the application of social knowledge as the members of the "public party," we can more fully appreciate the depths of the fierce clash between the parties over issues of social welfare policy that has continued until the present.

Renowned historian Michael Katz (2001) has observed that decisions on matters of social welfare policy have always been questions of "political and moral philosophy" and thus cannot be determined by "objective" or "empirical means" alone. He has argued the results of social science research "must be filtered through interpretive screens that determine its meaning" (p. 341). Looking toward the future, it would be highly beneficial if "interpretative screens" could be developed from which conservatives and liberals could view matters of social welfare policy with some level of consensus on approaching both the means and ends of social policy.

Although widening economic inequality and the prevailing politics of confrontation and obstruction do not bode well for prospects of policy initiatives aimed at improving society, a historicist perspective does provide some indications of how these divides might be bridged. In 1933, Jane Addams served as honorary President of the World Fellowship of Faiths at Chicago's Century of Progress celebration, the purpose of which was to "unite the inspiration of all faiths—upon the solutions of man's present problems" (World Conference of Faiths, 1933, p. 2). In an increasingly diverse and multicultural American society, the ecumenical spirit of common cause which permeated the World Fellowship of Faiths might serve as a model for a contemporary effort aimed at building a broad consensus to address poverty and social problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While it is acknowledged that finding common ground on social welfare policy between the public and private parties will prove a formidable task, it may be that assembling conferences of contemporary public intellectuals, theologians

and cultural representatives might provide the best hope of overcoming the formidable ideological and political barriers blocking the development and implementation of effective policies which exist at present. Clearly the project of fostering a collective sense of purpose toward achieving what Herbert Croly once referred to as the "Promise of American Life" is, at present, sorely needed.

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# Mass Shootings and Mental Health Policy

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*Research suggests that mass shootings can increase mental health stigma, reinforce stereotypes that people with mental illness are violent, and influence public policy. This article examines mental health policy initiatives resulting from the mass shootings in Sandy Hook, Connecticut and Aurora, Colorado within the context of existing research about mental illness, suicide, substance abuse and gun violence. Previous legislation that restricts access to firearms among persons with mental illness is reviewed. The article suggests that gun control legislation that focuses on persons with mental illness is not supported by research, may create barriers to treatment, and may have limited efficacy in promoting public safety.*

*Key words: mass shootings, mental illness, stigma, violence, mental health policy*

Research suggests that mass shootings can increase mental health stigma, reinforce negative stereotypes that people with mental illness are dangerous and violent, and influence public policy, all of which can undermine treatment and recovery (Corrigan, 2004; McGinty, Webster, & Barry, 2013; Pescosolido, Monahan, Link, Stueve, & Kikuzawa, 1999). The school shooting in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, of December 14, 2012, was the largest mass killing in the United States since the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting. The Sandy Hook shooting followed on the heels of the July 20, 2012 movie theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado.

These events engendered widespread public anger, renewed the debate on gun control, and led to several mental health policies at the state and federal level. These policies

have serious implications for mental health care, yet they were proposed and passed in the highly politically and emotionally charged aftermath of the shootings, a truncated process that left little opportunity for research-informed deliberation. This article examines current mental health policy initiatives resulting from the mass shootings in Sandy Hook and Aurora within the context of existing research about mental illness and gun violence. Previous legislative attempts to restrict access to firearms among persons with mental illness are reviewed. Implications for mental health services are raised.

### The Sandy Hook and Aurora Shootings

On December 14, 2012, Adam Lanza shot and killed his mother while she slept in her bed. Armed with several semi-automatic weapons, he then forced his way into an elementary school, shot and killed 20 children and 6 adult staff members, and then killed himself. Public outrage over the shooting was immediate. The majority of the victims were young children, the attack was savage, without provocation, and seemingly random, factors which fueled anger, fear, and confusion among the American public. The Sandy Hook shooting happened six months after another horrific, similarly arbitrary, mass shooting in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado.

That attack, in which 82 people were killed or wounded, also involved a shooter, James Holmes, who employed semi-automatic weapons. James Holmes was immediately arrested; during his trial, it was revealed that prior to the shooting, he sought mental health treatment at the University of Colorado, Denver, where he had been enrolled as a student. James Holmes was seen several times by Dr. Lynne Fenton, a psychiatrist who was employed as the director of student mental health services, and to whom Holmes later sent threatening letters. Dr. Fenton reported James Holmes to campus security, citing him at risk for homicidal behavior, although her report did not lead to protective custody. Both Dr. Fenton and the University of Colorado are the subject of numerous lawsuits alleging negligence for not having James Holmes involuntarily committed (McGhee, 2013). Days after the Sandy Hook shooting, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper proposed increased funding for mental health services in his state because

the "common element of so many of these mass homicides seems to be a level of mental illness" (Moreno, 2013). Governor Hickenlooper's commentary notwithstanding, in Lanza's case, treatment records have not been publically released, and no prior assessment of risk for violence has been reported.

### Mental Illness and Violence

The relationship between serious mental illness and violence is complex. Research suggests that demographic and economic factors, such as being young, male, and of lower socioeconomic status, are the major determinants of violence (Stuart, 2003). Although teasing out a causal connection between mental illness and violence is difficult, a large body of research shows that violence by people with serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, is rare and accounts for approximately only 4 - 5% of violent acts (American Psychiatric Association, 1994; Appelbaum & Swanson, 2010; Fazel & Grann, 2006; Monahan et al., 2001). Moreover, when people with mental illness are violent, it is almost always interpersonal (87%), typically occurs in the home, and the targets are usually family and/or friends. In contrast, the vast majority of violent acts are associated with crime, not mental illness (Stuart, 2003). Persons with mental illness are far more likely to be victims, rather than perpetrators, of violence (Hiday, 1995; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services [HHS], 1999).

### Suicide

Suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in 2010, resulting in more than twice as many deaths as homicides. Slightly more than half of all suicides (9,392) were committed with a firearm (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2010). Guns are highly lethal; persons who attempt suicide using a firearm are far more likely to die than those who employ other means. Research identifies both mental illness and access to a gun as among the leading risk factors for suicide (National Institute of Mental Health, 2010).

Although the strong association between suicide and guns suggests that strengthening prohibitions on gun ownership might be an appropriate strategy to deter suicide, suicide

prevention groups largely avoid being drawn into political battles over gun laws, reflecting an awareness of the power of pro-gun organizations. Cathy Barber, co-founder of the National Center for Suicide Prevention Training, cautions that raising suicide as part of gun control is a risky strategy.

When it comes up in the context of the gun legislation debate, it immediately turns off gun owners. Gun owners are the group that needs this information and they need it presented in a neutral way that isn't, 'Oh, here's another horrible thing about guns.' (Bendery, 2013)

Likewise, the U.S. Surgeon General stops short of calling for restrictions on gun ownership; instead, the surgeon general favors forming an alliance with gun owners as a suicide prevention strategy and focuses on the safe storage of firearms, rather than gun reduction. "Partnering with gun-owner groups to craft and deliver this message will help ensure that it is culturally relevant, technically accurate, comes from a trusted source, and does not have an anti-gun bias" (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2012).

The Harvard School of Public Health examined gun ownership and suicide and found that states with high gun ownership have correspondingly higher rates of suicide than states with lower gun ownership (Miller & Hemenway, 2008). Mental health policies, including federal and state legislation, that restrict firearm access among persons with major depression and/or suicidal ideation could reasonably be expected to result in decreased fatalities.

### Co-occurring Disorders: Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

Adults with co-occurring psychiatric and substance abuse disorders account for a large subset of persons with serious mental illness; this population is estimated to be slightly more than one quarter of all adults diagnosed with serious mental illness, totaling approximately 8 million people (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, n.d.).



Although researchers conclude that mental illness does not lead to violence, a large body of studies found that co-occurring psychiatric disorders and substance abuse are associated with violence (Fazel & Grann, 2006; Swanson et al., 1997; Volavka & Swanson, 2010). Substance abuse, even in the absence of a psychiatric disorder, is associated with violence (Stuart, 2003). However, this relationship needs to be interpreted carefully. Substance abuse is largely associated with violence because of its criminal nature. The psychoactive effect of certain substances, primarily cocaine, methamphetamine, and alcohol, is considered to contribute to violence (Boles & Miotto, 2003).

Given the large body of research that suggests that mental illness, in and of itself, rarely leads to violence toward others, whereas substance abuse is associated with an elevated risk of violence, mental health policy designed to reduce gun violence and promote public safety might reasonably focus on substance abuse broadly, and more narrowly, on the subset of individuals with co-occurring disorders.

### Federal Legislation

Federal gun control policy responses to the Sandy Hook and Aurora shootings strengthen legal prohibitions on gun ownership to individuals with histories of mental illness who are deemed at risk for violence to themselves and/or others. The primary federal vehicle for limiting access to firearms is the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which was established under the 1993 Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, and which is used to run background checks on gun applications (National Instant Criminal Background Check System, n.d.). The Gun Control Act of 1968 prohibits gun ownership by any person who has been “adjudicated as a mental defective or committed to a mental institution” (Gun Control Act of 1968, Pub Law No. 90-618). It should be noted that “committed to a mental institution” refers solely to individuals who have been involuntarily committed to an inpatient setting. A report prepared for Congress about submission of mental health records to NICS and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) law clarified that “the definition explicitly excludes ‘voluntary admission,’ and

so would not apply to individuals voluntarily seeking treatment for mental illness in any setting” (Liu, Bagalman, Chu, & Redhead, 2013).

The 2007 Virginia Tech shooting focused widespread attention on increasing mental health reporting to NICS. In the Virginia Tech shooting, Seung-Hui Cho killed 32 people and wounded 17 others at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. A report commissioned after the shooting reveals that Cho had a mental health record dating back to middle school. In college, he presented as threatening and isolative, both in class and socially. In 2005, following a student complaint of harassment, the police took Cho to a local community mental health center, where he was assessed by a clinical social worker who determined that Cho was mentally ill, presented an imminent danger to himself or others, and was unwilling to voluntarily enter treatment. The clinical social worker recommended involuntary hospitalization, located an available psychiatric bed, and contacted a judge to obtain a temporary detention order, which was issued. Cho was then taken to a psychiatric hospital, where he was evaluated by a staff psychologist, who found that Cho did not present an imminent danger and recommended against involuntary hospitalization. An attending psychiatrist evaluated Cho and concurred with the psychologist. Cho was released without receiving a primary diagnosis and was given a recommendation that he should seek outpatient treatment. No medication was prescribed. Cho was never reported to NICS (a lack of clarity concerning reporting requirements was subsequently cited). The issue was that Cho was not formally admitted to a psychiatric hospital, but rather ordered by the court for observation.

Further, HIPAA and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) privacy laws were identified as factors inhibiting reports to NICS. Because Cho was not reported to NICS, he was later able to purchase two semi-automatic weapons, which he used in the 2007 attack (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). The Virginia Tech shooting led to state legislation for mental health reporting to NICS. On April 30, 2007, Virginia Governor Timothy Kaine issued an executive order that eliminates the distinction between inpatient and outpatient settings as a criterion for reporting (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012).

At the federal level, the Virginia Tech shooting precipitated the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (NIAA), which was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2008. Its intent was to increase record reporting to NICS by providing incentives for states. The NIAA also changed the standard for persons deemed to be “adjudicated as a mental defective” or “committed to a mental institution,” finding that such adjudications or commitments are “deemed not to have occurred” under certain circumstances, such as if “the person has been “fully released or discharged from all mandatory treatment, supervision, or monitoring” and when “the person has been found to be rehabilitated “through any procedure available under law” (NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 [NIAA], Pub. L. 110-180).

This represents a change from prior law, under which the prohibition on persons “adjudicated as a mental defective” or “committed to a mental institution” was permanent. The Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence (2012) cautioned that this change would result in fewer mental health records being submitted to NICS; conversely, others suggested that the NIAA would increase mental health reporting (Norris & Price, 2009). NICS records have been increasingly populated with mental health records: In 1999, the first year for which data is reported, less than 1% of NICS denials were due to mental health reasons.

A large jump in mental health reporting took place between 2006 and 2009: In 2006, 405 denials were made for mental health reasons. By 2009, mental health reports had increased tenfold to number 4,811, perhaps reflecting the 2007 NIAA amendments that were passed in response to the Virginia Tech shooting. By July, 2013, the most recent year for which data are available, gun ownership denial based on mental health was the second largest category in the NICS database (28%), with close to 3,000,000 denials, far outpacing the number of denials because of a conviction of a criminal offense (1,601,781); a domestic violence conviction (93,219); and unlawful substance abuse (21,927). The only category that is greater than mental health denials of gun ownership is because of illegal immigrant status (5,427,994) (National Instant Criminal Background Check System, n.d).

The Sandy Hook and Aurora shootings renewed public and political attention on mental illness and gun control. Within this context, on March 6, 2013, Senator Lindsey Graham introduced the NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013. This bill seeks to “improve the effectiveness of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System by clarifying reporting requirements related to adjudications of mental incompetency, and for other purposes” (NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013). The NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013 expands the criteria to individuals in outpatient and inpatient settings. In order to remove obstacles that could hinder states from submitting mental health records to NICS, in April 2013, President Obama signed an executive order modifying the HIPAA privacy rule (HHS, 2013).

