The central concern of these essays rests with the relationship of the ‘welfare state’, understood as government policy on the provision of social protection, to the economy and political institutions. Paul Pierson, who contributes to four of the thirteen papers, suggests that social protection is now characterised by ‘permanent austerity’. In his view, this is primarily the result not of globalisation, but of common patterns in the development of social policies in different countries. There are four main trends: the slowing down of productive growth, the expansion of government commitments as welfare states have matured, ageing populations, and changes in the structures of households. Only the first, Pierson suggests, can be attributed to globalisation, and even there globalisation is only a contributory factor. The main concepts used to explain policy development are path dependence and veto points (institutional opportunities to frustrate reform); both tend to emphasise the distinctiveness of systems. The essays steer the focus away from general social trends and pressures, to influences and institutional structures which are specific to different countries.

There is much in this collection to admire. The quality of the individual pieces is evident, and there are useful insights on issues like deindustrialisation, decompensation, and the adaptation of economic production to different institutional contexts. The arguments against the common influence of globalisation are powerful. There is a general stress throughout the papers on the importance of competing interests, including ‘competitive corporatism’, and I was impressed by Kitschelt’s argument that political parties have to be seen as combinations of the interests of client groups, rather than as ideological coalitions. At the same time, there are substantial reservations to make about the arguments. Many of the general comments are difficult to sustain. The ‘welfare state’ is treated as synonymous with state welfare, when the systems of social protection in many countries are not state-run. The welfare state, we are told, has stopped growing. ‘Neoliberal policy reform is widespread, and programmatic restructuring is universal’ (p. 198). These statements are at least defensible. But can it be right to say that trade has not contributed to the displacement of workers or long-term unemployment (p. 52)? Is it true that the increasing generosity of social protection causes political conflict because it undermines work incentives (p. 90)? Do ‘the universal health care systems of Britain and Germany equate equity with equality’ (p. 342)?

Where questionable judgements are made – and some of the judgements here seem very questionable to me – few readers will have the time, leisure or inclination to dissect them at any length. The collection is hard going. There are more than 450 pages of carefully reasoned, but often turgidly written text. Schwartz’s initial essay makes some concessions in the direct of accessibility, but most of the others take no prisoners. There are mathematical models, long, long sentences
and enough grandiloquence and bombast to make Talcott Parsons look readable by comparison. It all makes sense if you sit and work at it, but the labour reminded me of nothing so much as schooldays struggling with Latin prose.

A third area of concern must be the rather selective frame of reference. Most of the papers are written by political scientists from prestigious academic institutions, who combine an impressive range of reading and scholarship in politics and economics with a surprisingly limited command of the literature of social policy and sociology. In an extensive, forty-four page bibliography, I spotted only nine references to papers from social policy journals and twelve from sociology journals. Given the kinds of issue which are being dealt with – globalisation, the reconstruction of labour markets, risk and the development of social protection – this is remarkable. It would not be true to say that it leaves any obvious holes in the argument, because the papers have an imperial authority and confidence in their approach which makes them neatly self-contained. However, one has to suspect that some other perspectives, and countervailing arguments, from the barbarian disciplines beyond the gate might have been helpful.

Fourth, it has also to be said that the papers are becoming dated. Comparative social policy is a fast-moving field, and the literature is constantly renewing itself. The papers were written mainly in 1997 and 1998, and the book has taken three years to appear. The effect is compounded because the collection is heavily geared to the issues surrounding neoliberal retrenchment in the 1980s. There is enough theoretical and longitudinal material to give the book a continued interest, but it may already be half-way through its shelf life. Several papers are worth recommending individually, which makes the book a worthwhile acquisition for a library, but the book as a whole is mainly suitable for particularly determined postgraduates.

Paul Spicker
The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen


*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S004727940222663X

Reviewing these two books together is rather a curious experience. Both explore the issue of citizenship in considerable detail, and yet there is little overlap in their subject matter. Bernard Crick, as a doyen of political scientists, is centrally concerned with political citizenship, and more particularly with education for citizenship, mainly in schools, but also in universities and elsewhere. Peter Dwyer’s book, on the other hand, explores the relationships between citizenship and welfare, the former necessarily being understood primarily as social citizenship. Civil citizenship has also spawned its own literature, concerned with civil liberties and legal questions like nationality. T. H. Marshall (1950) must be unquiet in his grave as he watches the three components of citizenship, which he strove to bind together into a single whole, spinning apart into separate areas of intellectual endeavour, although doubtless the divisions of labour in the fractured and fractious disciplines of the social sciences makes this unsurprising.

Crick’s book consists of eleven essays, nearly all of which have been published
before. ‘Essay’ is Crick’s preferred term, and, although some chapters started as addresses to various gatherings, and one, entitled ‘Friendly Arguments’, brings together excerpts from several sources, it is fully appropriate. Crick writes a plain reasonable prose which he interlards with occasional glints of passion and impish or caustic asides. Not for nothing is he the biographer of George Orwell!

The essays date from two decades, the 1970s and the 1990s. The earlier ones, which have stood up pretty well to the passage of time, were produced for bodies such as the Hansard Society and record his pioneering advocacy, along with a small group of the like-minded, of concerted programmes of political education in schools. The more recent pieces chart the background to, and the arguments for, the admission of citizenship studies to the National Curriculum – although there is also a rather splendid Orwellian recessional, entitled ‘The Decline of Political Thinking in British Public Life’, and apparently hitherto published only in Japanese. In this, Crick deplores the departure of the clergy from the role of educator of the general public. His own career as a public intellectual flourished in the late 1990s with his chairmanship of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, whose Report (QCA, 1998) led on to the Citizenship Order, 2000, and hence to a signal victory for the cause he had espoused two decades before.

An important concept for Crick, in both his older and newer writings, is ‘political literacy’. It would be interesting to know how he might conceive of the relationship between this and another form of literacy currently fashionable in schools – ‘emotional literacy’ – but since at one point (p. 129) he brings together political, moral, religious and sex education, one guesses he would regard it as close. For Crick’s idea of the political is not a particularly narrow one. He notes that all organisations have their politics, and says that children learn about the subject through their experiences of everyday life. He also assails the notion that the ability to recite details of the parliamentary procedure has much to do with the political awareness. In any case: ‘(I)t is education for citizenship which is being proposed, not just political literacy: gaining a knowledge of, as well as the skills to volunteer and work in, community organizations, as well as in those more overtly political; and even in voluntary bodies political skills can be useful – to understand what are the purposes of an organization, and to be able to contribute towards and to shape its policies’ (p. 139).

Crick seems keen to forestall the charge that education for citizenship will inculcate and extend to a wider population those manipulative skills which have served the middle classes so well in their transactions with bureaucracies. ‘Political literacy is not simply an ability to pursue even an enlightened self-interest’, he says, ‘it must comprehend the effects on others and their viewpoints, and respond to them morally’ (p. 67). Here Crick and Dwyer sing in unison. Both hold that Marshall viewed citizenship as almost wholly a matter of rights, with attendant duties playing a very secondary role.

Dwyer distinguishes five ‘perspectives’ which currently inform the British debate on citizenship and welfare. ‘Marshall’s rights-based approach’ is one, although it is regarded as very much yesterday’s ideology. Perhaps this is unsurprising, faced as it is with so many rivals priding themselves on their newness – the New Right, the ‘new communitarians’, New Labour. (The fifth – interestingly – is ‘a Muslim perspective’.) Dwyer discerns a ‘new welfare orthodoxy’ based on ‘obligation, virtue and contribution’ (p. 95).

Each perspective is interrogated with three questions. Who should supply
welfare services and benefits, the state or some other kind of institution, like private firms or voluntary organisation? On what terms should this help be offered and what should be expected of the beneficiary in return? Who has a legitimate claim to receive these welfare goods and services? He calls these questions provision, conditionality and membership respectively – although a very old term, eligibility, might fit the last better, even if, unlike citizenship membership, it might not complete the circle in the way he wants.

Dwyer deploys these three concepts to give a consistent structure to his book. With their help, he scrutinises the principal service areas, and also employs them as the titles of the chapters in which he reports on the focus groups which he convened in Bradford. Respondents are generally referred to as ‘welfare service users’, or just ‘users’, but this description seems not entirely accurate: his groups are of varied composition (assorted claimants and social services client groups, members of residents’ associations, mosque members etc.) and one of them – the ‘middle class charity group’ – appears to consist of providers rather than users. Neither, of course are they cross-sectional of the general public. Notwithstanding such quibbles about their precise status, the interviewees certainly provide some vivid illustrations for Dwyer’s discussion. The conclusions often reinforce the findings of other recent studies: for example, that whereas people are strongly supportive of the large-scale welfare state of the post-war settlement, they often hold individualistic, contractual views of the framework of social rights that should sustain it.