### State Legislation

There are significant variations among state laws concerning prohibitions on firearm access for persons with mental illness. As noted above, state reporting to the NICS database is voluntary; as of October 16, 2012, 38 states required or authorized mental health reporting to the NICS database as well as maintaining in-state databases. Eight states only collected mental health records in-state and did not report data to NICS. Most states only reported persons who had been involuntarily committed to an inpatient unit (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012).

The Sandy Hook shooting prompted new state mental health laws. New York State quickly passed the New York Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act (SAFE). Several other states followed suit, with legislation either passed or pending in Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Oregon, Ohio, and Florida (Goode & Healy, 2013). On May, 21, 2013, Washington Governor Jay Inslee, after a Seattle shooting by a man with a history of domestic violence left five people dead, signed a law entitled “An act relating to accelerating expansion of mental health involuntary commitment laws.” This law speeds up the involuntary commitment process by allowing it on the basis of reports from friends or family (SB 5480–2013-14).

NY SAFE was signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo on January 15, 2013. It makes reporting to NICS mandatory and includes, as proposed in the NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013, persons in outpatient settings and/or voluntary psychiatric admissions who are deemed at risk for violence. NY SAFE is codified as Mental Hygiene Law (MHL) 9.46 and covers physicians, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, and nurses, all of whom must report to their local director of community services (DCS) or his/her designees, any person who, in their reasonable professional judgment, is at risk of harming themselves or others. The DCS then reports the information to the New York State Department of Criminal Justice, which keeps the information in a state database for no fewer than five years and reports the data to NICS. If the person has a firearm license, it can be suspended or revoked, and local law enforcement can be dispatched to remove the firearm.

NY SAFE stipulates that "a report is not required when, in the mental health professional's reasonable professional judgment, a report would endanger him or her or would increase the danger to the potential victim or victims" (New York Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act [NY SAFE] n.d.). Further, it provides legal protection for professionals: "if a mental health professional uses 'reasonable professional judgment' and 'good faith' when making a determination, this decision cannot be the basis for any civil or criminal liability." NY SAFE also extends mandatory (assisted) outpatient commitment to one year (previously, the maximum duration was six months), and it requires that an evaluation of the need for continued outpatient commitment occur 30 days before it expires. In the event that such a recommendation is made, NY SAFE provides a mechanism to petition for the renewal of the outpatient commitment order. Oddly enough, given the connection between substance abuse and violence, NY SAFE "does not apply to services provided in an OASAS [Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse] certified program when a mental health professional (as defined in the law) is solely providing substance use disorder services to the patient" (NY SAFE, n.d.).

Noting that licensed clinical social workers are among the mental health professionals identified by NY SAFE, the New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social

Workers argued that NY SAFE undermines client confidentiality, potentially creates barriers to services, and promotes the criminalization of persons with mental illness (National Association of Social Workers–NY State Chapter, n.d.).

On March 11, 2013, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) issued a statement that they will not require mental health professionals to follow MHL 9.46 provisions, calling it a violation of civil rights and raising concerns that NY SAFE would deter veterans from seeking needed treatment, such those diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The VA argued that federal laws protecting the confidentiality of veterans' treatment records take precedence over conflicting state and local laws (Virtanen, 2013).

### Decoupling Mental Illness from Gun Control

The United States is ranked as having the highest number of privately owned guns in the world (gun ownership rate), although survey data suggests a decline among household gun ownership rates from an average of 50 percent in the 1970s to 35 percent in the 2000s. This trend may not represent an actual decrease in the number of guns in the United States, but rather a shift among gun ownership patterns in which growing numbers of households do not own guns, but those that do, own multiple firearms (Tavernise & Gebeloff, 2013). Although determining the precise number of guns in America is difficult because many guns are not legally registered, the United States, which has 5% of the world's population, owns 50% of the world's guns (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007).

The deep attachment that many Americans have to guns is rooted in the history of the nation, codified in Second Amendment rights, and is woven into the fabric of a gun culture (Hofstadter, 1970). Legislative attempts to limit and restrict gun ownership rights are highly politicalized and are fought by the powerful National Rifle Association, a group which opposes gun control legislation, but embraces the narrative that gun violence is caused by people with mental illness. NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre argues that mentally ill people are the root cause of violence and that more

access to guns, and armed security in schools for example, is needed to curb gun violence (Edelman, 2013).

Mental health advocates welcomed the opportunity to put mental health issues on the political agenda after decades of budget cuts, but agreed that mental health should be decoupled from gun control legislation (Boyer, 2013). In response, on June 3, 2013, President Obama hosted a National Conference on Mental Health in which he shifted the focus from gun control to treatment. He vowed to bring mental illness “out of the shadows” and to combat stigma. President Obama presented a plan for a media campaign that would target young people, and which would convey the message that it is ok to talk about mental illness. He pledged to provide more assistance to veterans who need mental health care, promised resources to train 5,000 new mental health professionals, and vowed to finalize rules under the Affordable Care Act that would enforce mental health parity. Mental health advocates, although pleased with Obama’s overall focus, remain only cautiously optimistic, because parity laws do not alleviate the devastating impact of cuts to Medicaid spending. Between 2009 and 2012, states cut a total of \$4.35 billion in public mental health spending from their budgets, leading to a severe shortage of services (Honberg, Kimball, Diehl, Usher, & Fitzpatrick, 2011; Pickler, 2013).

### Implications

Concerns raised by the mental health community focus on the potential for these policies to weaken client confidentiality and reinforce treatment barriers. Several professional associations, including the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, oppose the federal proposal to weaken HIPAA privacy laws. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the nation’s largest mental health advocacy group, issued the following statement:

NAMI shares the goal of reducing gun violence in America and believes that firearms and ammunition

should not be easier to obtain than mental health care. At the same time, NAMI strongly advocates that people should not be treated differently with respect to firearms regulations based on stereotypical assumptions about mental illness and its relationship to violence. We believe that the current NICS law is based on faulty assumptions about the relationships between mental illness and violence, not grounded in science. We therefore do not support amending the HIPAA Privacy Rule to create a special exception for reporting of mental health records to the NICS database. (Fitzpatrick, 2013, para. 2)

Another major area of concern is the potential for these policies to criminalize persons with mental illness. Violence prediction is inexact, and laws based on clinical assessments that prospectively predict violence based on clinical assessments are associated with civil rights violations, such as incarceration and involuntary psychiatric commitment (Monahan & Steadman, 1994).

## Conclusion

The Sandy Hook and Aurora shootings were shocking and horrific. The legislation that followed in their wake sought to limit access to firearms among persons with mental illness. These laws may have limited efficacy in promoting public safety because, as previously discussed, the research documents that the vast majority of persons with mental illness are not violent, and that only 4 - 5% of violence toward others is associated with mental illness. Further, these laws may do more harm than good, because they deter people from seeking needed treatment, undermine client confidentiality, contribute to erroneous stereotypes (e.g., the mentally ill are dangerous), and criminalize mental illness. On the other hand, these laws may reasonably be expected to reduce suicide rates; evaluating their impact on suicide is an important area for future research. Finally, given that substance abuse is associated with an increased risk for violence, public policies that are based on empirical research and that target specific segments of the substance abusing population who are considered at an elevated risk for violence may be efficacious in promoting public safety.



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# The Neglect of Network Theory in Practice with Immigrants in the Southwest

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*This paper reviews selected theories of international migration including social network and human capital. It discusses the nature of social networks among immigrants and the costs and benefits for the sending and receiving countries. The history of social network theory in social work practice is revisited. Given the current importance of immigration in the Southwest, the strength and limitations of applying networking principles in practice with immigrants in the border areas are included. This article does not focus on the complexity of networks among refugees or asylum seekers, where government population dispersion or resettlement policies might change their circumstances.*

*Key words: immigration; social networks; human capital; southwestern U.S.; social work practice with immigrants*

## Two Contrasting Theories of International Migration

The multi-ethnic nature of U.S. society, the recent concern about the growth of immigrant populations, particularly Mexicans up to 2007, and the grouping of those migrants in specific regions or cities has become a matter of study and concern in the immigration literature in the U.S. Yet, as Massey et al. (1993) suggested, "there is no single, coherent theory of international migration, only a fragmented set of theories that have developed largely in isolation from one another, sometimes but not always segmented by disciplinary boundaries" (p. 432). It is apparent that there is insufficient evidence to develop any single "scientific theory of migration" that would

provide a comprehensive understanding of the forces that propel or control the movement of people across the globe.

A variety of partial theories contribute to explaining the reasons individuals and groups migrate from one place to another. All of these contributions are helpful, but are far from definitive. Explanatory theories are offered not only by classical economics but also by what sociologists call the “new economics of migration.” Classical economic theories hypothesized that immigration was the result of the work of global markets that create push and pull forces that pivot on the call of higher earning jobs. For classical economists, aggregate migration flows between countries are the result of individuals making migration decisions based on cost–benefit calculations. An alternative perspective suggests that “decisions about migration are not made by isolated individual actors, but by larger units of related people in which people act collectively, not only to maximize expected income, but also to minimize risks...” (Massey et al., 1993, p. 436). Theories based on the “new economics” suggest that “families, households, or other culturally defined units of production and consumption are the appropriate units of analysis for migration research, not the autonomous individual” (p. 439).

In the U.S., a study by the Pew Research Hispanic Center on the current decline of immigration from Mexico validates the notion that individuals migrate because of group rather than individual pressures (Passel, Cohn, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2012, p. 5). These authors show how cultural forces and trends related to fertility affect decisions to migrate: the lesser the number of children in a family, the lesser the pressure to migrate. The Pew Report states that,

In Mexico, among the wide array of trends with potential impact on the decision to emigrate, the most significant demographic change is falling fertility: as of 2009, a typical Mexican woman was projected to have an average 2.4 children in her life time, compared with 7.3 for her 1960 counterpart. (Passel et al., 2012, p. 5)

This relatively new insight invites the use of network theory in analyzing how immigrants make their decisions and how they survive. This type of insight further helps explain

the centrality of family reunification measures in the debate about immigration policy.

While network theories might offer structural explanations and predictions about migratory behavior, such predictions are mitigated by the realities of entry policies of the receiving country. Entry policies often work at cross purposes with theoretical predictions of who will leave and who will stay. For example, difficult entry policies in a given country might deter family members from seeking to immigrate to that country, even if the head of the network had preceded them. Greene-Sterling (2010) suggests that,

After the United States opened up the trade with Mexico, its immigration quotas remained antiquated and inflexible. ... The American government did not readily grant visas for family unification. If you're a Mexican, you might not live long enough to get to the U.S. if you stand in line and wait your turn. For example, in 2008, if unmarried children of Mexicans with green cards wished to obtain a visa to join their parents in the U.S., the average wait time was estimated at 192 years. (pp. xi-xii)

Naturally, such realities are an important limiting factor that weakens the merit of the theories.

### Migrant Networking: Cost and Benefits for the Sending and Receiving Countries

Migrant networks depict the connections that immigrants have with their communities of origin not only in terms of what propels them to emigrate but also in terms of their destination. Networks highlight relationships with residents in the receiving communities, residents who might be kin and friends or simply former immigrants. These networks serve as buffers for the many transitions of the immigrant and increase the likelihood of success. Immigrants congregate around these networks, which enhance the possibilities of employment, the availability of housing, and in general, offer a mediated interpretation of the new culture. As Massey et al. (1993) say, "... they lower the costs and risks of movement and increase the

expected net returns of migration. Network connections constitute a form of social capital ..." (p. 448).

Social capital has received much attention from politicians and policy-makers. Those who discuss social capital generally include a consideration of the positive effects of migrants on community life, neighborhoods, culture and social diversity as well as the negative effects on welfare payments, schools, crime, physical and mental health (Carrington, MacIntosh, & Walmsley, 2007). Carrington et al. suggested in an Australian study in 2007 that "the social benefits of migration far outweigh the costs, especially in the longer term" (p. xi). The evidence presented by these authors indicates that migrants have made extraordinary contributions to Australian human and social capital.

In the U.S., a number of studies have suggested similar outcomes related to the contributions of immigrants to social and cultural capital. Weintraub and Cardenas (1984), for example, provided reliable evidence that tax revenues, even from the undocumented, clearly exceeded the cost of providing public benefits to them. Portes and Rumbout (2010) observed: "When a community of Mexican expatriates, regardless of size, settles, one of its first organizational efforts is to create '*comites de pueblo*' or '*club de oriundos*' that gather people of the same locality of origin in an effort to maintain contact and support its development" (p. 109). As these committees raise funds, they generate businesses in their community of residence; they buy products and equipment to send back, use technology, organize fund raising activities, etc., all of which generate revenue and serve to integrate the immigrants into the larger receiving community. Social and cultural capital are enhanced.

When circumstances cause the erosion of the ties that bind communities of origin and communities of residence there is an increase in costs at the point of origin and at the point of arrival of the immigrant. Examples are found among Latin American migrants, both documented and undocumented. Heads of families, whether male or female, who leave behind spouses and children, can be more readily employable in the U.S., but they are also more isolated and less stable as a social force in the host communities. Social capital is further eroded because when network connections fail, the new resident



immigrants live in poorer conditions. A large amount of their income is sent back in the form of remittances to help those members of the network who cannot “cross.” Furthermore, if they are men alone in new communities, they might be more prone to substance abuse, and if they are women, they can be easy targets for exploitation by unscrupulous people. Because of the difficulties of movement back and forth to their home countries—a matter of policy—unattached immigrants often engage in risky and costly practices to try to maintain their networks, for example, payments to *coyotes* who promise to reinstate the network.

In the country of origin, children left behind give rise to the very difficult and often intractable problem of unaccompanied minors in border towns, which are of concern to the courts and social service providers both in Mexico and the U.S. The cost of determining responsibility for these children is felt by the court systems, the child protection system and the schools, to name but a few. Oftentimes, they are left with a single parent who may decide to cross the border to join the other parent, only to discover that the husband or wife, after many years of separation, has found a new partner. The new arrival is then caught in diplomatic transactions between the sending and receiving countries (Cardoso, Gomez, & Padilla, 2009), or is again abandoned with no networks, becoming a charge to social services. Unfortunately, the public is most likely to be familiar with the latter.

The costs of losing migrants in a receiving country have been documented recently, particularly in the Southwest. Greene-Sterling (2010), reporting on the costs of losing immigrants in Arizona, documented through case examples how housing vacancies began to sprout in neighborhoods that had been flourishing before, either because the immigrants left when the recession hit or when law enforcement targeted them for deportation. Other negative effects of voluntary and involuntary returns are cited by Passel, Cohn and Gonzalez-Barrera (2012). They suggest that the economic and population gains experienced by the border areas between 1995 and 2000 have probably been eroded by the 1.4 million Mexicans and their children who returned to Mexico between 2005 and 2010. Such trends point in the direction of economic and social losses in years to come.

## Social Work and Network Theory

Tracy and Brown (2011) have suggested that “almost by definition, social work has recognized the importance of social networks in clients’ lives” (p. 448). Social work grew out of an interest in the individual in relation to his/her environment. Historically, social work attempted to focus on the interrelated patterns of people vis-à-vis their communities. The settlement houses included a large number of incipient social scientists who “mapped” the neighborhoods not only to understand them better but also to inventory where immigrants lived and worked (Kelley, 1895; Hunter, 1901, 1904). They were pioneers in using mapping and statistics as incipient techniques to locate clusters of immigrants of particular nationalities.

The Charity Organization Society’s form of “scientific” social work also relied on identifying clusters of people in poor communities so that help would be given in systematic rather than random ways. According to Richmond (1908), it was important for social workers to seek the most natural sources of relief and that included the networks of kin and neighbors. The findings of the first caseworkers identified the strengths of many social networks, particularly natural and familial networks, but also their problems, such as alcoholism, mental deficiency, etc. While such identification was often used for very helpful purposes, it also included assumptions about malingerers, entrenched dependency, imbecility or other problems deemed at the time to be ingrained in the “moral fiber” of many immigrants.

By the mid-1930s, anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists were investigating informal relations and structures within large and small systems. Sociograms became an instrument of research. Moreno (1937) depicted the complexity of social relationships and connections among individuals. Studies in various communities in Europe indicated that network connections among people helped with job-seeking and securing, helped with aid in times of stress, and served as coping mechanisms for individuals (Barnes, 1954; Granovetter, 1973; Mitchell, 1969). Social workers became familiar with the terminology of social network theory. The links among individuals depicting interconnections began to be studied for their merit as social support systems.

Differential diagnosis, popular until the 1980s, encouraged social workers to look at the broader picture of the client in relation to his/her networks. In the 1970s, the advent of the ecological approach to social work practice continued focusing on social support networks, both natural networks within families and small groups, and larger networks in communities. But by the 1980s, as Fabricant (1985) has suggested, bureaucracy based on functional job analysis applied a form of Taylorism in social work, which eroded not only the craft but the possibility that workers would be creative outside the scope of the bureaucratic arrangements of agencies.

In the 1980s, however, the incorporation of social support networks in social work became very salient in Britain. Movements such as “going local” (Hadley & Mc Grath, 1980; Martinez-Brawley, 1990) stressed the positive aspects of resorting to community networks in social service delivery, not only for effectiveness but also as a cost saving device, particularly for the elderly. Social services were more willing to capitalize on networks, a matter that at one time would have worried those concerned about quasi-nepotistic practices. In 1981, Jimmy Carter’s White House Conference on Families stressed the use of networks. Carter was a “ruralite” and his belief in the strength of families and small communities showed in the established purpose of the conference. Also, recognition was given to the diversity of family networks and a section dealt with how government could support networks (Tracy & Brown, 2011). The Conference announcement stated:

The main purpose of this White House Conference will be to examine the strengths of American families, the difficulties they face, and the ways in which family life is affected by public policies. ...This Conference will clearly recognize the pluralism of family life in America. The widely differing regional, religious, cultural, and ethnic heritages of our country affect family life and contribute to its diversity and strength.... There are families in which several generations live together, families with two parents or one, and families with or without children. The Conference will respect this diversity. (White House Conference on Families, 1978, paras. 4-5)

The social work literature of the 1980 reflected a strong emphasis on social and helping networks (Maguire, 1991; Whittaker & Garbarino, 1983). However, what can perhaps be viewed as the classic social support networks textbook of the times—Whittaker and Garbarino's (1983), mentions work with immigrant communities only in passing. Fleeting recognition was given to the need to understand particular helping network patterns among specific groups such as Blacks, Lithuanians, Latvians, Hungarian and Poles, recognizing that they were primarily "settled" communities. It is apparent that the theme of recent immigrants was not as salient in the professional discussion of the 1980s as it is today. The involvement of social workers with new immigrant populations was not as significant in the theory or practice of that time.

By the late 1990s, migration theorists in sociology were focusing their explanations for the immigration phenomena on social network theory. However, social work had become more bureaucratized and concerned with costs. The whole notion of social work practitioners focusing on immigrant networks to offer help to new arrivals was viewed as costly and perhaps problematic and inefficient.

### The Scarcity of Social Network Theory in Practice with Latino Immigrants Today

Healy (2005) suggested that social work practitioners are reluctant to acknowledge the place of theory in practice. This applies to all types of theory, from simple explanatory statements of the reality at hand to what is referred to as "evidence-based" principles. Given Healy's assessment, it is not surprising that there is no systematic attempt to incorporate the explanatory principles of social networks in reaching out to immigrant communities. When one discusses with practitioners the frameworks used in working with immigrants, most will refer to elements of network theory but also suggest that their daily practice is not necessarily embedded in those concepts. For example, most practitioners realize the importance of family connections in adjusting to new settings, yet, they comment on how little time they have to try to understand them. Very extended and unusually large families with blood and non-blood "relatives" are a case in point.

Immigration policies, whether we believe they are generous or not, rely on an understanding of what brings immigrants into a country, who will follow them, where they will locate, etc. At the policy level, family reunification measures, very important to Latino immigrants, rely heavily on an understanding of networks. The question to be addressed then is why network principles are not more extensively used in social work with Latino immigrants in the Southwest. What are the elements blocking the full use of networks in helping immigrants in their transitions to the new land? The blockages can be clustered in two categories, though they may not be totally discrete.

### *Cultural Elements and Paradigms in the Receiving Culture*

American culture is embedded in an early sense of freedom, independence, accomplishment, mastery of one's environment and personal accountability. In essence, the cultural ethos is, as Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) have suggested, one of individualism: "Individualism was so embedded in the civic and religious structures of colonial life that it had not yet found a name, even though John Locke's ideas of individual autonomy were well known by colonial times" (p. 147). De Tocqueville (1969) used the word "individualism" to describe the American condition. This intrinsic individualism permeated social work thinking and practice, even before social work developed cogent theories of its own. Americans "pull themselves up by their boot-straps," they aid others, but the object is self-reliance and independence. The social work paradigm of settlement houses of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century relied more on existing networks, but the psychological influences of the 20<sup>th</sup> century focused practice on psychological theories that were highly individualistic. In *Mental Health in America* (1981), Veroff, Koulla, and Douvan stated:

The present day hero searches for the self by reliving experience in a contractual relationship which is, by definition, removed from 'real-life' and artificial in the sense that the feelings and emotions it contains are not indigenous to it but belong to other primary relationships in the real world... Psychoanalysis and psychiatry is the only form of psychic healing that

attempts to cure people by detaching them from society and relationships. (p. 6)

While our interest here is not related primarily to the psychological theories that are embedded in social work practice, the fact is that many bureaucratic practices, central to social work with immigrants, are derived from those psychological paradigms. So when agencies do not invest workers' time and energies and other resources searching for and relating to the immigrants' networks, it is because these steps have not been deemed essential among the myriad of discrete tasks workers are supposed to do. Social work in the U.S. in general is a very pragmatic, task-oriented enterprise, and social work with immigrants is particularly so. Some studies that looked at child welfare workloads have concluded that "child welfare cases that involve immigration issues present additional complexities that need to be considered in workload assignments." They specifically highlight the resource implications of applying "culturally appropriate practices" (Dettlaff, Vidal de Haymes, Velazquez, Mindell, & Bruce, 2009, p. 60).

#### *Legal Issues and the Limitations of Bureaucracy*

It must be recognized that social workers practice in the context of an increasingly litigious society. Agencies, whether dealing with immigrants or not, are keenly conscious of the potential for litigation and tend to practice defensively rather than imaginatively. Risk taking is neither encouraged nor sanctioned, and expanding the practice to potential networks brings forth ambiguity and reduces the span of control. There is also the fundamental element of privacy and confidentiality as defined by the legal framework or the practices of a highly individualistic culture. For example, in practicing with unaccompanied immigrant children, workers cannot always search for relatives, even when the children suggest the existence of those networks in the surrounding communities. Parental (or legal) permission is likely to be required, but naturally the parents are either not in the country or are in hiding. While some jurisdictions might be more open than others to workers' creativity in this respect, "when practitioners or supervisors stray beyond agency policy, they incur a greater risk of being held liable for malpractice" (Barsky, 2009, p. 76).

There are also risks associated with identifying the networks of undocumented immigrants who fear discovery or are otherwise problematic (Dettlaff et al., 2009). Those networks are hidden, and identifying them might not be welcomed by its members. Furthermore, if those networks are outside the U.S., the difficulties increase. Cardoso, Gomez, and Padilla (2009) reported that "caseworkers and judges are often reluctant to use kinship placements across international boundaries" (p. 71). They add that experts in the field explain this reluctance because of concerns about the quality of the networks and of the services that might be available across the Mexican border. If children were placed with family members who could not respond to the needs of the child, questions about the standards of care would be raised, and practitioners could be vulnerable for breaches of those standards. It is acknowledged that clients often refer to networks, which are not there or are extremely fragile, and that raises questions about standards of care (Tracy & Whittaker, 1990). Individuals who require social work help often come from fractured environments. The networks in those environments, while potentially helpful, can also be harmful.

Finally, efficiency has become the order of the day in social work practice. Workers must justify every step they take in terms of stated goals and achievable outcomes. Bureaucracies rely on specialization. Those who work in them have a specificity of function that defines and constrains their actions. Resources are provided only for those specific functions. Standardization of procedures is the *raison d'être* of the bureaucratic enterprise. In "Emerging Issues at the Intersection of Immigration and Child Welfare," Dettlaff et al. (2009) highlight the difficulties of collaboration between bureaucratic agencies in the U.S., Mexico and other Latin American countries regarding the many issues where their jurisdictions intersect. Working with networks of immigrants, while in the long run potentially beneficial and enriching, is in the short run complicated, time consuming and difficult to standardize. Decisions are always complex and challenge the bureaucracy and the workers, for often opposing alternatives can be justified.

## Summary and Conclusions

We have addressed the merits of network theory to provide explanations related to the phenomenon of international migrations. We have shown how social work, which encouraged the use of networks in the early decades of the practice, has become less prone to use network theory today. In practice with immigrants, there have emerged new structural, legal and professional challenges. Recognizing the difficulties of decision-making in this arena, we must nevertheless end by encouraging the re-exploration of networks in dealing with immigrants, whether children or families. Networks can constitute an extremely powerful resource in the process of acculturation and support of new immigrants. As is the case with all relatively untested interventions, any expansion of network practice with immigrants today must be accompanied by careful study of the legal and structural implications of each situation in the sending and receiving countries, including cross-system coordination, and by a realistic analysis of resource allocations within the agencies that work with immigrants, including workloads.