This bring us back to the question of whether all rights carry with them commensurate duties – although ‘responsibilities’ is the favoured word nowadays, perhaps because it is vaguer, or is seen as a non-legal expression, or sounds less Victorian but nevertheless conjures up a picture of the longer-term commitments of individuals. Recently the Fabian Society has been agonising over its constitution; its Executive Committee proposes to include in a new ‘Rule 2 some words about seeking the realisation of a society ‘where rights reflect responsibilities’. In a letter to Fabian Review (Spring, 2001) Roger Warren Evans calls this ‘a piece of ephemeral phraseology’ and asserts that there ‘is no correlation between rights and responsibilities – logically, legally, jurisprudentially or philosophically’. This may be a bit sweeping – after all, public agencies both can and do, legally and logically, attach all kinds of conditions to the benefits and services they proffer. However, it is not easy to disagree with Warren Evans’s further statement that ‘no true right ... can be made dependent on the adoption of responsible behaviour’. ‘A right that can be withdrawn’, he says, ‘is no right at all’.


TONY REES
University of Southampton

JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402236636
As anyone who has more than a passing interest in either citizenship or democ-
racy will know, each concept has spawned expansive, but at times, very separate literatures within the various disciplines of social science. As Vandenburg states in his preface, ‘Sociologists tend to look at divisions due to class, gender, race and ethnicity and to focus on issues of cohesion, belonging and exclusion. Political scientists tend to look at institutions and organisations and focus on issues of power, violence, order and sovereignty’ (p. x). This extensive edited collection represents an attempt to bring together some of the many sociological debates about citizenship and combine them with an understanding of the notion of democracy as developed within the discipline of political science. The book is divided into three parts. Part I provides an accessible overview of competing philosophical debates on issues such as the relationship between the individual and community, and how globalisation may be affecting the role of the nation-state. The first few chapters set the tone for subsequent discussions well with Vandenburg and Hindess (chs. 1 and 3) emphasising the changing and contested character of citizenship and democracy over time. In chapter 2 Turner goes on to outline the weakening ties of the outdated father/worker/warrior nexus that lies at the heart of T. H. Marshall’s often discussed theory of citizenship. I’m less convinced than Turner about the potential development of ‘cosmopolitan virtue’ as the basis for a positive postmodern citizenry in the future, nonetheless, it is an interesting argument. Further pieces in this section of the book all have something to offer. Coleman and Higgin’s reminder of the ethnocentric core of much liberal thinking and the brutal oppression of indigenous peoples that accompanied the formation of many ‘democratic’ nation-states is well informed and forceful. I also particularly enjoyed Muetzelfeldt’s discussion on the shift in language from citizen to that of client/consumer and the wider negative implications of the move towards managerial agendas within the public welfare sector.

In Part II the focus shifts to explore the book’s themes in relation to a number of different nation states. There appears to be no overarching theme to this section, rather each contributor focuses in on an issue(s) of relevance to their own interests and a particular location. There is a good mix here with chapters relating to both established (e.g., France, Germany, Sweden etc.) and new or emergent democracies in places such as South Africa, Russia and Indonesia. Verall’s chapter on postcommunist Russia and the weakness of ‘civil society and the institutions of state [which has] resulted in the rise of mafia capitalism’ (p. 192) makes bleak reading whilst simultaneously providing a good example of why substantive rather than formal democratic citizenship rights retain a contemporary importance. A number of the other chapters in this section combine an historical explanation of the development of citizenship (within a particular nation state) with an analysis of some dimension of difference, and, therefore, they make a useful starting point for anybody looking to develop their understanding of a specific national context.

The two chapters that make up the final part of the text shift the focus to consider two issues beyond the domain of nation states: both make for interesting reading. Taking a number of East Asian nations as evidence, Burchill shows that optimistic accounts which trumpet the end of history and the ideological victory of liberal democracy (e.g., Fukuyama, 1992) are flawed. In the final chapter I found it refreshing to read an argument that looks beyond optimistic hype to outline the democratic potential, and pitfalls, of the virtual world. As
Vandenburg points out, the cyberworld is increasingly dominated by powerful multimedia capitalists.

Overall, the scope of issues addressed within the book is wide and the standard of writing high. I have only two reservations. First, the book deals with some big issues and at times there is a tendency for certain contributors to engage in rather grand narratives of their own. It would have been useful perhaps to have grounded some of the issues discussed by including contributions based around empirical work that engaged more directly with the views of ‘grassroot’ organisations. I concede that this criticism reflects my personal position in relation to social research, but it may also have increased the book’s appeal to certain sectors of the social policy community. Second, whilst the book deals extensively with a number of dimensions of difference (class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality) in relation to the central themes of citizenship and democracy there is no mention of disability. I find this both disappointing and surprising given that a chapter on struggles of the disabled people’s movement would have made a good case study that directly engaged with the book’s main themes. These criticisms aside, the book will be of relevance to those readers of this journal looking to extend their understanding of citizenship, beyond the standard welfare focus of mainstream social policy texts, to take on board associated philosophical and political debates.


PETER DWYER
University of Leeds


This book is driven by the overriding question of why the state’s contribution to childcare has been so meagre. It is a timely and welcome book which explores the politics of childcare in postwar Britain – an issue largely overlooked in social policy. Many social policy analysts have highlighted the importance of childcare, for instance, in the context of women’s labour market participation. Twenty-four-hour nurseries were one of the first ‘demands’ of the women’s liberation movement back in the 1970s. Yet, few commentators have traced the development, or non-development, of childcare policies. So this is a study about why policies fail to materialise.

The introductory chapter examines some of the questions and themes addressed by the book. It sets out the theoretical approach adopted, namely, gendered institutionalism. Britain’s record of childcare provision, therefore, can be explained by the character of our political institutions and processes including their gendered nature, and the policy legacy they embody. Two further themes run throughout the book which have similarly influenced policy outcomes. These are first, Britain’s ‘liberal-welfare’ approach to state intervention, and secondly, ideological issues about the state’s interest in children, gender roles, relations within the family, and potentially redistributive dynamic of childcare provision. Subsequent chapters chart the historical development of childcare policy from
the early nineteenth century until 1998. Thus we move from the dramatic episode of the ‘war nurseries’ to policies in the 1950s, which were underpinned by assumptions that childcare was a residual welfare function, distinct from nursery education. This was followed by the emergence of a childcare lobby in the 1970s, prompted by the growth of women’s labour market participation and the rediscovery of poverty. Next, with Conservative rule in the 1980s came the restructuring of the welfare state and with it the absence of any major developments, except in response to the threat of the ‘demographic timebomb’ and fears about labour shortages. By contrast, under Major’s leadership childcare rose up the political agenda. We saw the introduction of childcare vouchers and the reframing of daycare policies into a more positive dimension of welfare restructuring. And it is within this context that New Labour’s policies are explored.

Two further chapters adopt a different approach. One focuses on issues about the demand for childcare, and the role of the childcare lobby, particularly the part played by feminism. The other concentrates on a comparison of British childcare policy with a range of European countries and the Old Commonwealth.

This is a useful book because it helps explain the slow development of childcare policies and the factors shaping that development. However, in my opinion it misses an important part of the story, especially in relation to the demand for childcare. Part of the problem is that the analysis is restricted to formal childcare policies for the under-fives. This is completely understandable given the focus of the book. However, it means that there is no discussion about the use of informal childcare provision, and in turn, how this has affected formal childcare policy. The most recent large-scale DfEE funded study on childcare (La Valle et al., 1999) re-iterates findings from earlier studies (Finlayson et al., 1996) that the most widely used types of childcare are informal. Moreover, most parents prefer their children to be looked after by relatives and friends. Of course, this is a reflection of the nature and quality of the formal provision available, and its costs.

Inevitably, the widespread use of informal arrangements shape perceptions concerning both the need and demand for formal childcare. For many policymakers and politicians, unless there is a proven demand for a service – why provide it? Cynical perhaps, but probably quite realistic. Yet, the book does not address adequately issues about the demand for childcare, despite its centrality to politicians’ and policy-makers’ thinking. Only in passing is it mentioned that demand for childcare is affected by its supply. For our friends in the Treasury, this is likely to raise important considerations. If the prime reasons for the state subsidising childcare are to increase and sustain women’s labour market participation and to reduce their reliance on social welfare, then the last thing the boys in the Treasury would want is for women to switch from informal to formal childcare arrangements, or for non-working mothers to use the provision.

And given the important relationship between demand and supply, there is surprisingly little in the book about factors shaping the supply. Indeed, one of the key disappointments of the current national childcare strategy is the continuing lack of childcare places. Why are there not more childcare providers? Labour has tried to deal with this directly by reforming some of the regulations affecting providers and indirectly, by subsidising the costs of childcare.

Whatever lies behind the Labour government’s national strategy, it remains a
significant development in the politics of childcare. The strategy reasserts the legitimacy of the state’s involvement in childcare provision. It is a recognition that society is concerned about supporting parents with the immediate costs of childcare. Let’s hope that, in future, we can reframe childcare policies so greater equality becomes the main driving force behind them. If this does not happen, childcare policies will continue to be fragile and their existence will continue to be susceptible to the fortunes of the economic cycle. How else do we ensure that any achievements are not squeezed out during the next economic downturn?


CLAIRE CALLENDER
South Bank University


*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402256639

This edited collection adds to a voluminous literature on gender equality policies and the European Union. The foreword promisingly asserts that the reader will find ‘empirical information and theoretical exploration about the recent past and current situation of the European Union and women’ (Foreword, vi). It states that the book is guided by comparisons of three sorts: historical, cross-national and inter-continental. The inter-disciplinary of the book appears equally promising; the authors are from Britain, Italy and Germany, and from a variety of backgrounds – European studies, industrial relations, economics, human geography politics, history, law, sociology and – not forgetting – social policy.