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# Information and Communication Technology in Child Welfare: The Need for Culture-Centered Computing

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*This article discusses the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) in the California child welfare system. Drawing from anthropological literature, the authors emphasize the role of work practice and context associated with new ICT implementation. This case study uses a documentary-historical approach to analyze interviews with 386 workers who used the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) between 1997 and 2005. Data show the implementation of CWS/CMS impacted the work practice of the welfare system. The authors recommend culture-centered computing for future developments and upgrades of ICT in child welfare.*

*Key words: California, child welfare, community of practice, culture, information and communication technology (ICT), management*

Technology has created new ways of working in many workplaces, including child welfare agencies. Along with the development and adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in various social work settings, some have called for more attention to ICT in research and training (Perron, Taylor, Glass, & Margerum-Leys, 2010). Furthermore, Zhang and Gutierrez (2007) noted that the studies in American social work literature do not always discuss the reaction of users to ICT implementation in the workplace. In Australia and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, recent ethnographic research has shown that poorly designed ICT implementation in child welfare sometimes leads to unintended or harmful

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consequences for both service workers and clients (Broadhurst et al., 2010; Gillingham & Humphreys, 2010; Peckover, Hall, & White, 2009; Peckover, White, & Hall, 2008; White, Hall, & Peckover, 2009). The impact of ICT on workplace interactions has been similarly studied in fields such as educational psychology (Roth & Lee, 2007) and business (Zuboff, 1988).

In contrast to past work dominated by organizational theory, we engage with work from the field of anthropology to provide fresh insights for understanding ICT in child welfare work. Social work research has recently drawn from anthropology for linguistic analysis of interview data (Carr, 2010), to understand African-American kinship relations (Miller-Cribbs & Farber, 2008), to understand kin relationships in older adult housing transitions (Perry, Andersen, & Kaplan, 2013), and to advocate for the importance of the body for domains of social work practice (Tangenberg & Kemp, 2002). Given the importance within the social services sector towards professionalization (Perry & Ellett, 2008), modernization (Peckover et al., 2008) and computerization (Moses, Weaver, Furman, & Lindsey, 2003), we argue that ICT implementation in child welfare in the U.S. warrants further attention to promote optimal adoption and utility by workers in the long run.

### The Development of and Response to ICTs in Child Welfare

Though today ICT use is diffuse across child welfare work, for instance in New York some workers take casenotes using mobile technologies (Cresswell et al., 2007), the adoption of ICT overall has been challenging. In the 1980s and 1990s, advocates for children expressed concern that the de-professionalization (i.e., hiring of workers without professional degrees) of child welfare work led to increased risk of abuse, neglect, and mortality (Broadhurst et al., 2010; Perry & Ellett, 2008). In response, some states began requiring professional training and introduced ICT in the workplace to improve services to clients. In step with the advent of the information age, "there has been a major expansion of the use of computers for the handling of information associated with social work practice" (Sapey, 1997, p. 803). The introduction of ICT into child welfare agencies in the United States was intended to achieve better

efficiency and to manage delivery of services more effectively (Moses et al., 2003; Parrott & Madoc-Jones, 2008). This is consistent with a recent review article that argues, "managerial interests dominate ICT application in child welfare" (Treageagle & Darcy, 2008, p. 1484).

The literature notes that some child welfare workers have been reluctant to adopt ICT into their professional practice (Parrott & Madoc-Jones, 2008; Treageagle & Darcy, 2008). This reaction to ICT implementation within child welfare and in social work, more generally, has several explanations. Some propose that "reluctance to engage with ICT has been founded on realistic concerns that ICT might play a role in de-professionalizing and depersonalizing the social work task" (Parrott & Madoc-Jones, 2008, p. 186). This is ironic, given that ICT implementation was undertaken in agencies that expressed a commitment to re-professionalize social work. Others attribute ICT resistance to the issue of power, with child welfare workers perceiving ICTs primarily as instruments of management and accountability, instead of as a genuine asset to facilitate decision making and to improve services to families (Gillingham & Humphreys, 2010). Taken a step further, others argue that ICT implementation in child welfare work practice has resulted in a "digital Taylorization" of work (Rideout, 2008), in which, "the work in social work is increasingly being ordered, devised and structured by academics, policy makers and e-technicians far removed from the day-to-day encounters which practitioners have with the users of services" (Garrett, 2005, p. 545). These critical studies suggest incongruence between ICT design and the actual work environment of child welfare workers. This has been referred to as a "poor fit" of the system to the workplace (Semke & Nurius, 1991), with poor fit typically manifested as staff resistance to the ICT (Parrott & Madoc-Jones, 2008).

Until now, studies of ICT in child welfare have been focused on the potential efficiency gains offered by technology, rather than assessing the cultural fit of the technology to work practice, which historically requires regular interpersonal interactions between clients and workers. For example, in their study of the adoption of decision-support technology, Foster and Stiffman (2009) found that child welfare workers resisted use of the technology because they preferred and were more comfortable with normative ways of working, which they deemed

reliable and were unwilling to replace with new technology. Concurrently, the preference of child welfare for human sources of information rather than digitally accessed data has been echoed in other case studies (Gannon-Leary, 2006). Research has found that child welfare agencies, like many human service organizations (HSO), experience ICT resistance, especially when accompanied by staff anxiety and concerns about worker autonomy (Moses et al., 2003). Investigations of the relationship between organizational culture and ICT development more broadly in social services raise similar issues (Carillo, 2005; Cronley & Patterson, 2010).

While ICT was introduced to improve services, recent ethnographic research from Australia and the UK shows that ICT implementation in child welfare work sometimes leads to unintended or harmful consequences for both service workers and clients. These include the reconfiguration of child welfare work in a way that constrains professional practice (White et al., 2009); ICT design and maintenance activities triggering the latent conditions for case worker error (Broadhurst et al., 2010); and the use of ICT resulting in security and confidentiality concerns (Peckover et al., 2008; Peckover et al., 2009). Similarly, other research shows that, "far from supporting a practice which is centered on the contexts in which children live and the concerns which professionals might have about them, the new ICT systems are having the effect of distancing professionals from the lived day-to-day experiences of the people with whom they work" (Hall, Parton, Peckover, & White, 2010, p. 409). Caseworker feedback on ICT use in child welfare work shows ICTs to be time consuming in a way that detracts from the provision of quality social services. In this way, ICT implementation is interpreted as "a burden that interferes with their core missions" (Zhang & Gutierrez, 2007, p. 221). Together, these case studies suggest the need for more user-centered design of ICT systems, based on the cultural context of caseworker preferences. The next section extends the social-work-specific discussion of ICT by engaging the broader literature of the anthropology of work and technology to enhance understanding of culturally specific concerns.

## Anthropological Frames for Understanding Work, Technology and Learning

Anthropology has developed a rich tradition of ethnographic study of work and cultures (Jordan, 2003), which includes attention to the impact of technology on work environments (Hakken, 1993). The introduction of computers, and, more recently ICT, into social life is referred to as “computerization” or, “the process through which computers become integrated into the ways that humans handle information” (Hakken, 1991, p. 407). Anthropological research shows that computerization and technological change in work environments are social processes (Hakken, 1991; Howard & Schneider, 1988), and social structures among work groups are not easily transformed by the introduction of new technology (Baba, 1999; Howard & Schneider, 1988; Kunda, 1992). For example, Baba’s study of information technology across American work organizations found that, “informal means of relationship management, created spontaneously by work groups as a way to achieve their objectives and protect themselves from harm, form a deeply rooted and tenacious social infrastructure that is not easily brushed aside by technology alone” (Baba, 1999, p. 344). Anthropological studies of work and technology have also shown that the relationship between technology and culture is complex (Batteau, 2010), and failure to appreciate the relationship between these two factors can result in critical consequences for work organizations, such as commercial air travel accidents (Batteau, 2001).

To explore the determinants of successful ICT adoption in child welfare, we consider Etienne Wenger’s concept of *communities of practice*. Wenger states that communities of practice are “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4). There are three fundamental elements that form the basic structure for a community of practice:

- A common domain or sense of identity among its members (joint enterprise)

- A community that fosters interactions and relationships (mutual engagement)
- A practice or set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories and documents that community members share (shared repertoire). (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002, pp. 27-29)

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), a community of practice learns in a manner that is situated within a particular social and physical environment unique to that community. They call this historical-cultural theoretical model of learning “situated learning” (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In this model, situated learning is relational and negotiated. Situated learning is a useful frame for appreciating that learning activities within child welfare work practice, such as those requisite in new ICT implementation, are context-specific. This is akin to Hakken’s (1993, p. 125) point that the success of ICT implementation has less to do with technology itself than with mediating social and cultural constructions of the work context. The aforementioned research on ICT implementation provides new ways for social work to interpret dissatisfaction with and resistance to ICT as related to socio-cultural explanations.

To further analyze the difficulties of ICT adoption in child welfare work practice, we borrow from Hakken’s concept of “culture-centered computing” or information technology system development that gives explicit focus to the cultural contexts of the development process (Hakken, 1991). Apart from assisting in future ICT development or upgrades in child-welfare work, the concept of ‘culture-centered computing’ is useful in appreciating how understanding the professional context of child welfare work—including a given agency’s existing work activities, information sharing patterns, and social dynamics—is critical in the design of ICT for child welfare workers. Lack of cultural sensitivity to the work context may explain an agency’s acceptance of or reluctance toward new ICT or ICT updates.

*Research Context: Child Welfare Services / Case Management System (CWS/CMS)*

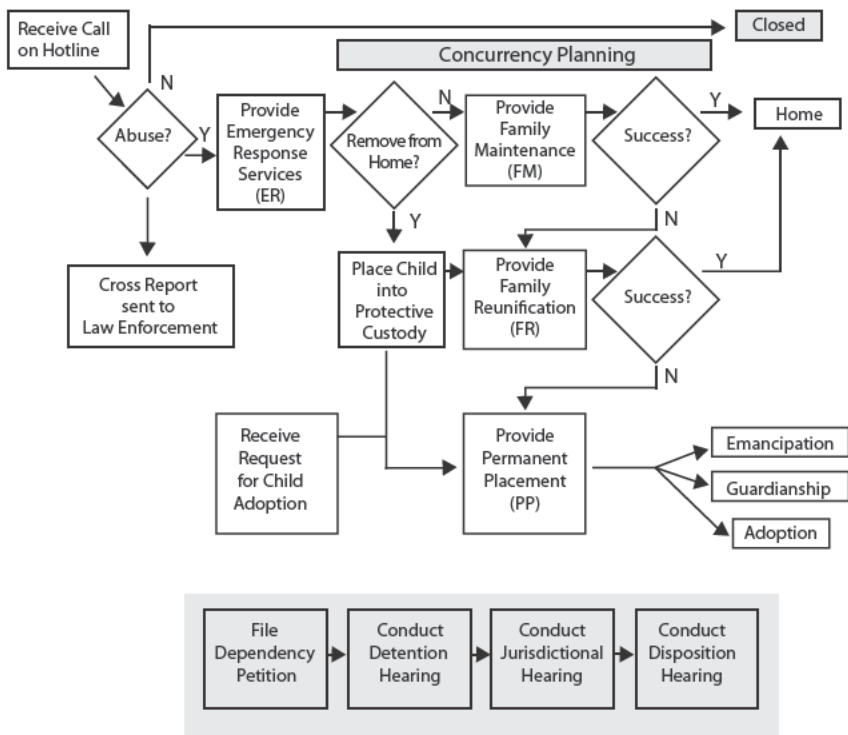
The adoption of California’s statewide child welfare statewide management information system occurred after efforts



to re-professionalize child welfare workers. In 1989, the state partnered with schools of social work to establish the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) to administer a federal title IV-E stipend program on behalf of the graduate schools there. Through the program, schools worked with CalSWEC to recruit students with a commitment to working in a public agency and with multilingual and low-income communities. The first class graduated in 1993 and was required to serve at least two years as public child welfare workers thereafter. Formal pre-service training and other on-the-job training provided opportunities for situated learning, including use of the new case management software and the system reorganization called CWS/CMS.

Figure 1: Child Welfare Process based on Department of Human Services Advance Planning Document (California Department of Social Services, 2006)

Child Welfare Services: High-Level Process



The implementation of CWS/CMS began in 1997 and was in place in all 58 California counties by 1998. One motivation for the system was to track abusive parents who moved to different counties to avoid the law (Brown, 2002). Prior to implementation, social workers in child welfare kept documentation in paper files and often did not even have a computer at their desks because work happened in the field. The technical specifications of CWS/CMS were limited partly because the World Wide Web had only launched in 1995. As Windows-based desktop software, CWS/CMS was designed for child welfare workers to input data on PCs which were synchronized with the state's server over an Intranet system with limited bandwidth, rather than the Internet, due to security considerations. Counties that had laptops or mobile devices required that they be taken into the office for synchronization. See Figure 1 for a description of the contemporary child welfare business process (California Department of Social Services, 2006). Figure 1 shows the relevance of the community of practice framework. For example, it illustrates a joint enterprise among law enforcement, clients, child welfare workers, and the courts. The workflow from a hotline call to emergency response, concurrent planning, and closure is an example of mutual engagement. The values, regulations, and procedures that frame the documentary storage and business process in CWS/CMS constitute a shared repertoire.

Early on, an independent evaluation of CWS/CMS found that, despite initial apprehension, the new system had little effect on perceptions about the agency (Weaver, Furman, Moses, & Lindsey, 1999). The changes in perceptions that the evaluation found included "Time spent in telephone contacts related to clients," which dropped from 19.6% to 17.1% and "Doing documentation related to clients," which rose from 30.2% to 34.1% ( $p = 0.05$ ). The evaluation of CWS/CMS also found that workers spent more time alone and less time with co-workers. Additionally, the relationships with supervisors became less supportive and more performance oriented and created tension due to the demands of using CWS/CMS to review and approve case decisions (Weaver et al., 1999). Although initial challenges to implementation were resolved, the ongoing frustrations with the \$122 million-per-year CWS/CMS led the California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

to propose a new web-based system to cut costs, involve community partners, and integrate with systems in other states to conform to new Federal child outcome requirements (California Department of Social Services, 2006). Although the state (California Department of Social Services, 2006) wanted to upgrade, this project was put on hold due to budget constraints (California Department of Social Services, 2011). While several options exist, the recommended web-based approach to achieve Federal compliance combines customized and off-the-shelf software, which will cost \$170 million (California Department of Social Services, 2012). Planning restarted in 2012 and the revised system is projected to begin deployment in 2015 (California Department of Social Services, 2013). There is still time to reflect on the initial implementation of CWS/CMS in advance of the planned upgrade. How can an anthropological frame for understanding work, technology and learning explain the change in relationships between clients and child welfare workers during the first few years of implementation? How do these lessons inform potential upgrades to the system?

## Method

This case study is a documentary-historical approach (Crabtree & Miller, 1999) that involves a secondary analysis of archival data from a child welfare worker retention study. These data consist of semi-structured interviews with child welfare workers and supervisors who were graduates from a master's in social work program and whose education was supported by stipends from the California Title IV-E program. CalSWEC collected 386 interviews between 1996 and September 2005 to determine why these child welfare workers either remained or left their agencies. CalSWEC has since closed the study. The respondents answered a series of 18 questions about motivations for entering child welfare, current working conditions, and suggestions for improving the Title IV-E program. CalSWEC asked respondents what they liked most and least about their jobs during their payback period. The interviews were transcribed and organized in nVivo 6.0 and made available for secondary analysis (Jacquet, Clark, Morazes, & Withers, 2008; Smith & Clark, 2011).

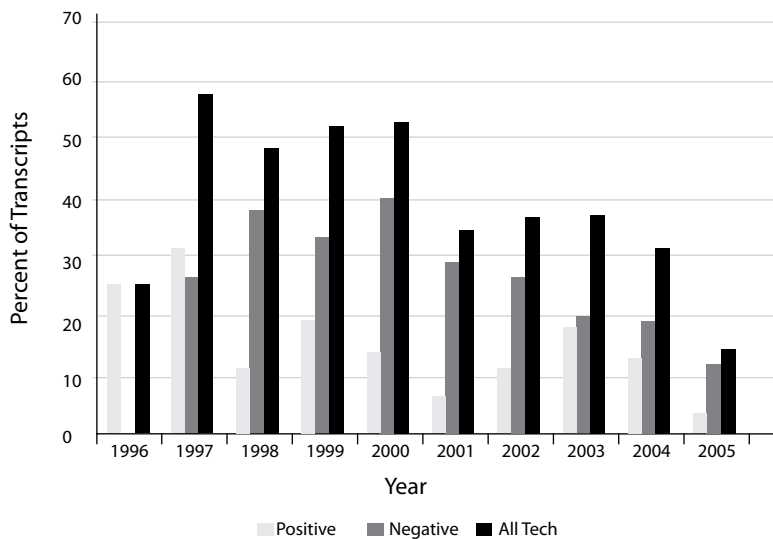
Our analysis built on legacy coding from previous studies by Clark, Jacquet, Morazes, Smith, and Benton (2006) and Morazes, Benton, Clark & Jacquet (2009). We used applied qualitative data analysis methods that encouraged iterative analysis of data in the context of existing theory and literature (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). In this study, "code" means a set of words representing concepts which were, in turn, organized into overall themes. For example, if respondents mentioned computers or technology in response to the question, "What did you like least about your job?" the first author classified these statements as negative. In contrast, if respondents mentioned computers in response to what they liked about their job, the first author coded each instance as "positive." We also analyzed other sections from the interviews. During a second review of the interview data, the first author used constructs from the literature of science and technology studies as axial codes. At that stage we received feedback from anonymous reviewers recommending a different theoretical framework for interpreting the data. During the third data review, we used frameworks from the anthropology of technology in the workplace, specifically the community of practice and culture-centered computing. The authors prioritized two themes for analysis: (a) changes in the community of practice between co-workers and with clients; and (b) introduction of technology for saving time and money and how this affected management of workers and cases across distances from agency to clients' homes.

## *Results*

*Descriptive statistics.* See Figure 2 for a bar chart presenting the percentage of positive and negative discussions of technology found in archived child welfare worker interviews by year. A respondent may have both positive and negative comments about the use of technology. The positive bar is the number of positive statements, divided by the number of respondents for that year. The negative bar is the number of negative statements, divided by the number of respondents that year. The all-tech bar is the sum of the other two bars. In 1996, implementation had not yet begun, but three respondents discussed the pre-planning. For the last eight years, respondents made

more negative statements than positive. Discussions of technology peaked in 1997 and fell to about five statements in 2005. By that time, students would have been exposed to the system during their master's degree programs, especially during their field placement, because the system release became stable and training was institutionalized. No one mentioned technology or computers when asked what they liked about their jobs. However, 38 respondents identified computers when asked what they liked least about their jobs. People could give more than one response, so the results do not sum up to 100%. Related to technology, there were twice as many negative statements than positive (54 vs. 95). Positive statements were much shorter and often mentioned in passing.

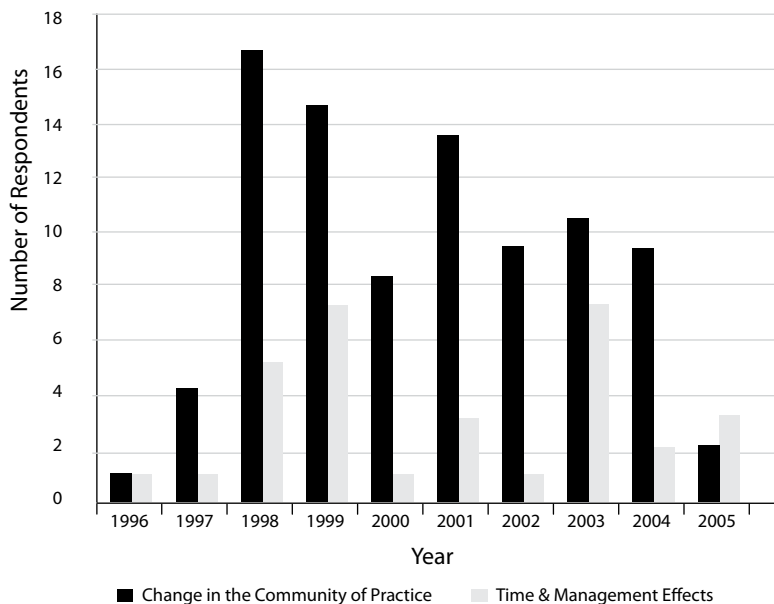
Figure 2: Percentage of Child Welfare Worker Interviews Mentioning Technology by Year.



One might assume that people who quit their jobs would be more likely to complain, and that those who stayed might be more positive about technology. In this sample, the reverse was actually true: 78 stayers (25%) complained about technology while only 41 stayers made positive comments (13%). In contrast, 13 leavers (16%) made positive remarks about technology and 19 leavers (23%) made negative comments.

See Figure 3 for the changing frequency of the subset of technology-related discussions that we categorized thematically as “change in community of practice” and “time and management effects,” which will be discussed in depth in the next the section. The largest number of technology codes discussing changes in community of practice occurred in 1998, which is not surprising, given that this was one year into system implementation. Discussions of time and management effects peaked in 1999, shortly after completion of the introduction, and in 2003, the year advance planning began for system upgrades (California Department of Social Services, 2006). As mentioned earlier, discussions of technology fell to about five respondents in 2005 at a time when students would have been exposed to the system during their master’s degree programs because system training had been institutionalized.

Figure 3: Number of Child Welfare Worker Interviews Mentioning Technology by Year and Theme



### *Change in the Community of Practice*

Our first theme, “change in the community of practice” includes statements that describe how the introduction of CWS/

CMS shifted the culture of professionals whose historic role had been interacting with people face-to-face to operators of a technologically-mediated interface between the clients, supervisors, and the courts. One major change child welfare workers reported was the shift from paper case notes to the requirement to input notes directly into CWS/CMS. Several respondents wished that they had more clerical support to either do the data entry in the office or to join them at a home visit. One social worker lamented the change in technology from pen and paper to computer saying:

I didn't have enough computer skills to keep up with the writing and the documentation, [...] because that was a change from my first time as a social worker where you had hand-written documentation and transcribers to the point where you were doing that yourself on the computer.

In other words, the new technology presented a challenge, but had the same purpose as hand-written case notes. In contrast, not all counties eliminated clerical positions, leading one social worker to comment that the clerical staff members kept their jobs because they had a better union.

A second change within the community of practice was that workers began documenting each other's behavior:

Because of the politics, it got more and more big-brotherish. People were recording phone conversations—noting the time you spent on the computer. You had to record the percentage of time you were doing paper work versus the amount of time you spent with clients. You did not feel like a professional.

For this social worker, a punitive system of collecting evidence of co-worker behavior replaced a tradition of mentorship and mutual support among co-workers.

A third change in the community of practice involved the struggles of older, more experienced co-workers. Some Title IV-E graduates had worked for many years before obtaining a MSW and were at a disadvantage, because they were not comfortable with the new technology. For example, one social

worker left the county in part because of resistance to learning CWS/CMS. When discussing a new job this respondent said, "I have more input; I can express my creativity more. I have paperwork but no, I don't even have a computer, a lot less paperwork, and there's more flexibility, more room for innovation." In other words, this worker implied that, by moving to a smaller organization, the worker rediscovered a social work ethos that valued input, creativity, and innovation. Other respondents expressed concern about the loss of experienced workers because they were the ones who have the actual social work skills needed to solve problems with families in the field.

Finally, the most important change in the community of practice, as mentioned by the interviewees, was that the increased time spent using CWS/CMS took time away from serving children and families. One respondent estimated that CWS/CMS doubled the amount of time it took to do a case report. Others estimated that time spent on CWS/CMS took between 20% and 80% of their time. Some of the explanations given for this included inadequate training, slow computers, frequent system downtime and the large number of menu options to navigate in the system. This led some social workers to characterize their situation as paradoxical. For example, one reported feeling tension between the time needed to meet with children and families to prevent abuse and neglect, and the time required for documentation for the court in CWS/CMS. Another worker described the tension of changing roles with clients as akin to managing a dialectic, in other words, opposing social forces. This respondent also spoke of going through a role transition from being a social worker to being a police officer to being a computer user. This points out the contradiction between a social worker's helping role and the enforcement role that requires extensive computer documentation. Respondents implied that they felt they were no longer doing social work.

### *Time and Management Effects*

Our second theme, "time and management effects," refers to participants' responses to the time and cost saving potential of CWS/CMS. Some effects relate to efficiencies needed to manage workers and caseloads across California's large counties. For management, technological change is justified to help



practitioners reach physically, linguistically, and economically isolated families. Some respondents noted that child welfare needed an expensive system to run like a modern business.

First, the CWS/CMS changed case management by giving users immediate access to information for assessing program performance. For example, one administrator noted that she, "could help the county within minutes to develop a report and extract data, and give a comprehensive profile of all children in the family reunification program, or the length of time it took for a child to return home." CWS/CMS provides a digital representation of children in families that could be used by county administration, the courts and other institutions.

Second, as a result of ICT, some management shifted from mentorship and clinical supervision to task supervision, which involved the assignment of cases and management of deadlines. In a few counties, a social work license was required to be promoted to supervisor. Some counties did not offer clinical supervision and others outsourced it to consultants. One respondent complained that CWS/CMS absorbed much of the clinical supervisor's time and made it difficult for some to obtain licenses and advance in their careers.

Third, some supervisory interactions with staff moved from face-to-face to digital. Prior to system deployment, social workers gave paper reports to their supervisors for approval. CWS/CMS required that reports be delivered electronically, thereby changing the technological mediation between workers and supervisors. Some in our sample reported that they missed having a supervisor to go to for answers, felt that supervisors did not understand how much time it takes to enter data into the computer, or claimed that supervisors were never seen in the office.

Several respondents only worked with CWS/CMS instead of with clients. For example, one had been promoted to supervisor and put in charge of CWS/CMS training and quality assurance, saying "I have no contact with the problems of clients anymore. I don't see that as I did when I was a county worker, I don't hear it. What I hear now is reconfiguration of computers and images and servers and hosts, something totally different." This administrator also mentioned the positive aspects of technology and how "social workers were very resistant at the beginning but now they are very receptive to this change."

Fourth, some respondents made statements to suggest a “poor fit” of the system to the workplace (Semke & Nurius, 1991). Although the state invested in the CWS/CMS to improve compliance with federal reporting standards, one worker noted employees want to be child welfare workers and not do data entry. Other workers said that the state paid them good salaries and paid for an expensive graduate education for them to spend a large percentage of their time doing clerical work. Another worker compared use of the system to processing mortgage paperwork. Still others complained that the system was like an audit machine, or that the worker does not know how the information will be used, or expressed confusion about whether it would be the right set of information for making sound decisions.