Not all of these promises proclaimed in the Foreword and the title are actually realised. First, the book is more about women than about gender. Second, the promised comparison of European Union policies with those of the United States never materialises and the only (passing) reference to the US is contained in the Foreword itself (the author of which is not a chapter contributor). A less specific statement of the book’s purpose is provided by the editor, Rossilli, who defines it as being ‘to provide a variety of viewpoints for analyzing developments in EU policy’ (p. 20). This does the book some injustice because, as a collection, the chapters trace the Europeanisation of gender conflict, explore the gendered nature of the democratic and citizenship deficits, and the apparent contradiction between the EU’s ‘advanced’ gender equality policy and the continuation of gender inequality.

Regarding the topics covered, there are contributions on the expected areas: an overview of the European Union’s gender equality policies (Mariagrazia Rossilli), employment equality policies (Ilona Østner, Francesca Bettio, Jill Rubery and Mark Smith); equal opportunities programmes (Catherine Hoskyns); social security (Julia Adiba Sohrab); trades unions (Myriam Bergamaschi); parity democracy and political representation (Eliane Vogel-Polsky, Joni Lovenduski); sexual harassment (Jeanne Gregory); non-EU migrant women (Eleonore Kolman and Rosemary Sales); and trafficking in women (Marjan Wijers). The chapters
are all of reasonable length. However, with one or two notable exceptions, they are far less explicit about how EU policies interact with, and impact on, women’s social rights at national level. Furthermore, a designated chapter on family policy (covering, for example, parental leave, childcare and reproductive rights) would have been useful, particularly given the tortuous passage of the parental leave directive and the fact that subsidiarity has been applied to family policy. Moreover, the collection examines the internal social policies of the EU and I felt the book would have benefited from a review of EU external social/gender policies, i.e., towards countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as a critical review of the EU’s trade, aid and development policies and their implications for women living in non-EU countries.

That said, this book is useful in that it provides current empirical data and reviews of EU sex equality policies, although the specialist would probably not learn much that s/he did not already know. Those interested in the subject will find this book a useful source, not only to mine information from, but as a useful review of the main debates, feminist positions and policy developments regarding gender equality, from the foundation of the EEC to the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997). It would be eminently suitable for final year undergraduates and postgraduates, and there is a handy summary list of EU gender law and policies up to and including the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) in the appendix. Annoyingly, though, the book does not include an index, while a list of relevant websites would have been a useful addition.

NICOLA YEATES
Queen’s University, Belfast


This book discusses and develops the qualitative study that was part of Angela Hattery’s Ph.D. In her words, she aims to ‘examine and analyze the process by which (American) mothers with young children balance and weave work and family’ (p. 165). Her central hypothesis is that ‘motherhood ideology’ is a key predictor of maternal labour force participation: a factor in mothers’ decision-making that has been underplayed in recent studies. She explores this through analysing data from interviews with 30 women with very young children, from which she constructs four categories. She argues that in relation to their strategies for resolving job–family conflicts, American mothers in the mid-1990s could be identified as conformists, non-conformists, pragmatists or innovators. ‘Conformists’ prioritise the dominant form of motherhood ideology, ‘intensive mothering’, and arrange their lives, regardless of their families’ economic circumstances, so that they can stay at home with their children. ‘Non-conformists’ reject intensive mothering, see their role as providing as well as nurturing, and return to the labour force whatever their families’ economic circumstances. ‘Pragmatists’ believe in the desirability of intensive mothering, but make labourforce decisions on the basis of a number of interrelated factors, including economic circumstances, their earning power and the adequacy of childcare arrangements, as well as their beliefs about motherhood. Finally,
‘innovators’, like pragmatists, accept the dominant cultural goals of intensive mothering and securing high standards of living for their families, but find innovative ways of achieving these. They participate in the labour force, for example, without using paid childcare. Hattery argues that this typology helps us to understand the differences among mothers more than the conventional dichotomy between mothers who are employed and those who are not, and also highlights the importance of motherhood ideology in their decisions. Economic need, for example, becomes much more clearly seen as subjectively constructed, mediated through beliefs about motherhood, rather than an objective state.

As with many qualitative studies, this book’s strengths lie in the pictures that emerge of the lives of the women who were interviewed and the complex ways in which they actively construct their role as a mother, yet within ideological and other contexts that are not of their making. Hattery also adopts the feminist practice of relating her own experiences to her research. Part of her argument is that a dominant ideology of intensive mothering affects even the most ‘non-conformist’ of mothers. Fathers, she asserts, are praised and rewarded for deviating from their traditional role as provider (for example, taking on housework and childcare), whereas mothers are publicly chastised (or chastise themselves) for falling short of the ideals of intensive mothering. As a working mother, she illustrates this with a personal anecdote about her partner’s incomprehension at her staying up late to bake home-made cookies for a school event when there is a perfectly good baker round the corner!

Qualitative studies do not aim nor claim to be generalisable. However, it is clear that Hattery’s sample is a particularly narrow one. Her interviewees were all married and lived in the same upper Midwestern county, all except one were white, they were relatively well educated (most with degrees) and relatively well off. As Hattery acknowledges, they reflect a very particular experience of American motherhood. She argues that this helps to highlight the importance of ‘motherhood ideology’ in understanding the different labour market decisions of these rather similar mothers. However, she then chooses a very small number as ‘ideal types’ of her four categories and relies almost exclusively on quotes from these seven women as illustrative of her arguments. This technique is justified on the grounds that their individual stories best illustrate the distinctive characteristics of each category. I would have welcomed (and found more persuasive) a wider range of interview data.

I am also not entirely convinced by Hattery’s argument that the particular version of motherhood ideology espoused by her interviewees predates and is a key factor in their labour market participation decisions, rather than being at least partly an ad hoc rationalisation. In addition, the largest groups among her interviewees are the pragmatists (14) and the innovators (8), where the argument that motherhood ideology is the key variable is the weakest. I would also have liked to see more contextualisation of this ideology, both in terms of understanding changes in its dominant form over time and between individuals and groups. For example, although she argues that conformists make their decisions to stay at home regardless of economic factors, it is interesting to note that none had completed a college education, compared with more than three quarters of the rest of the sample. Finally, at times the book seemed oddly repetitive, perhaps reflecting its origins as a Ph.D. thesis. An introductory summary of the book’s
Some of the pictures and stories in this American study will resonate with the experiences of comparable British mothers. However, there are also some interesting differences. For instance, the option of part-time employment, although chosen by some of the mothers in Hattery’s study, would be a more prominent feature of the ‘balancing and weaving’ experience of many British mothers. More striking are the references that indicate the different position of single mothers in the two countries. Unlike their British counterparts, single mothers in the US are more likely than those who are married to be in paid work. Even the conformist mothers in Hattery’s sample felt that single women should work and put their children in daycare rather than be on welfare. In the US, it seems, this is the ‘bottom line’ for intensive mothering ideology.

JANE KEITHLEY
University of Durham


*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402276631

Inheritance may not seem like a gripping topic for sociologists and social policy analysts, but Finch and Mason demonstrate that it is central to our understanding of the meaning of family relationships in late modern society, as well as providing insights into much broader theoretical issues about identity, individualism and inequality. *Passing On* is theoretically rich, linking together theoretical and empirical research in an innovative and insightful way, while also addressing contemporary social policy concerns.

Finch and Mason show how inheritance is a process that constitutes families and not just reflects them. It can be seen as both reproducing the social system and consolidating family relationships across generations, while the transmission of property simultaneously expresses the boundaries of a kinship group and the power structure within those boundaries. Inheritance represents a process of exchange that has high symbolic potential in terms of confirming particular relationships and constructing identities.

Inheritance is complex, only part relates to the inheritance of property and money through a will, since in England a will is left in only a minority of deaths. Of particular interest is the transmission of more personally significant possessions, or ‘keepsakes’, and how this is managed both before a person dies and following death.

The book draws on three linked studies by the authors: an analysis of 800 wills from people who had died at 10 year intervals between 1959 and 1989; in-depth interviews with 98 people about how inheritance is handled within families; and 30 semistructured interviews with solicitors and others who deal with wills, inheritance and probate. Some of this material was previously published in Finch and Mason, *Wills, Inheritance and Families* (Oxford University Press, 1996), but the present book provides a more theoretically driven analysis addressing key contemporary themes. One such theme is the impact of the changing structure of families, in terms of the growth of remarriage and cohabitation, and how
issues of inheritance highlight the agency of individuals in working through the complexities of such family relationships.

Key themes include time and memory, and how the ways that items are passed down across generations provides evidence of change and continuity and the links between the past and present. The possession of objects previously owned by a person who has died provide the living with access to a continuing relationships with that person through memory. Finch and Mason demonstrate how shared memories among families provide sources of identity within a family, and the way transmission of objects provides a focus for this memory.

The symbolic value of personal gifts and possessions as a symbol of the deceased is addressed in a particularly insightful chapter. These objects are seen as carrying the memory of the person who died, which gives the object both its meaning and value. By representing a person who has died they can act as the embodiment of that person, but only where the person who now owns the ‘keep-sake’ had direct knowledge of the person whose memory the object carries.

It may come as a surprise that what beneficiaries do with money they inherit is fraught with moral danger since beneficiaries need to consider how others, as well as the person who has died, would morally evaluate the way that they spend bequeathed money. This often leads to difficulties in balancing obligations to their present family while also appropriately respecting the memory of their past family represented by the person who has died.

The key policy issue of whether older people should use the assets of a house to finance their personal care and support when needed is addressed. It is clear that all ages accept that older people have the right to use their house and other assets as they see fit, and that providing an inheritance should not be an expected right. Equally, there is a strong and universal sense of injustice that assets which represent an individual’s life-time work should need to be used to finance long-term care, when others who have been ‘feckless’ receive care paid by the state. Interestingly, the contradiction between the ideology of ‘good parenting’, namely that adult children should be encouraged to be independent, may lead to perceived disadvantages of younger adults inheriting substantial sums.

A fuller and more explicit analysis of how gender intersects with the various issues addressed would have further strengthened this valuable study, particularly as women are both more likely to bequeath and to be the recipients of keep-sakes. This book will provide an important teaching tool since it exemplifies the theoretically informed analysis of empirical data, as well as being of particular value to researchers interested in the family and ageing.

SARA ARBER
University of Surrey


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402286638

This is an excellent volume. Arguing, surely correctly, that the marked increase
in workfare arrangements, particularly over the past decade or so, represents a fundamental change in the way social assistance is provided, the book sets out ‘to describe, compare and analyse’ (p. 1) workfare programmes in seven OECD countries – Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK and the USA. In accomplishing this task so successfully, the editors have furnished us with a much-needed account of contemporary workfare arrangements in key welfare regimes.

The book is divided into analytical and comparative explorations of workfare policies (Chs. 1, 9 and 10), and seven chapters which supply descriptive detail relating to the countries under review. Broadly, this division of labour works well and the fact that the analytical and comparative content is undertaken solely by the editors gives the book a much tighter and coherent quality than is the case with many edited volumes. The only difficulty here is that the ‘descriptive’ chapters are just that: occasionally rather dry accounts of national workfare arrangements, which lack a critical edge. For this reason, the remainder of this review concentrates on the three chapters devoted to comparative analysis, of which the penultimate and final chapters are the most important.

Drawing on the country-by-country descriptions, Lodemel and Trickey explore the origins, nature, similarities and differences in workfare policies amongst the seven welfare regimes in some depth. In so doing, they are able to show that workfare is a considerably more complex and multifaceted entity than is commonly assumed. For example, workfare arrangements, frequently attributed to the ‘Americanisation’ of social policy, are shown here to have quite different pedigrees. Although the reduction of social spending and prevention of individualised dependency are objectives common to each of the nations under review, certain countries (e.g., Denmark, the Netherlands and to a lesser extent the UK) adopt a ‘Human Resource Development’ (HRD) approach, which grants ‘more’ in the social assistance contract, in contrast to those endorsing a ‘Labour Market Attachment’ (LMA) approach (the USA and Norway), which grant ‘less’. Of course, complexities abound even on this one dimension. Norway and the USA have adopted LMA for very different reasons, while Germany and France have developed programmes that lie differentially between the two approaches. When other dimensions are added – for instance, target populations and the universal or selective nature of the programmes – it becomes clear just how difficult it is to develop a meaningful typology of ‘workfare regimes’. Paradoxically, perhaps, this is helpful because it serves to move regime analysis beyond the now-dated preoccupations with Esping-Andersen’s decommodification index to a closer concern with the increasingly fragmented and ‘disorganised’ character of contemporary welfare states.

A further – significant – feature of the discussion concerns the degree to which the introduction of workfare programmes has led to a ‘convergence’ of national social assistance schemes. Lodemel and Trickey argue that convergence is essentially limited to a ‘re-balancing of rights and obligations in the provision of welfare’ (p. 307) – an adjustment that arguably owes something to American ideas about the nature of worklessness. However, the editors point out that, with the partial exception of the UK, actual workfare policies are not simply American imports and owe more to current EU concerns about social exclusion. If there is a degree of convergence in terms of actual policies, it is limited to those countries
that have developed the HRD approach to workfare and which share similar (centralised) administrative arrangements in relation to social assistance. In general, though, there is a good deal of diversity among the regimes under review – and, beyond the forensic analysis of workfare policies themselves, the real issue is their effectiveness. This aspect is not dealt with in this volume, not least because it raises one worrying difficulty with all forms of workfare that the volume does not address: that as all compulsory programmes expand, they increasingly ‘target recipients who have greater and greater barriers to work [and that] the result of redesignating groups as “work-able” and of tightening work-testing criteria is that programmes now encompass people who in an earlier era would have been considered unable to (or incapable of) work’ (p. 285).

NICK ELLISON
University of Durham


This book is an exercise in prospective policy evaluation. In 1996 the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act changed the basis of the US social assistance system, removing the safety net available to families with dependent children and replacing it with time-limited financial assistance that is in most cases conditional on participation in the employment market. Bill Clinton had campaigned on the premise of ending Welfare as the US knew it but, having lost the political initiative, he saw the proposition of work obligations after two years replaced by the ending of entitlement to benefit after two years. In addition, responsibility for Welfare was passed from the federal to state governments and funding shifted from a demand-led system, which automatically compensated for economic fluctuations, to one based on fixed block grants that did not.

In Spring 1997, the editors of the volume formulated some twelve questions that they considered important in understanding the likely prospects of the reform. They invited many of the foremost US economists with an interest in public policy to tackle the questions either by reviewing existing literature or by undertaking new analyses. The resultant text is a state of the art treatise on what economics can say about the working of the bottom end of the US labour market. The individual contributions differ in style and approach, but the reader who abhors statistical modelling, large tables and algebraic formulae will have to rely on the succinct summary of findings provided by the editors in their introduction. Because this is economics, the volume is necessarily devoid of insights provided by the kind of qualitative studies that have so enriched understanding of the British labour market and that are also beginning to become available in the US.

Despite being an important source data and analysis on the US labour market, the volume is in some respects an enigma even in its own terms. First, in the fabled rationalistic world that begets economic models, one might have expected this kind of analysis to be assembled before the policy was implemented rather than afterwards. The real world is, of course, driven by ideology and political
compromise, and the consequences of welfare reform were initially less impor-
tant than the reform itself; politicians wanted to be seen to be responding to pop-
ularist concerns about welfare undermining the work ethic and fostering
immorality. Even allowing for welfare-to-work demonstration projects that are
sometimes cited as the blueprint for evidence based policy-making in the UK,
policy typically precedes research and analysis in the US rather than vice-versa.
Secondly, the editors must have foreseen that the volume would inevitably
become dated as direct evidence on the impact of the 1996 reforms became
available. This has already happened. Finally, the volume draws on data neces-
sarily collected before the reform to establish statistical relationships and
explanatory models. It is as least possible that these relationships and the
processes that underlie them could have been changed by welfare reform,
thereby rendering the models obsolete.

If there are concerns about extrapolating between either side of the 1996
reforms in the US, how much more dangerous is it to use these analyses to reflect
on the consequences of the New Deal programmes in the UK? Yet I defy the
British reader not to ponder on the following US findings. Unskilled employees
experience the same percentage growth in earnings per year of work as skilled
ones and women the same as men. While such trends mean that absolute dis-
parities widen for each cohort of new recruits, unskilled workers and women can
achieve modest wage growth if they remain in employment – although they
may have to move job regularly voluntarily to maximise wages. But wage
growth will not allow everyone to earn his or her way out of poverty and the
contributors to this volume – generally not free marketeers – view subsidised
wages and childcare as essential tools of labour market management.

Less positively, low-skilled workers find it less easy than others to acquire jobs
and are more likely to lose them again quickly, or to slip out of the labour market
altogether. Holzer and LaLonde are not much convinced by the efficacy of US
programmes to increase skills – partly because the jobs may be the cause of high
turnover as much as the people who fill them. Instead, they advocate a range of
measures to promote job and employment stability with existing employers or
within industrial sectors. Will Labour’s second term see New Deal necessarily
supplemented by post-employment measures?

More worrying is the ‘greater cyclicality of the low wage labour market’: unskilled workers lose out most in a recession. Labour had the luxury of imple-
menting the New Deal in a rising labour market when it was most likely to be
effective. Come an economic downturn, it may still be necessary to resort to
targeted public sector employment programmes as advocated, in this volume, by
David Ellwood, architect of Clinton’s original welfare reform proposals.

ROBERT WALKER
University of Nottingham

David T. Ellwood, Rebecca M. Blank, Joseph Blasi, Douglas Kruse, William
A. Niskanen and Karen Lynn-Dyson, *A Working Nation: workers, work and
government in the New Economy*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2000,
xvi+146 pp., £16.95 pbk.