In summary, some reported feeling that the system saved time and money, and others disagreed. While some counties had sufficient budgets, others were struggling with layoffs or had to cut contracts with community-based service providers. Some respondents reported the belief that resources could have been better spent by putting more social workers in the field or using funds for prevention efforts.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The community of practice is a plausible frame for interpreting and assessing the introduction of ICT in child welfare work. As discussed in the previous sections and shown in Figure 3, worker response to the CWS/CMS implementation only began to improve after four years of integration into work practice. We argue that this was an example of situated learning that was influenced by the degree to which the implementation affected work practice. The finding that use of CWS/CMS was one of the aspects of work that child welfare workers liked least is similar to findings from other case studies of ICT in child welfare (Gillingham & Humphreys, 2010; Hall et al., 2010; Zhang & Gutierrez, 2007). We propose that the introduction of CWS/CMS changed the shared repertoire of child welfare work, including ideas of the type of work needed, as well as the way workers practiced mutual engagement with clients and related to each other in the workplace. This is consistent with social work literature that has documented the

risks associated with having less time to spend with clients as a result of ICT implementation. For example, Treageagle & Darcy (2008, p. 1491) note that "the positive, change-developing, and life-enhancing aspects of the relationship between worker and client may be diminished by decreased face-to-face contact." This shift in roles and responsibility has been described in the literature as a change in social work from being a profession about the "social" to one that manages the "informational" (Parton, 2006). We surmise that these and other changes associated with the implementation of CWS/CMS suggest the importance of greater consideration for the end user when developing or updating ICT in child welfare work.

The second theme we identified from our analysis is the impact of management's implementation of technology to save time and money. This is a resonating point in other studies wherein case workers experienced a form of "digital Taylorization" (Rideout, 2008). Findings are reminiscent of Broadhurst et al. (2010) in that CWS/CMS facilitates the process of child removal but does not help with the other system interventions. While this "managerialist" (Treageagle & Darcy, 2008) use of ICT is similar to the experience of ICT implementation in other English-speaking countries, respondents in this study displayed more ambivalence about the technology, with some even voicing potential benefits to the profession and community. Additionally, the implementation of CMS/CWS changed the act of supervision to include a new class of specialized trainers of CWS/CMS, consistent with the findings of system relationships to agency power structure in Semke & Nurius (1991). In at least one case, an agency outsourced its clinical supervision to free up a supervisor's time to meet the demands of CWS/CMS. This is important because good supervision and agency support for clinical licensure are associated with longer worker retention (Clark, Uota, & Smith, 2013; Jacquet et al., 2008). Ideally, CWS/CMS should not take away needed face-to-face time between workers and supervisors. In an organization pressed for resources, whether labor, time, hours or money, technology is idealized as a way of reducing long-term costs and freeing up staff time. However, for some agencies in the State of California, new technology did not necessarily save workers time in the first few years of use, nor did agencies simply accept the amount of time it took for

CWS/CMS adoption. While the authors acknowledge the importance of ICT use, we argue that prospective system design and evaluation in child welfare agencies need to ensure that ICT does not compromise required home visits and follow up services that are still essential. System design should also take into consideration the need for workers to complete the professional licensure requirements for promotion.

Based on our thematic findings, we draw from anthropological concepts of work and technology and a theoretical model of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) to propose socio-cultural explanations for Californian child welfare workers' responses to CWS/CMS implementation. We argue that Californian child welfare workers in this case study constitute a community of practice. For instance, they shared a common professional identity—a joint enterprise serving children and families. The child welfare workers were engaged in interactive relationships with other members of the community, called mutual engagement in the community-of-practice framework, which included mentorship time with supervisors. Finally, at the time of implementation, the members had a shared repertoire of ideas, tools, information and ways of working, primarily organized via a paper-based filing system, which was situated in a particular social and physical environment of work (face-to-face interaction with clients).

Drawing from Lave and Wenger's (1991) theoretical model of learning, we interpret the caseworkers' initial resistance to and dislike of CWS/CMS, and delayed acceptance of the ICT, as an example of situated learning. Batteau's (2010, p. 48) work on the relationship between culture and technology states that, "when a new technology arrives, the recipients are negotiating its usefulness and its scale, and a redefinition of sociality and identity that it implies." In this way, ICT implementation is a social process (Hakken, 1991; Howard & Schneider, 1988), whereby users either accept, adjust to or reject new technology. Findings from this case study corroborate the view that CWS/CMS implementation into California's child welfare work has involved a social process of negotiation: negotiation of ICT acceptance to be sure, but moreover, negotiation of the identity of child welfare workers as a cultural group. For the adopters of CWS/CMS, the identity of child welfare work was forced to

change from what was traditionally a face-to-face interactional work activity with clients to a more autonomous, information-driven work activity, mediated by technological infrastructure. While respondents discussed their dissatisfaction with these changes, they also acknowledged the organizational and reporting benefits of using CWS/CMS. Through the process of incorporating CWS/CMS into their community of practice, Californian child welfare workers negotiated their acceptance of the ICT over time.

### *Limitations*

We present an interpretation of the social adoption of technology using a documentary-historical approach (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The first limitation is that the secondary data used in this analysis was collected for the purpose of assessing child welfare worker retention and did not directly explore the understanding of the use of ICT. This case study is not intended to evaluate CWS/CMS and the archival interview data did not include any questions to prompt respondents to discuss it. It is not possible to conduct follow up interviews because the CalSWEC retention study closed after 2006. Accordingly, it is outside the focus of this article to draw a conclusion about the efficacy of CWS/CMS. A second limitation is that these data are not intended to be generalized to all child welfare workers in California.

### *Recommendations for Practice and Research*

These limitations notwithstanding, this article contributes by giving focused descriptions of changing relationships and workplace practice as perceived by some of the participants. These descriptions highlight specific examples of system implementation issues that can be addressed in future upgrades. Finally, these interviews are analyzed using anthropological concepts of technology and learning theory, a first for the social work literature.

Current recommendations for ICT design in child welfare work include a need for tools that are focused on the worker's work environment, needs and preferences (Broadhurst et al., 2010; Foster & Stiffman, 2009; Gillingham & Humphreys, 2010; Hall et al., 2010; Peckover et al., 2008). As Sapey states,

unless social workers do become involved in the ways in which new technologies are used within organizations, they will fail to influence its impact upon their clients and may further fail to control the way in which computers affect the nature of social work itself in the future. (1997, p. 803)

To that end, we suggest adopting an anthropological approach to ICT design and implementation in child welfare work. This entails consideration of the cultural conditions of child welfare work, or performing what Baba calls a "cultural risk assessment" that would lead to "an understanding of the role of social relations in current work processes and the changes that should be expected given technology deployment plans" (Baba, 1999, p. 343). An assessment of cultural risk is akin to Hakken's concept of "culture-centered computing," developed from case study findings showing that "system development approaches that give conscious attention to the broad cultural dynamics within which computers are to operate lead to systems that work better than those that don't" (Hakken, 1991, p. 420). This culture-centered approach would allow workers to map out the system flow in the daily work process as they experience it, so that they can ensure that ICT developments or upgrades are a good fit and contain the information needed to obtain support from the court for the best outcomes for children and families.

Additionally, a cultural risk assessment would fit with the culture of child welfare because the workers use other risk assessment tools daily. Specific to California child welfare work, we propose that future deployments and developments of CWS/CMS should attempt to be more conscious of training and changing social relationships and shared repertoire within the field. To sustain mutual engagement, this should include dedicated time for face-to-face clinical supervision following CWS/CMS implementation, as support from supervisors has been shown to be a significant variable in worker retention (Jacquet, Clark, Morazes, & Withers, 2008). We also recommend ongoing situated learning and integration activities following implementation, such as periodic cultural assessments of the impact of CWS/CMS on case worker activities and job satisfaction.

Finally, we suggest that further qualitative research be done on the effects of new or upcoming ICTs in social services generally, since such research has been minimal within American social work journals and the costs of ICT implementation are high. For example, mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones are being rapidly adopted among consumers. These tools have the potential of providing real-time, secure access to information for child welfare workers and their clients. On the other hand, such ICT may also open child welfare workers up to problems related to personal safety, information security, and privacy concerns. Research with a culture-centered approach can determine what kinds of ICT would be a good fit for the community of practice that is child welfare.

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## Book Reviews

Kent Flannery and Joyce Marcus, *The Creation of Inequality: How Our Prehistoric Ancestors Set the Stage for Monarchy, Slavery, and Empire* (2012). Harvard University Press. \$39.95 (hardcover).

Today, when some still question if anthropology matters and others wonder if perhaps the discipline—embattled by a decades-long critique of its colonial roots—might be more at home as a branch of sociology, veteran archaeologists Kent Flannery and Joyce Marcus have provided their own emphatic answer. *The Creation of Inequality* is an ambitious and impressive book, written for a general audience but laden with insights for academics of almost any conceivable background. Born of the seemingly encyclopedic knowledge of its authors, it weaves together salient pieces of the anthropological and archaeological record to take its readers on an edifying journey from Sumer to Samoa—and many places in between—to meet humanity's *dramatis personae* in the 15,000 year epic of social inequality. Fittingly, the authors begin and conclude their story in dialogue with Rousseau, whose famous 1753 treatise speculated that the end of human equality arrived with the unfortunate transition out of some idealized pre-society, Arcadia. Their approach, which marries archaeological evidence with anthropological interpretation reveals a complex and uneven development—there is no “state of nature” here.

At a hulking 648 pages, *The Creation of Inequality* is organized in 24 chapters that move more or less progressively from history's relatively egalitarian hunter-gatherer groups, such as the Caribou and Netsilik Eskimos and the !Kung of southern Africa, to the multi-level administrative empires of the Aztec and Inca. Along the way, Flannery and Marcus dedicate lengthy sections to discussion of the various “clues” which reveal how the “social logic” of more equal societies, manifested in practices such as meat-sharing partnerships, gift-exchange, and

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prestige-based, non-hereditary leadership (i.e., Melanesian “big men”), gave way to the logic of inequality in societies with—among other things—taxes, bureaucracies, separate burial practices for nobles and commoners, and, importantly, hereditary formal power. Key to their analysis is their conception of the unique role of the “sacred” in human societies. Looking to chimps, who compete and assemble themselves hierarchically into alphas, betas and gammas, Flannery and Marcus observe that even outwardly egalitarian hunter-gatherers preserve hierarchy by making their supernatural beings the alphas, their ancestors the betas, and themselves the undifferentiated gammas. Moving toward *institutionalized* social inequality has thus often involved certain gammas’ claiming power legitimated by special—and often hereditary—relationships to these sacred alphas and betas. Clearly, European kings were not the only ones who invoked the divine right to rule.

Aside from providing a grand overview of the numerous forms social inequality has taken throughout human history, *The Creation of Inequality* is most useful for scholars of social policy and welfare in two respects. First, it presents in a demotic way a veritable wealth of case studies. Particularly for those who have restricted their comparative analyses to contemporary Euro-American cases, the authors provide a starting point for thinking about inequality as a *human* issue, where current instantiations are not especially unique when viewed with the benefit of exhaustive archaeological and anthropological data. Arguably, there is much to be gained by placing inequality in this wider context while recognizing that human beings, long before Bismarck in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, devised various schemes for addressing social inequality. Second, the book illustrates effectively that inequality is not solely the effect of differences in income or resources. Rather, culture is returned to the conversation by highlighting its material, spatial, and symbolic dimensions. For scholars who have become enamored of the continuous variables which they feel best indicate the presence of social stratification, this book is a critical reminder that not everything is about how much money—or yams, copper valuables, skulls, depending the case—one has. How, after all, are we to quantify the various forms of “sacred life force” which have underpinned different systems of authority throughout history?

Both of these points—the straightforward presentation of numerous cases and the emphasis on culture—make *The Creation of Inequality* essential reading for scholars interested in developing a more expansive view of contemporary social inequality. That said, however, the book is not without its shortcomings. Sociocultural anthropologists, in particular, will chafe at what seems an outdated tendency to reify societies as bounded, agentive entities that can be categorized and set in an analytic trajectory. Flannery and Marcus, for their part, make no secret of their contempt for postcolonial, postmodern anthropology and rarely forego an opportunity to take potshots at what they perceive to be suffocating political correctness; the interspersed bits of family feud are somewhat distracting and should have been left at home. Further, despite its eminent readability, the book stumbles in its attempts to comment explicitly on present-day inequality in a more colloquial register. Flannery and Marcus have a knack for whisking their reader around the globe, and back and forward through the centuries. The passages that return the reader to the 21<sup>st</sup> century feel awkward and half-baked when juxtaposed with the textured descriptions of the book's fascinating cases.

These issues do not diminish in any serious way the quality of what is unquestionably an important and uniquely anthropological contribution to the social scientific conversation on social inequality. Synthesizing in a non-technical way a vast array of ethnographic and archaeological data, *The Creation of Inequality* furnishes its reader with a novel perspective for analyzing the growing social disparities in many places in the contemporary world. This perspective—developed through reaching ambitiously around the globe and far back through time—is the one that Rousseau, and countless others who have attempted to theorize rank, stratification, and hierarchy, lacked. For the general reader and scholar of social welfare alike, it offers an incomparable trove of empirical material for thinking about where social inequality came from and, critically, where it might be headed.

Kelly McKowen, *Department of Anthropology,*  
*Princeton University*

Anton Hemerijck, *Changing Welfare States*. Oxford University Press (2013). \$40.00 (paperback).

How government welfare policies change over time has been a neglected topic in social policy scholarship. Instead, the use of static models and the field's typological preoccupations have deflected attention from the volatile nature of social and economic change and its impact on social policy. This is the case even in countries that are widely regarded as exemplars of stable welfare statism, such as the European "welfare states." Although welfare regime classifications are now widely popular, they have been seen as static, although they have been dramatically affected by change. As the region has experienced the ravages of the Great Recession, the imposition of austerity policies, high unemployment, falling living standards, insecurity and rising tensions over immigration and national identity, there is an obvious need for social policy scholars to focus attention on change.

It is in this context that Hemerijck's book on welfare change in Europe is to be welcomed. Basing his analysis in comparative welfare state analysis inspired by historical institutional scholarship, the author discusses the way European governments, in concert with the European Union, have modified their social policies to respond to change and new economic realities. He points out that much of the earlier literature on welfare change was concerned with the retrenchment of government social policy and the so-called crisis in welfare but notes that European welfare states have been resilient, adjusting to what is sometimes referred to as "permanent austerity." However, he points out that a new approach in European social policy with the potential to transcend the impasse has emerged over the last decade. This approach harnesses the power of economic development for social ends and promotes economic participation rather than passive receipt of welfare benefits. The author uses the term "social investment" to characterize this trend. Reflected in the Lisbon Treaty of 2000, and also in the way a number of governments have adopted active labor market policies and expanded child care, the social investment "turn" offers a way out of permanent austerity.

Inspired by the regime theory framework, Hemerijck conceptualizes the evolution of European social policy from its

immediate postwar "Golden Age" to the recent emergence of social investment in terms of a stadial model in which social policy change is seen as moving coherently through three phases: first, universalism driven by Keynesian economics and Beveridgean social insurance; second, the neoliberalism, dominated by neoclassical economics, marketization and budgetary retrenchment; and third, "the social investment turn." The three waves, the author suggests, represent an incremental recalibration of welfare regimes reflective of a normative commitment to gradually achieving social policy goals through a process described as open institutionalism. These phases provide a framework for analyzing a number of issues affecting European social policy such as the factors responsible for change, the impact of social policy on standards of living and social well-being, the role of the European Union and the effects of the current recession. The book concludes with a careful examination of the social investment approach, which Hemerijck contends comprises an affordable and defensible normative basis for European social policy.

The author ranges over many complex issues that reveal his mastery of the field and deep appreciation of the complexities of social policy in Europe. He makes a major contribution to current debates about social policy's historic and likely future trajectory, not only in Europe, but around the world, where much of the literature continues to repeat the now rather tired "welfare crisis" cliché. Although he does not understandably pay much attention to developments in other countries, his interpretation of welfare change has international value. It is in this regard that his use of the concept of social investment is particularly important. However, his analysis would benefit from an examination of the ways this concept has been used outside of Europe and particularly in the developing world. Suggesting that social investment is a new feature of social policy, he does not recognize that it has been used in the social development literature for many decades, encapsulated in the notion of "welfare developmentalism," particularly by East Asian writers, where debates about welfare productivism have been prominent. This oversight is a pity, because Hemerijck's commitment to what he calls "affordable social investment" could be enhanced by closer collaboration with colleagues from the developing world who have for many years now

advocated the reformulation of traditional Eurocentric welfare state models to incorporate social investment features.

Nevertheless, this is an important book that will stimulate critical debate on a number of issues. The author's use of data is extensive and impressive, and his thorough knowledge and documentation of European social policy, will be a major resource for international social policy scholars who wish to understand the complexities of recent trends in the region; the author is to be commended for putting welfare change at the center of his account. It is hoped that his book will foster a more dynamic approach in the field that needs to address the volatile and chaotic nature of change in the light of recent events. If combined with the now extensive scholarship on social investment in the developing world, it may also contribute to the formulation of a One World perspective, combining the analytical insights as well as normative commitments of scholars from different nations. This has the potential to inform global social policy and benefit the world's people as a whole.

*James Midgley, School of Social Welfare,  
University of California, Berkeley*

Jennifer M. Silva, *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. Oxford University Press (2013). \$29.95 (hardcover).

*Coming Up Short* is a brief, but powerful, update of the status, difficulties, behaviors and distresses that characterize the lives of young working class adults. Based on in-depth interviews with 100 subjects, both White and African American, the book is—among other things—a reminder of the power of qualitative research, where the subjects' statements and the vignettes about them poignantly document a number of themes in a way that statistical tables could not.

Silva is consciously updating the classic sociological studies of Sennet and Cobb's *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (1972) and Rubin's *Worlds of Pain* (1976). Her findings document lives as circumscribed as the subjects of those earlier studies but are totally different: where working class men and women formerly led gendered and role-ascribed lives characterized by narrow choices and feelings of defeat and duty, today's young



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adults face uncertainty in every aspect of theirs.

The major changes—deindustrialization, primarily—in the U.S. economy since the 1980s account for the disruption of traditional work and family patterns that were previously determinative of the American working class' behaviors. Now, young under-educated adults cannot get a foothold in the labor market. They go from one poorly paid and often temporary job to another. Some have tried to pursue higher education but often drop out, leaving them frustrated, bitter, and in debt. Without regular sources of income, young adults do not marry or form stable relationships. As a consequence, single parenthood is common. These many problems leave the subjects distrustful and in precarious situations.

Many of these problems have been previously documented (see Edin and her colleagues). What Silva adds to our understanding is that the way neoliberalism has infected this population's understanding, so that rather than looking to structural causes, they blame themselves for their insecurity and struggles. Another major characteristic that defines this group is what the author labels the "mood economy," where failure is understood as stemming from psychological problems experienced in their growing up, and success is understood as overcoming their inter- and intrapersonal difficulties. In this important discussion, Silva makes frequent reference to the work of Eva Illouz. Respondents are likely to have been in treatment or have participated in AA and NA meetings. They have absorbed the language of psychotherapy, if not from direct experience, then from popular media figures like Oprah Winfrey. Young adults seem unfamiliar with any aspect of group solidarity, and they interpret their problems almost completely in personal terms.

Silva is sensitive to the growth of inequality in America and the role that neoliberal economic policies have played thereto. Indeed, almost the last statement in her book is:

In order to tell a different kind of coming of age story—one that promises hope, dignity, and connection—they (young working class adults) must begin their journey to adulthood with a living wage, a basic floor of social protection, and the skills and knowledge to confront the future. (p. 156)

Yet the book is slim on policy recommendations that are implied: better schools, greatly increased educational and vocational counseling (in high school and at the community college level), low interest government-sponsored loans, and a return to easier means to declare bankruptcy, among others.

Included in the Appendix is the author's Interview Guide. It reveals that Silva's questions were designed to elicit responses about personal and familial histories, struggles and, sometimes, redemptive successes. Silva apparently did not seek responses about experiences with unions or other forms of worker cooperation, although she states that her interviews were semi-structured. The interviews were conducted in Lowell, MA and Richmond, VA from October 2008 to February 2010, before the Occupy Movement (which Silva primarily critiques as having spurred right wing backlash) and before recent worker protest activities, such as fast food and Wal-Mart workers' demanding higher wages. One wonders what Silva's respondents would have to say about these events and whether they have affected their current understanding of their predicaments.

*Coming Up Short* is highly recommended for sociologists and social welfare students and academics alike. It informs in telling detail the difficult circumstances and self-perceptions of a significant portion of the American population. It is also a window into how the "helping professions" have influenced the thinking of young adults and suggests that those professions need help their clients see their troubles in broader terms than they apparently currently do.

Marguerite G. Rosenthal, Emerita, School of Social Work,  
Salem State University

Cris Beam, *To the End of June: The Intimate Life of American Foster Care*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (2013). \$27.00 (hardcover).  
David Tobis, *From Pariahs to Partners: How Parents and Their Allies Changed New York City's Child Welfare System*. Oxford University Press (2013). \$29.95 (hardcover).

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*Partners* are two recent books that prove the veracity of this statement, each in its own way. Beam's is the more artistic of the two, etching a memorable, evocative and ultimately sad portrayal of life in today's foster care system. Tobis chips away at a different story—one of transformation that tells the tale of change in New York City's child welfare system in a more logical, deductive fashion. What is common to both, and the true gem of each of these excellent books, is their privileging of the client voice. In *Pariahs*, it is parents and advocates outside of the system who speak, and in *June*, it is the children and foster parents themselves.

A writer and teacher whose introduction to foster care came through impulsively rescuing one of her students, Beam brings to full color the portraits of six families and 22 young persons caught up in the maddening machinery of American foster care. Beam's work is thoroughly researched and unapologetically subjective. She has the reader rooting for foster parents and youth to succeed against all odds—until we realize, through her clear and perceptive narratives, that all human beings are fallible. In fifteen well-paced and beautifully crafted chapters, Beam weaves stories of do-gooders whose own challenges in life blind them to the true needs of the children they care for; of teenagers who are shuffled along the game of life like tokens, expected to behave as if they have been treated fairly and make decisions as if capable, when neither one is true or possible.

This book is highly recommended, not for its thorough view of today's foster care, but for its sensitive, nuanced and infrequently told view. Segmented in three aptly titled sections ("Catch", "Hold," and "Release") but by no means linear, Beam introduces the ironies and incredulities of a system serving foster children and the families who take them in. She skillfully and deftly moves along each of their narratives, then (sometimes confusingly) doubles back, updating the reader on the all-too-often dismal conclusions of their lives together. Each story offers the foibles and redemptions of what it is to be human, though it seems the cost is always—in the end—the child's.

*To the End of June* leaves the reader moved by its intimate portrayals, bewildered by the complexities, ambiguities and mistakes Beam points up, and nearly incapable, by its end,

of seeing anything right about today's child welfare system. And that's when David Tobis comes to the rescue. In his energetic, if at times redundant, documentation of the many ways parents and their allies changed the child welfare system in New York City these past two decades, we find some room for optimism. Fueled by his own charismatic and forward thinking leadership, Tobis articulates the inside story of change in a system seemingly incapable of transformation. Through vivid, nearly reportorial observation, Tobis highlights how parents and various child welfare advocacy groups offered a countervailing force to the powers that be in New York City. Starting with his first person descriptions of meetings that led to the creation of the Child Welfare Fund and other initiatives, Tobis is the ultimate insider, providing the spark for much of the reform's momentum. His unwavering belief in the power of (birth)parent participation is the main thread woven throughout the book's eight chapters.

Tobis writes convincingly of how mainly poor, disenfranchised women (mostly of color) are seen by those inside and outside of the child welfare system—as demon-mothers, parent pariahs, criminals in a society that is quick to disregard their rights and needs. Through numerous case examples, he highlights agency-based practices that too often victimize the very families they are supposed to help while cogently, unflinchingly baring the underlying abuse and neglect that drew the attention of child welfare authorities to these mothers in the first place. He devotes several chapters to the initial context of the reform central to the book; another to lucid portrayal of four mothers whose children were placed in foster care; another to the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP), the country's preeminent organization run by and for parents in the child welfare system; and several to profiles of other parent-led or parent-focused organizations in New York City and nationally. He finishes with his take on the lasting effectiveness as well as the future of child welfare reform.

Of equal value to his very real and personal descriptions of the change agents are Tobis's illustrations of the underlying organizational dynamics at play in the reform movement. As a trained sociologist, he deftly analyzes both supporting and countervailing forces in the fight to change a system that is fundamentally political. Throughout, Tobis describes the

complex interplay of economic, political, legal, and sociological factors that, when combined with the power of the media, inevitably leads to the cyclical nature of opportunity, change, and backsliding that has accompanied every reform effort. Rarely do we see as finely written a story by one who lived and led a social change movement.

By the end, Tobis acknowledges the difficulty of changing a system whose focus is on those without a voice: children. He counts on people like Beam to bring those voices to the fore, while empowering parents and advocates to continue working toward child welfare reform. Beam and Tobis write from two very different perspectives—the former primarily that of the foster child and foster parent, and Tobis, from that of the (birth) parent. Yet, if they were in the same room, they would likely agree on many things, primarily that change should focus on working to prevent family problems in the first place.

In reading both books, I occasionally found myself defensive, arguing on behalf of the agency's perspective, or, as a social worker, privileging the social work voice. I wanted to point out the progress we have made, of the evidence we continue to amass on its sometime effectiveness. I wanted to scream that most of its shortcomings are the result of underfunding, and many of its inefficiencies an outcome of its unavoidable scope. That each book left this me unsettled, agitated, and deeply affected is evidence that the seeds these authors have sown can cultivate longer lasting reform.

*Julie Cooper Altman, School of Social Work, Adelphi University*

Leo R. Chavez, *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens and the Nation*. Stanford University Press (2nd ed.) (2013). \$70 (hardcover); \$22.95 (paperback).