*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402306639

This short book is made up of three major articles plus a more neo-liberal and
polemical essay by Niskanen. The three offer useful data and discussion on important socioeconomic changes in the United States over the past quarter century. David Ellwood presents data on wage dispersion and income inequality in a reasonably accessible way, illustrating what he justifiably describes as ‘monumental changes’ over the last twenty-five years. He says that the ‘biggest winners ... were the well-to-do’ while ‘men in the bottom two thirds of the wage distribution gained little or nothing’ and ‘in the lower wage groupings, wages were lower than they were twenty-three years ago’, while ‘women’s earnings rose dramatically at all levels’ which simply reflected their increased involvement in paid employment. The incomes of ‘families with two workers’ rose slightly, but only because women’s earnings offset the decline in most men’s earnings. Most dramatically, perhaps, ‘for the bottom third of children, family income is 16 per cent lower that it was almost a quarter of a century ago’ (all the above quotes from p. 31). Such data will come as no surprise to JSP readers, but it is still a vivid corrective to popular stereotypes of the United States as the land of plenty and opportunity. It demonstrates, once again, that the neo-liberal promise of ‘trickle down’ is a serious myth. With the tightening of the labour market since 1996, Ellwood detects a modest improvement in the position of the low paid compared to those on middle incomes, but he anticipates that such modest gains will be swept aside in the downturn which is now upon us.

Rebecca Blank briefly reviews a range of ‘public policy responses’ which she suggests address the issue of increasing income inequality. Like New Labour, the focus is on measures aimed at those actually or potentially in low-paid employment such as improved education and training for underachievers, higher minimum wage, employment linked tax credits, and subsidy to work-related benefits such as health insurance and childcare. The minimum wage in the US rose 19 per cent in real terms between 1989 and 1997. The maximum earned income tax credit for a lone mother with two children increased 210 per cent in real terms in the same period, to be worth $3,656 per year. Without measures such as these, income dispersion and/or unemployment would presumably be much worse. There has been a trade-off between ‘subsidised’ low-paid employment and unemployment. This raises what could be described as the modern form of ‘the Speenhamland’ question. The new forms of welfare directed at the working poor are in effect subsidies to low wages. The economic injustices, resulting in part from these public policy measures, are being pursued in the contemporary struggles for a ‘living wage’ in the US.

There is no discussion in this book of the incomes (or lack of them) of those who cannot take or find paid employment, nor of the taxation of those at the higher levels of the income distribution. Indeed income and capital taxation of all groups is not aired as a policy issue. Both these are off limits, not only in this book but also in much public policy discourse. Politicians’ focus in the US and the UK is on the working poor. There is also no specific reference in the book to the abolition of mean-tested assistance to families, including many of the working poor, in 1996.

Kruse and Blasi give a detailed account of the development of ‘new employee–employer relationships’, reviewing a range of issues and practices including employee stock ownership, flexible and temporary contracts, training programmes etc. They suggest that there has not been an overall deterioration
in the quality of employer–employee relationships, but that a greater diversity of
degree, good and bad, is emerging. So, while these essays do not and cannot
claim to offer a comprehensive overview of policy, the data is accessibly pre-
NORMAN GINSBURG
University of North London

Kingdom, France, Germany and Public Sector Health Care in the USA*, CICITAS,

One reads more and more that healthcare rationing is inevitable. Largely as a
result of the growing influence of economics-based models predicated on ubiqui-
tous scarcity and insatiable demand, there has been a re-framing of the scholarly
discourse on resource allocation, which places the ‘R’ word centre stage. Even
where we did not know it was occurring, we learn that implicit rationing was
present all along, and we are told that this should be replaced by explicit
rationing according to rational criteria. The jury is still out regarding the ulti-
mate viability of this approach, but I found it refreshing to read a book that chal-
lenges the inevitability thesis. Redwood is concerned to investigate whether the
various policies and practices that are conventionally lumped under the rubric of
‘rationing’ really belong there, to offer a critique of rationing as a technical solu-
tion to contemporary problems, and to suggest some alternative ways forward.

One section of the book especially useful for those who teach this topic is an
early chapter that offers a taxonomy of the main cost containment, control and
regularity mechanisms that have been identified with rationing in the four
nations studied. Redwood classifies these as white, grey and black according to
the extent of the constraints imposed on necessary medical care. He makes the
telling point that rationing rarely depends on a straightforward dichotomy
between treatment and denial, but is a more nuanced phenomenon in which it is
the relative balance of the various interacting policies and practices that counts.

Redwood distinguishes between situations where rationing is inevitable
because of the finite supply of resources, such as organs for transplantation, and
situations where treatments are denied or limited because of an unwillingness to
channel sufficient monies into health care systems. He argues that while
rationing is inevitable under conditions of physical scarcity, there are alterna-
tives when funding is the main issue. Two short chapters on health care expen-
ditures and health outcomes highlight the relatively poor record of the UK in
relation to other developed countries. The book reiterates the familiar point that
the UK is seriously under-resourced in terms of funding and numbers of doctors
and nurses per head of population. Although productivity (as measured by such
things as *per capita* consultations and bed occupancy) compares favourably with
other nations, the UK fares less well in terms of morbidity and health outcomes.

Four chapters are taken up with consideration of the evidence about the
extent and nature of rationing in the countries studied. Redwood argues that the
UK exemplifies ‘a rationing climate’, manifest *inter alia* in waiting lists, regular
media exposes and a general resistance to medical and pharmaceutical innova-
tion. The author contends that this is linked to the particular history of the NHS.
with its reliance on funding via general taxation, resistance to co-payments and
distaste for supplementary insurance, all of which in his view translate into
chronic underfunding. France faces the quite different problems of a superabun-
dance of health care resources, and such rationing as does occur arises as a
result of cost containment measures intended to clamp down on the over-supply
of doctors and hospital facilities. Constraints on treatments are largely absent,
and successive governments have struggled unsuccessfully to control health
care expenditures. Redwood believes that the ability to sustain comprehensive
services in the face of recurrent financial crises can be attributed largely to the
system of supplementary health insurance, which transfers part of the financial
burden to the *mutuelles* and private insurance companies. Cost containment
is also a major issue in Germany, but here the problem has been the inability of
the sickness funds to further raise premiums in the face of employer resistance
and the sluggish post-unification economy. At the end of the 1990s this led to
the capping of some budgets for hospital and medical services, and proposals
for emergency measures to control drug prescribing costs. Actually the authori-
ties stopped short of introducing radical reforms, and Redwood concludes that
at worst the grey area between cost containment and rationing is becoming
larger. The discussion of the US healthcare system emphasises the growth of
public funding, and makes the case that it should now be seen as a mixed health
care economy, rather than a predominantly private one. Redwood highlights
moves to limit care in some public programmes, particularly Medicaid, but
argues that these amount to grey-area measures rather than out-and-out
rationing.

Overall the book provides a useful, if sometimes slightly superficial, survey of
rationing policies and practice in four developed nations. The main disappoint-
ment for me was that it goes a step beyond purely scholarly analysis to advance
a particular political agenda. This emerges most clearly when Redwood turns to
the alternatives to rationing. The author sees rationing as emerging from central
planning and particularly the planned economy of the post-war period, which
saw the birth of the NHS. His solution is to replace the state health care system
with mixed public/private provision. Accordingly, he argues that the principle of
solidarity should be redefined to cover only those unable to pay for their own
care, and that there should be diversification of funding sources, a wider choice
of (private) providers and more emphasis on individual responsibility for health.
One is left with the impression that, as in some of the North American commen-
tary, rationing has been used as a spectre to argue for the dismantling of the
NHS.

DAVID HUGHES
University of Wales Swansea

James J. Rice and Michael J. Prince, *Changing Politics of Canadian Social

*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402326631

The contemporary literature on social policy reform can be divided roughly into
two camps: accounts on the impact of economic globalisation, and accounts on
domestic politics and social trends. Rice and Prince’s book is an explicit attempt
to transcend this dichotomy, by studying the dialectical relationship between
economic globalisation and ‘societal pluralization in the Canadian welfare state’. Dealing with broad historical and social issues, this work might prove interesting to most students of social policy.

The first two chapters provide a general overview of the impact of economic globalisation and ‘societal pluralization’ on contemporary social policy. In their discussion about globalisation, the authors extensively refer to the work of Karl Polanyi, who appears as a crucial theoretical reference throughout the book. According to Rice and Prince, the advent of the modern welfare state created an equilibrium between ‘cooperative communities’ (social protection) and ‘market economy’ (economic liberalism). Today, economic internationalisation and the supremacy of liberalism are eroding the foundations of this economic, political and social equilibrium. As a consequence of this community fragilisation, new social movements emerge and exacerbate ‘societal pluralization’ (p. 9). For the author, ‘pluralization encompasses what has been called the politics of difference, identity politics, labour market polarization, and elements of postmodernism’ (p. 25). These general trends can be found in most Western societies, but the book illustrates them by referring almost exclusively to the Canadian context. Here, a more comparative outlook could have been most useful.

The following four chapters of the book offer a remarkable synthesis concerning the historical development and the current transformations of the Canadian welfare state. The third chapter, which deals with the post-war expansion of social policy, is especially interesting. Directly influenced by Keynesian arguments and the ‘Beveridge report’, the construction of the Canadian welfare state also involved a reshaping of the federal political system. The post-war era favoured a relative centralisation of this system, and a steady decline of the municipalities as social policy actors. On the intellectual side, the state was then considered as the dominant, if not the only legitimate, actor in the field of social policy (p. 82).

In the fourth chapter, Rice and Prince show how the economic, social and political ‘crisis of the welfare state’ of the 1970s and 1980s directly challenged this state-oriented vision of social policy. This chapter offers a concise survey of the main critiques of the Welfare State that have been formulated since the 1970s. In addition to the traditional Marxist and conservative perspectives, the authors focus on the feminist perspective, the ‘critiques from the community’ (local and identity-based organisations), and the ‘critiques from insiders’ (front-line workers, recipients). Despite their heterogeneity, most of these critiques undermined the statist and bureaucratic orientation taken by Canadian social policy during and immediately after the Second World War. On the political front itself, the end of the public commitment to full employment as well as federal and provincial efforts to control social spending has transformed the Canadian welfare state (ch. 5).

The sixth chapter offers a remarkable synthesis concerning the impact of globalisation and economic liberalism on social policy. Here, the authors discuss the ‘marketization of social programs’, that is, the influence of economic values and the culture of capitalism on social policy as well as the public sector activities at large. ‘Marketization’ is not a new process, but one can witness ‘the intensification of designing social programs on the ethic of the economic market’ (p. 149). In fact, this process does not automatically lead to the privatisation of social pro-
grammes. ‘Marketization’ is mostly about making current social policies ‘market friendly’, without privatising them.

Alongside ‘marketization’, the replacement of universal programmes by targeted measures is another key characteristic of the new politics of Canadian social policy (ch. 7). According to Rice and Prince, the targeting of imposing social programs (such as the replacement of Family Allowances by income-tested tax credits) is not caused only by the current logic of fiscal austerity. In a national context characterised by ‘societal pluralization’, the intellectual support for universality is declining in most policy areas (health care and education being the main exceptions).

The authors also acknowledge the centrality of the feminist perspective in the current debate on social policy (ch. 8). Often neglected in traditional scholarship on social policy, feminist research convincingly portrays ‘the welfare state as a mixed blessing for women. On the one hand, the welfare state offers women benefits, jobs, and some supportive laws and services; on the other, it imposes controls, perpetuates stereotypes, and reinforces dependencies’ (p. 205). Progress has been made, but ‘cutbacks to public sector services and programs fall disproportionately on women’ (p. 206).

In the last two chapters of the book, the authors explicitly outline their own vision of social policy development. From their democratic and pluralist perspective, the new politics of social policy is really about decentralising the welfare state while empowering the civil society: ‘social policy must and can be sued to encourage people in the community to come together to identify common problems, develop local solutions, allocate resources to address problems, and open the process so it includes a diverse group of participants in the community-development process’ (p. 207). Considering the existence of a ‘darker side of community’ (authoritarianism, conservatism), decentralisation must avoid fragmentation and discrimination by focusing on interdependence: ‘At the deepest level, the new politics of social policy must champion the idea of interdependence and interconnection between all communities’ (p. 242). In the context of economic globalisation and ‘societal pluralization’, the state still has an important role to play. Yet after two decades of retrenchment and declining public confidence in the state, ‘the federal and provincial governments must rebuild their social role and capacity in order to re-energise the politics of social policy’ (p. 245). To achieve this goal, a new attack on poverty based on the principles of ‘negative income tax’ must be launched. Reforms at the international level, such as the creation of a financial transaction tax, must also become a central element of this new political strategy. Moreover, this strategy must widen the scope of policy debate by inviting ‘nongovernmental groups into the discussion’ (p. 242).

One may not accept this communitarian creed without further questioning its assumptions, but overall, it is impossible not to recognise the interest and the intellectual usefulness of this concise and well-written book. The only significant problem with this work is the idea that ‘cultural recognition’ can be labelled as one of the three dominant social paradigms (alongside ‘economic liberalism’ and ‘social protection’) in the Canadian politics of social policy. Since the 1980s, multiculturalism and identity politics have not directly influenced social policy-making in Canada. In fact, identity politics has divided the left in a myriad of advocacy groups that generally fail to unite around a broad social and political agenda.
Despite its limits, Changing Politics of Canadian Social Policy will prove useful to those interested in learning about the Canadian welfare state and, more generally, the actual transformations of social policy.

DANIEL BÉLAND
University of Calgary


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402336638

I was delighted to be asked to review this book for the Journal of Social Policy. As someone who teaches welfare finance to undergraduates I am always searching for up to date and accessible texts. However, when I first saw the title my initial reaction was ‘why housing?’ After all, education and health services could be argued to have strong links to the economy (human capital theory) whereas housing does not. Also education and health services could be said to be universally available, whereas social housing is not. So my next thought was that perhaps housing was included to demonstrate the difference in central control of funding between areas which are central (health and education) and those which are peripheral to central government concerns – along the lines of Bulpitt’s notion of centre and periphery (Bulpitt, 1983). However, on reading the work I was surprised to find that this is not a central line of investigation. That is not to say that useful and interesting comparisons were not drawn – they were.

This book, which is in part based upon ESRC funded research, is well written and is accessible to social policy undergraduates. As the title suggests, the work explores how central government attempts to ‘control the locals’ with a focus upon health education and funding for social housing. It is made clear that each of the authors wrote different chapters of the book, but the work still hangs together well and there was clearly a high degree of interaction between them during the writing process.

The content. There are, of course, a number of ways in which central government can control local services but the two key mechanisms are regulation and funding. The authors acknowledge the important recent work in the area of regulation by Hood et al. (1999) – and I could add the work of Baldwin and Cave (1999) – and consequently decided to focus their attention in this book upon funding and funding mechanisms. After a short introduction, the book is divided into four sections. Section 1 introduces and analyses formula funding. It does this by charting the intellectual, political and historical developments up to 1980. In section 2 three chapters set out how the funding systems, which applied at the end of the 1990s, have developed and now operate, focusing in turn upon the three focus areas of health, education and social housing subsidies. The third part of the book reports the results of a series of interviews with actors in various government departments, agencies and ‘coal face’ workers. One of the key findings was that in some cases the message from the centre was not being received or accepted upon the ground. This is, of course, not a revelation. A number of authors drawing upon the literature in contemporary organisations theory have pointed to the resistance which can occur when external
goals are imposed upon organisations and how this can lead to (re)interpretation of service goals by producers (Shaw, 1997). However, this is reflected upon in the final section of the book, which tries to draw lessons from section 3. This final section brings together the strands of argument put forward in the book and compares and contrasts the funding systems in the three focus areas before pointing to ways in which the funding systems may be advantageously developed in the future.

This book will be a useful addition to my undergraduate welfare finance reading list. It goes into more depth than Howard Glennerster’s *Paying for Welfare* and covers a range of different issues. However, at £40.00 per copy it is a book that they will mainly be acquiring from the library unless a paperback version is produced.


IAN SHAW
University of Nottingham


Within government rhetoric community development and citizen participation are increasingly identified as central strategies for the ‘modernisation’ of social welfare in a complex and globalising world. They feature as key elements in ‘community’ or neighbourhood capacity-building, active citizenship, local economic and social development or regeneration, as a means for the delivery of welfare services, and as a way of ensuring legitimation of government policy and practice. Yet working within a participatory framework also continues to offer the possibility of empowerment, emancipation and the expansion of direct political engagement. Despite this continuing and growing interest in ‘tools for change’ there is a relative dearth of accessible literature that both theorises and examines strategies for local intervention. Majorie Mayo’s book in which she advances the importance of local work at a cultural level, understood both as a design for living and as art or media, as one strategy to facilitate participation and empowerment is thus a welcome addition.

Mayo’s commitment to local strategic interventions and the importance of both the cultural sphere and personal and collective identities is very clearly stated. However, she is adamant about the contested nature of such concepts as ‘culture’, ‘community’ and ‘identity’, the politics of social movements, and the need for a critical approach to any policy or strategic initiative. She is equally clear about the contentious history of such local interventions and the necessity to locate contemporary initiatives in a global context both theoretically and in practice. In mapping the competing perspectives Mayo refers not only to a range
of critical social theorists but also to the analyses provided by user and grassroots organizations. Mayo moves comfortably between theoretical debates – Marxism and post-structuralism with Bourdieu as a bridge in the area of cultural production and change – international and national policy agendas, and local initiatives. In advocating the use of cultural strategies within the UK context, however, more attention might have been given to exploring the relative failure to date of earlier, albeit limited, efforts to build and sustain the articulation and continuing expression of diverse and vibrant local cultures. In this regard Mayo points to the limited and experimental nature of previous policy but pays less attention to the powerful hold of hegemonic culture over disadvantaged communities and the consequent impact this has on local practice and politics.

With its focus on the potential of cultural strategies for participation the book is likely to be of immediate appeal to a relatively small segment of the broad social policy community. Certainly, it will be of relevance to those involved in ‘cultural’ work as well as those concerned with community development more generally who must grapple with its contradictory nature so well illustrated here. Chapters on the specific application of cultural strategies in relation to local economic development, migrants and asylum seekers, and health and well-being will be of direct use to those engaged in these areas either as frontline providers or local policy makers. Similarly, the opening four conceptual and contextual chapters exploring competing approaches to culture, community, identity politics, community arts and local development will be of interest to the growing numbers involved in regeneration and community-based approaches to welfare or citizenship.