With Congress currently positioned for battle in the final round for comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform, including a path to citizenship, immigrant rights activists are gearing up with rallies and fasts across the country. On the one hand, the Pew Hispanic Center polls reveal that the majority of Americans are in favor of immigration reform, yet the Southern Poverty Law Center delineates an unprecedented

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rise (figures have doubled between 2007 and 2009) in alarmist, nativist, extremist hate groups fomenting intolerance and angry demagoguery. The time is certainly ripe for a second edition to Leo Chavez's *Latino Threat*, which is replete with updated information on draconian immigration laws, as well as coverage of the presidential debates of 2012, which showcased the vituperative and vitriolic discourse of the Latino Narrative Threat, defined as:

A number of taken-for-granted and often-repeated assumptions about Latinos, such as that Latinos do not want to speak English; that Latinos do not want to integrate socially and culturally into the larger U.S. society; that the Mexican origin population in particular, is part of a grand conspiracy to take over the U.S. Southwest (the *reconquista*) and that Latin women are unable to control their reproductive capacities, that is, their fertility is out of control which fuels both demographic changes and the alleged reconquista. (p. ix)

The book is divided into two parts: the first describes the myths and stereotypes which undergird the Latino threat discourse, including chapters on the cultural contradictions of citizenship and on Latina sexuality as a threat to the nation; the second part focuses on media spectacles, such as marches and demonstrations, as well as the privileges of citizenship, on the Minutemen, on DREAMers, and anchor babies. Armed with Foucault, Chavez proceeds at a relentless speed as he deconstructs these narratives through critical cultural analysis and mixed method research, and ultimately denudes and topples each of the triple, mythic, stereotypical threats of invasion, re-conquest and separatism. He thus exposes the primitive and primary process thinking which creates the essentializing binary constructions of citizen/foreigner, legal/illegal, deserving/undeserving, moral/immoral. Chavez then moves on to a cogent analysis of the manipulation of the threat narratives by media pundits and politicians to create divisiveness and prevent social integration for Latinos, as they further their own personal and political ambitions at the expense of denying basic social services, meaningful jobs, benefits and

rights, including prenatal care or quality education and ultimately citizenship. Chavez ends with the enumeration of concrete policy recommendations “to alleviate the damage caused by the Latino Threat Narrative and to ensure a rapid integration of Latino immigrants and their children” (p. 217).

Chavez writes with compassion and integrity, restoring dignity to the lives deformed by these narratives. At times, the reader would have preferred more analysis of the economic and labor issues that also drive these narratives. *The Latino Threat* is accessible and essential reading for students and professionals alike, and fosters advocacy for policy change, as well as the need to understand the psychologically and emotionally damaging repercussions of structural racism and nativist discourse practices, and their effects on provision of language access, health disparities and social services for Latino immigrants.

Catherine Carballeira, Touro College  
Graduate School of Social Work

Katherine Stewart, *The Good News Club: The Christian Right's Stealth Assault on America's Children*. Public Affairs (2012). \$25.99 (hardcover).

This book is an unusual one for review in a scholarly journal for several reasons. First, the author herself is not a scholar in the conventional sense; she is a journalist. Secondly, the work is more of a call to action than to contemplation. Thirdly, the book, though exploring an important social phenomenon, does not seek to explain that phenomenon.

Alternatively, though the author is a public intellectual, she presents not screeds but substance in a developing form of social organization that has gone, for the most part, unnoticed. She uses recognized qualitative methods—participant observation, interviews, and detailed textual examination. Overall, the book merits review.

*The Good News Club* documents various ways the Christian Right is infiltrating the American educational system through sponsored after school activities that are highly planned centrally and then “franchised,” as it were, to local church groups

rights, including prenatal care or quality education and ultimately citizenship. Chavez ends with the enumeration of concrete policy recommendations “to alleviate the damage caused by the Latino Threat Narrative and to ensure a rapid integration of Latino immigrants and their children” (p. 217).

Chavez writes with compassion and integrity, restoring dignity to the lives deformed by these narratives. At times, the reader would have preferred more analysis of the economic and labor issues that also drive these narratives. *The Latino Threat* is accessible and essential reading for students and professionals alike, and fosters advocacy for policy change, as well as the need to understand the psychologically and emotionally damaging repercussions of structural racism and nativist discourse practices, and their effects on provision of language access, health disparities and social services for Latino immigrants.

Catherine Carballeira, Touro College  
Graduate School of Social Work

Katherine Stewart, *The Good News Club: The Christian Right's Stealth Assault on America's Children*. Public Affairs (2012). \$25.99 (hardcover).

This book is an unusual one for review in a scholarly journal for several reasons. First, the author herself is not a scholar in the conventional sense; she is a journalist. Secondly, the work is more of a call to action than to contemplation. Thirdly, the book, though exploring an important social phenomenon, does not seek to explain that phenomenon.

Alternatively, though the author is a public intellectual, she presents not screeds but substance in a developing form of social organization that has gone, for the most part, unnoticed. She uses recognized qualitative methods—participant observation, interviews, and detailed textual examination. Overall, the book merits review.

*The Good News Club* documents various ways the Christian Right is infiltrating the American educational system through sponsored after school activities that are highly planned centrally and then “franchised,” as it were, to local church groups

which place them in schools as optional co-curricular after school elements. They are offered on a study/learn basis as their manifest function but really have the goal of capturing children's commitment to their evangelical perspective and world view as their latent function. These are the Good News Clubs.

There are 12 chapters in all, and a conclusion. The first 6 focus on the operations and formal and social organization of the Clubs. Chapters 7-9 focus on the literary strategies of the evangelical movement, specifically "The Texas Textbook Wars" and "The Bible 'Literacy' Wars." Chapter 9 discusses the ways in which some of the school-related activities marketed as "co-curricular offerings" are repackaged as "character" development programs and move into the curriculum itself. School underfunding makes local schools more likely to accept these initiatives because of their internal needs for staffing.

Chapter 10 focuses on "The Peer-to-Peer Evangelism Loophole." Here students try to "recruit" other students, while the following chapter looks at joining the Good News Club's volunteer cadre. Stewart gets the application and goes through the many requirements for belief that are outlined as needed for volunteers in order involve committed followers who are desired for the volunteer jobs. The chapter then details Stewart's participation as an "observer" in a Good News Club training.

The final chapter, "If You Can't Own It, Break It: The Plan to Undermine Public Education" outlines a greater initiative to "...defund and ultimately eliminate" the public schools (p. 245). In the conclusion, Stewart observes that,

The goal of the national assault on public education is to turn America into a 'Christian Nation.' I am not worried that they might succeed. I am worried about the damage they will cause when they fail. ... And I am alarmed that we have allowed them to get so far so fast." (p. 257)

With the book's thesis and evidence before us, how can we evaluate the work, its meaning, and its contribution? The work seems convincing. The writing is good. Stewart outlines all the material she read, names the people she talked with, and employs a "let the facts speak for themselves" presentation

strategy. Her concern about the dangers presented by a committed minority that seeks to have everyone on its bus does indeed pose a danger to any pluralistic community, organization or society. Hoffer's *True Believers* are always and everywhere a concern, regardless of what particular belief system they represent.

There are some omissions, however. One is that America seems to be doing a good job of dismantling the public education system on its own and replacing it with a "charter" school system. This larger social process, heavy with racial implications, is not mentioned. Secondly, there have always been special schools in this country: Catholic Schools might be the biggest example, but Yeshivas and International Schools are other examples. So is home schooling (2.7% of American children were home schooled in 2007). Faith-based groups and those with other commitments have established their own institutions but have not really tried to "convert" others to them, although there always has been, for many religious especially, a strong subtext of missionary work, often coupled with a "social work" or helping function.

But the sociological question is "Why." How do we explain the impetus to assertively, aggressively, subtly, openly have everyone believe as you do and be subject to your interpretation of what is right and wrong? How can we understand "values imperialism?"

This is not a question Stewart answers, but she provides a partial suggestion. Explanations for values imperialism will surely vary. For evangelicals, though, one part of the answer may lie in the hopeless strictures and structures of predestination, a big variable for Max Weber in *the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and discussed also in my books on Catholic value systems. It is a somewhat grim doctrine. Stewart gives us a taste in detailing the requirements of becoming a volunteer in the Good News Club circuit.

The anxiety of "uncertainty and powerlessness" must be overwhelming. So what is a believer to do? There are at least two possible of answers. One is the secularization of salvation. This solution depends upon the assumption that God would not allow someone who is saved be a failure in this life. Hence success—especially financial success derived from work—is an "outward sign" of inward grace. The other is recruiting new

souls for Christ—bringing the “good news” to more people. Surely such recruitment would assist in winning divine approval and might also be considered an “outward sign.”

So one answer to why evangelistic Christians pursue values imperialism is for them to assuage the uncertainty of predestination by working hard for His son, in the hope that doing so might move the needle to the salvation goal line. Anxious uncertainty is a powerful motivator. A similar dynamic might be a factor in other aggressive value systems.

In sum, the book reads well and would be useful for courses in the sociology of religion and courses in social and public policy especially.

*John E. Tropman, School of Social Work, University of Michigan*

Jal Mehta, *The Allure of Order: High Hopes, Dashed Expectations, and the Troubled Quest to Remake American Schooling*, Oxford University Press (2013). \$29.95 (hardcover).

Jal Mehta challenges our tendency to believe that every education reform effort is “new,” and therefore holds fresh promise for improving student performance. In *The Allure of Order*, Mehta provides a retrospective of the standards reform movement, showing that its roots hail back to the Progressive Reform era. He traces forward from this period, demonstrating how publication of *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* in 1983 gave fresh legitimacy to the standards movement that has lasted through today. Although the value of standards as a primary driver of educational improvement has generated a plethora of literature, Mehta’s search for why this reform has persisted, despite frustration with student achievement gains, adds depth to an ongoing and urgent policy discussion about strategies to improve student performance.

Mehta reminds us that the repeated cycles of school rationalization that define our education reform path were the result of a series of decisions by “policy entrepreneurs” able to invoke a sense of crisis to install their reform notions. The Progressive Era was characterized by two trends: the Deweyan path that foregrounded a rich liberal arts education, dependent on a high quality of teacher-student interaction; and a rationalist path, where top-down decision-making through a

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professionalized education management class was imposed on the teaching profession. The latter gained traction as education outcomes were increasingly defined around economic goals. With *A Nation At Risk* explicitly tying education outcomes to U.S. competitiveness in the global market, policymakers—Republicans and Democrats alike—endorsed the “scientific management” approach as the reform pathway.

Mehta identifies three interrelated phenomena that explain the susceptibility of our education system to the imposition of a standards-based accountability system. First, he points to the fixation we have with “scientific” solutions to social problems, in a vain search for painless, low-cost fixes to social inequities. Second, he discusses how “rational” technocratic solutions, such as the imposition of standards and accountability, address at the back end a quest to identify highly qualified teachers, without taking account of the pay, preparation and continuing learning support needed at the front end to build a strong teacher corps. And last, the K-12 teaching profession, for many years one of a few career options for women, has been a low-status field unable to defend itself. Mehta suggests the profession is further hobbled by the teachers unions, which have held tight to protecting teachers’ salaries and working conditions without putting much weight behind ideas that could develop the profession and improve teaching and learning.

Mehta lays out principles for countering the current weaknesses of the education system. He suggests that teachers, now at the bottom of the bureaucratic chain, should be at the core of any improvement strategy. Schools should be the focal unit of change, and districts should be supporting actors, not leading ones. He suggests that the most promising alternative system is the “portfolio district,” a public-private hybrid model now about a dozen years in the making. This system is modeled on a stock portfolio; it is one in which a district consists of diverse district-managed and charter schools from which families can choose. And like with a non-productive stock, if families do not choose the school or if the school does not demonstrate strong student performance, then it is shed from the portfolio and another school opened to replace it. Largely it is in this plurality of types of schools, each with autonomy to select teachers, develop curriculum and manage its budget, that Mehta sees the possibility for innovation, and a glimmer of hope.



Mehta glosses over, however, the mounting questions about and evidence of the limitations of the portfolio district model. Those who advocate for portfolio districts often are the same as those who believe that standardized testing represents bottom line accountability—to measure student outcomes and teacher “effectiveness”—a reform approach Mehta has thoroughly debunked. In addition, knotty equity problems abound when some schools can “fundraise” or receive private sector funding; when “choice” results in concentrations of high needs students in a few, usually district-managed, schools; when school closings are part of a pattern of institutional abandonment of low-income neighborhoods; when experienced, diverse high quality teachers are not distributed fairly across schools; when there are indiscriminate attacks on unions; and when decimated urban districts lack the staff and know-how to manage their charter sector, to create a market of high quality schools to replace closing schools, to monitor complex contracts, and so forth. While I laud the idea that it is important to not only analyze problems but to also suggest solutions, to hold up the portfolio district as having so much promise without at least a hint of some of the troubling issues this model raises concludes Mehta’s book with a policy suggestion far less rigorously conceived than the analysis that preceded it.

*Eva Gold, independent consultant. Founder of Research for Action, a non-profit Philadelphia-based research and evaluation firm.*

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