Yet, the book offers more than a critical and contextual guide to those engaged in specific aspects of social policy. It also provides an insight into how to write about social policy and practice. Not only is it written in an accessible style that should be welcomed by students, policy makers, and theorists alike but it also contains four key ingredients for successfully communicating social policy. First, the book is full of many illuminating examples of cultural practice that are all located within a theoretical context. Secondly, the examples are global in scope and Mayo demonstrates how it is possible to effectively draw upon and integrate policy and practice from the ‘north’ and ‘south’ in which the learning is multidirectional. Thirdly, Mayo uses a wide range of policy documentation from both global institutions as well as national governments to inform her argument. Fourthly, she brings a critical and reflexive approach to both theory and practice in which one never loses sight of the other: theory is grounded in practice and practice in theory. This approach ensures that the reader never forgets that social policy and intervention is both purposive, grounded in a vision of how the world should be, and the importance of understanding and acting upon the nature of such visions.

CHRIS MILLER
University of the West of England, Bristol


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402356630

Homelessness has generated a vast literature. There is always more to say about
the subject. This book is one of many that asserts tackling the loss of a home cannot itself adequately address the problem. If people are to be successfully integrated into the community and maintain a tenancy, access training and obtain employment then support in varying degrees is needed. This is now increasingly recognised in the fifteen member states of the European Union.

Despite the size of the literature there has been little comparative research on this pan-European phenomenon. This book is to be welcomed as it fills a gap in European social policy. The empirical content of the book relates to the 1999 national reports of the correspondents of the European Observatory on Homelessness who conduct research on behalf of FEANSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the homeless.

The book begins with plotting European trends. In many of the countries of the European Union the provision of supported accommodation or what the authors call support in housing (support delivered to people living in mainstream housing) is a direct response to the closure of large-scale institutional establishments for homeless people. However, of course, underlying these broad developments the fifteen countries have different housing and social welfare systems. Rejecting any grand theory of welfare regime posited by researchers such as Esping Andersen (1990) the authors opt for a simple three-fold classification in which to locate their examination of the development of supported accommodation. The first grouping is those countries, such as Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, where the process of de-institutionalisation has had a long history. Second are those countries where the development of supported housing has really emerged from a strong commitment to social inclusion and reintegration and social protection legislation. Examples here would be Austria, Belgium, France and Luxembourg. The last group of countries includes Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain where de-institutionalisation itself may be weak and where the role of the family and civil society is dominant.

The authors of this book adopt the now well-established position that a discussion of homelessness should take place within debates about social exclusion. A number of writers see homelessness as perhaps its most extreme manifestation. The aim of this book is to present a comparative analysis of the provision of European housing and social support services with a particular emphasis on exploring their contribution to reducing the social exclusion of homeless people throughout Europe. There, is however, a key policy issue here. Social exclusion, itself, is a central EU policy concern but the principle of subsidiarity has meant that housing policy is the responsibility of the member states. Whilst no one would now probably disagree with the current authors’ belief in the role of support to homeless individuals as the only way of achieving lasting social inclusion and reintegration into the community the neglect of housing policy’s contribution to homelessness can be unhelpful. The lack of good quality, appropriate and, most crucially, affordable housing has been the traditional explanation for homelessness. My contention is that solutions to homelessness not only need to be embedded in a holistic approach to people’s need, including their need for support, but still need to address the shortage of the right sort of housing. My only criticism, therefore, of this book, is that it pays little attention to the very different housing policies, tenure patterns and housing circumstances of the
member states and the interaction of these structural housing variables with the prevention and relief of homelessness.

These points notwithstanding, the book is a very useful source of reference to developments in the fifteen member states relating to the tackling of homelessness through the provision of both housing and support. The key observation that it makes is that supported housing provision throughout Europe is very underdeveloped particularly in those countries where the role of the family in the delivery of welfare is dominant. A considerable amount of detail is provided on the different types of provision available and on the range of support services: housing and domestic, counselling and skills, personal and health care. The authors also place a great deal of importance on providing a person-centred service where the homeless person has some chance of feeling in control.

The concluding chapters of the book deal very well with the issues of evaluation. Providing support to homeless people has been very much an act of faith. There are very few good studies of the impact of supported housing programmes. However, this does not mean that the problems are not well known. The authors neatly dissect these. Projects so often do not have clear objectives, funding policies are often short term and opportunistic and, most fundamentally, there is lack of co-ordination between different sectors: housing, social care and social security. The authors make reference several times to the UK programme Supporting People. This serves as an excellent case study for all the issues highlighted in the book. The intention of Supporting People is excellent, the expansion of support services to people living in ordinary settings, but its implementations looks set to continue the problems of inadequate funding and demarcation disputes between different agencies.


CHRISTINE OLDMAN
University of York


Identifying themselves as ‘academics with attitude’ and allies of service users, Barnes and Bowl investigate the impact of the collective action of mental health service users and survivors. Taking Over the Asylum is primarily aimed at academics, practitioners working in the mental health professions and policy makers. Utilising interesting and diverse evidence from research and action in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, this analysis is written in an informed and lively manner that reflects years of research and a genuine commitment to the development of empowerment strategies by the authors.

There is a thorough analysis of current debates and dilemmas associated with mental health and empowerment. The authors explore the multiple dimensions of disempowerment and empowerment and show how ideology, policy and practice all serve to disempower people with severe mental distress. They propose a comprehensive view of empowerment and suggest that transformation will need
to take place in many different locations if real change in people’s lives is to be achieved. The strategies for empowerment that have resulted from the development of autonomous action on the part of mental health service users and action within service systems are explored. An examination of the similarities and differences in the objectives and actions of those concerned with the empowerment of people who have used mental health services, reveals conflicts within user movements and between users and their carers and mental health service staff. The impact of the diverse strategies on mental health services and the lives of people with severe psychological distress are discussed.

Clearly, since the late 1980s, mental health policy guidelines have stressed the need for service user involvement in the planning and delivery of services. Nevertheless, Barnes and Bowl question the extent to which real change has taken place. They recognise that achievements have been made over the past twenty years, with the shift in emphasis from consumer choice to partnerships; but, they remain cautious about the depth of the transformation that has taken place and suggest that a fundamental shift in the balance of power remains to be achieved. Moreover, they argue that the concept of empowerment and effective strategies through which people experiencing psychological distress might become empowered cannot be defined solely by the relationships with mental health services; empowerment needs to be within a broad social context. The contexts within which empowerment is sought include the social relations of everyday life as well as mental health policy and services. Thus, attention needs to be paid to social issues such as employment, housing, relationships, poverty, stigma and exclusion. There is a useful chapter on social movements and social change which extends the debate beyond mental health policy. The authors conclude by reflecting, quite optimistically, on the policy and practice context within which future strategies for empowerment are likely to proceed.

Throughout their analysis, Barnes and Bowl emphasise the importance of understanding the impact of severe psychological distress from the perspective of mental health service users and survivors. The focus on the user/survivor ‘voice’ in Taking Over the Asylum furthers our knowledge about this valuable perspective and as such is a useful contribution for the development of empowerment strategies.

MARY KNYSPEL
Coventry University


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402376633

A recurrent theme in reforming social security is greater involvement of the private sector, replacing some or many functions currently conducted by central government. This book examines the idea that publicly organised social security be replaced by some system where individuals have their own accounts, owned by them and (with restrictions) controlled by them. Proponents of such schemes tend to suggest improved rates of return and, potentially, a greater willingness to save. This being an American volume, addressing US concerns most directly, the
social security element relates primarily to pensions on retirement. Sometimes benefits in case of disability and survivors are mentioned.

Of course, the issues under discussion are relevant also to the UK, and more widely. Perhaps the Tory-proposed ‘basic pension plus’ was the nearest proposal to a whole-scale privatisation. Even so, many proposals do envisage a larger role for individually owned pots of money, rather than collective provision. The recent stakeholder pensions are one instance of trying to move from a state to a private second-tier pension.

There are various arguments that may be made for and against such a move. Often they are a balance of whether mistrust of the state (with regular changes of regime and the multi-billion pound fiasco on SERPS inheritance) now exceeds or is less than mistrust of the private sector (with its miss-selling scandal on private pensions, and concerns about annuity values). The focus of this volume is more narrowly on the possible structures for arranging a large number of private personal accounts (albeit with aggregation of funds on some arrangements). In particular, the volume addresses the issue of how much such arrangements would cost in practice. Of course, the (high) costs of private sector insurance have been an issue since before Beveridge.

The consensus of opinion is that a relatively low-cost system of private accounts can be introduced. However, it would need to ‘piggyback’ (free-ride?) on existing state systems of payroll. To keep costs low, the range of investment options would also need to be somewhat circumscribed, as would freedom to do much with the funds associated with each account. The volume does not address issues relating to the risks and returns from having individual accounts, only the likely administrative costs of such a reform: hence, critics might object that a higher average return would leave some worse off than under the state guarantee. The issue of risk is the subject of a separate report.

The volume itself consists of a concise and helpful editor’s introduction, followed by four substantive contributions. A final chapter provides a panel session of industry perspectives. Each chapter is followed by a formal comment, and then a short summary of discussion from the conference. This structure ensures maximum value from having held the conference, and is a feature that I am sure would benefit other collections of papers on a particular theme emerging from a conference.

UK readers should beware that there is a fair amount of US-specific jargon to contend with. Award yourself only one point for knowing what a 401(k) plan is, with two points for knowing the details of 401(c) plans. A detailed glossary would have assisted international readers, I suspect. However, one chapter does approach the question by comparing privatised or semi-private arrangements in selected countries (UK, Sweden, Chile, Australia). This makes clear how far the state has taken an active role in establishing what are seen as private sector schemes — with Chile being a good example of the state having to establish much of the market.

This is clearly an important area. The administrative costs of privatised accounts are clearly a significant part of the debate. If anything, this volume seems to want to remove this potential objection from the debate, by insisting that costs need not be high — even if some discussants feel the estimates are on the low side. However, for more general readers the volume will contain rather
more depth than breadth on this topic. A detailed index of subjects and authors is included.

STEPHEN MCKAY
Policy Studies Institute


This book reports the findings of a research project funded under the ESRC’s Population and Household Change Programme. It returns to three classic studies of the 1940s and 1950s (see Sheldon, 1948; Townsend, 1957; Young and Willmott, 1957; Willmott and Young, 1960) that separately explored the nature of family and community networks in three contrasting urban areas (Bethnal Green in London, Wolverhampton and Woodford in Essex). According to the prevailing opinion of that period, families were leaving older people to fend for themselves within the framework of the newly established ‘welfare state’. However, this body of research was able to show that the contrary was true, kinship and family life was of continuing importance, and that this was partly attributable to the inadequacies of the ‘welfare state’.

Returning to the sites of the original studies (referred to as the ‘baseline studies’), this research investigated whether the nature of family life and support for older people has changed in the intervening fifty years. This may convey that it merely reports the results of a particular piece of research. Yet, this very welcome and important new book is more than simply a research report. It contributes to the growing body of gerontological literature offering important sociological insights into the nature of growing old into the early twenty-first century. By adopting a comparative historical framework for the analysis, it allows a greater understanding into current debates around the ‘quality of life’ of older people. This is currently part of another ESRC programme, called ‘Growing Older’, which seeks to investigate different aspects of quality of life in old age and thereby contribute to the development of policies and practice in the field, and extend quality life.

The book is divided into four parts. The first discusses the methodology and framework employed and gives descriptions of the three areas drawing on the three baseline studies of Sheldon, Townsend and Young and Willmott. The second reports the empirical findings in terms of family life, ‘neighbouring’ and social support. The final substantive section considers these findings in the light of the large amount of qualitative and quantitative data generated. Within this section, I was pleased to see a very interesting and insightful chapter documenting the family care and support in minority ethnic groups in two of the three sites, Wolverhampton and Bethnal Green. There was also a very illuminating discussion into the world of leisure in retirement and the transformation of ‘lifestyles’ of older people since the 1950s. Finally, there is a concluding section drawing out the broader sociological findings and consequences for social and public policy, and how this might be better implemented.

This book, written by members of one of the foremost social gerontological research centres in the UK, will soon establish itself as an important text within
the social gerontological and, hopefully, the wider, social policy literature. The research upon which the book is based confirms that although the family has changed since the 1950s, it nevertheless retains its influential position and role within the support and care of and for older people. Moreover, familial relationships continue to be of significance to older people themselves. However, the authors do identify that it is ‘much less easy to talk about “the family of older people”’ (p. 265). They argue that there is a diversity of types or greater heterogeneity of types of older people and families than there were during the 1950s. Further, they suggest that ‘locality’ is a significant variable when assessing the ‘management and production of support’ since each has a distinct development and history. Locality, as others have found, also continues to be important in the context of demonstrating real social and economic differences and social divisions.

This text will no doubt become required reading for all social gerontologists and indeed, all those with an interest in social policy. We should encourage our students to read it, since, if it does nothing else, it should encourage them to read the classic studies of Sheldon, Townsend and Young and Wilmott.


TONY MALTBY
University of Birmingham


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402396636

This book takes the form of a series of conference papers presented at a one-day symposium in October 1998 under the auspices of the British Academy. Contributors were selected on the basis of their eminence in the fields of education, social sciences and statistics. The four main sections of the book (on a comparative perspective, a historical perspective, the role of public examinations, and problems of measurement) each consists of a paper, followed by a shorter ‘discussion’ by one or more contributors. None of the contributors feels able to produce an objective definition of the concept of educational standards, or prescription for their measurement. But the articles, and responses to them, do place policy debates about standards and their measurement within a broader context.

The opening, comparative, section contains much interesting material on assessment systems, and their purposes and administration, in several countries. This demonstrates that the English system differs from others in its focus on criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced national assessment (most educational systems are primarily concerned to rank individual candidates as a basis for selection), and in its claim to maintain standards over time (other systems tend to be more concerned about reliability and fairness of ranking only in a given year). Both the main article and discussion also reveal the apparent
confusion amongst such terms as ‘expected’, ‘average’ and ‘minimum’ standards in current national literacy and numeracy targets.

These themes also inform the historical section of the book, much of which consists of a thorough analysis of the Revised Code in English elementary education. These ‘standards’ and their context are compared with the concerns of current education policy, giving interesting historical insights into the continuity and reemergence of themes and issues.

The paper and discussion on public examinations again raise issues about their objectivity, and give many grounds for caution against reading too much into them. Public examinations results do not, by themselves, provide us with the qualitative data on which to base any worthwhile judgements about falling or rising educational standards. But they may provide us with useful qualitative data on changing educational objectives and expectations. This indicates a probable fruitful line of enquiry. Although the main article does not elaborate in much detail the research agenda that this might stimulate, further approaches are developed in the ensuing discussion.

The final section, on measurement, proposes a statistical model that identifies factors to consider in any measure of performance, and in inferring from these any judgements about standards. The value of the approach is that it does identify relevant factor; but it is also acknowledged that some of these cannot be effectively isolated, measured and operationalised. The discussants develop the implications by arguing that this precludes the general use of any ‘Platonic’ standard of educational performance, and significantly undermines attempts to make ‘aggregate’ comparisons of school performance.

One recurring theme throughout the book is the importance of professional judgements by teachers in determining and maintaining standards. But comparative material indicates the extent to which the English education system reflects a mistrust of schools and teachers by policy-makers. There is much material here for those interested in the role of teacher professionalism in the determination of educational standards.

Another recurring theme is the impossibility of producing an absolute definition of educational standards. Such definitions have to be understood in their historical, cultural and political contexts, including the purposes of systems of assessment. This should encourage an attitude of scepticism in the face of allegations of ‘rising’ or ‘falling’ standards, or of educational ‘dumbing down’.

This is a short book which offers many interesting and worthwhile insights. Some of these could usefully have been developed further; for example: the implications for the curriculum of an increased focus on standards and testing. Similarly, the book offers no prescriptions for teachers faced with a barrage of, often contradictory, recommendations concerning the benefits of, for example, mixed-ability, whole-class or small-group teaching. The focus of the book does remain quite narrow. Although it is titled ‘educational standards’, the focus is almost exclusively on schools. (Nevertheless, the analysis might re-enforce any scepticism felt by readers recently involved in attempting to operationalise ‘benchmarks’ in relation to university teaching!) The analysis remains focused on ‘standards’, and, perhaps appropriately, does not stray into the related, but different, concept of ‘quality’. This reviewer was also irritated by references on occasion to the ‘British’ education system, when discussing England (and possi-
bly Wales); as one (Scottish) contributor does acknowledge, Scottish education is different!

This is, nevertheless, a worthwhile contribution to an important policy debate, which at the time of writing (April 2001) represents the three highest priorities of the prime minister (‘education, education and education’).

MALCOLM LOMAS
Brunel University


JSP, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402406630

Starting with Goodman, White and Kwon (1998), there has been a burgeoning debate on the East Asian welfare model (Jacobs, 1998; Gough, 2000; Holliday, 2000) in the last few years. Tang’s book is one of the more recent attempts along this line. Two sets of reasons might account for such interest. One relates to the failure of welfare states in the West. The new focus on the East from Western social policy analysts is seen as a possible digression of interest, if not a search for an alternative welfare model. Second, many high-growth East Asian economies (particularly the tiger economies of Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea and Taiwan) were hard hit by the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Western observers are particularly interested in the impact of the crisis on social life. One such example is the setting up of a New Social Policy Forum for East Asia by the Asia–Europe Meeting within the World Bank since 1998, with an agenda to search for ways to better handle post-crisis social problems in the region. Broadly, two different approaches could be identified on the East Asian welfare discourse. The first approach asks whether there is a distinctive welfare regime in East Asia that differs fundamentally from the West. The preliminary answer is that it is not clear. Evidence has suggested that the East Asian welfare model might well be a variant of the Western welfare state with more emphasis on economic growth. The second approach seeks to ask more fundamental questions about the nature of East Asian welfare. For example, what is the nature of the relationship between the state and the family? How can social policy be integrated and contribute towards economic and political stability? This approach focuses more on the institutional framework and its underpinning values of the East Asia welfare systems in meeting social needs. Tang’s attempt aptly belongs to this genre.

Social Welfare Development in East Asia has a distinct feature. It is the first single-authored book covering all four tiger economies (Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea) and written entirely by an Asian of Chinese descent, who spent a greater part of his life in East Asia. This perhaps provides him a vantage point for his theoretical pursuit.

The book has eight chapters. The first two chapters are scene-setting where an overview of socio-economic conditions and a set of comparative welfare perspectives are presented. The major theme suggests that almost all of the four tiger economies can be identified as some form of developmental state where the government has the capacity and autonomy to carry out progressive and directed socio-economic policies. Tang argues that the underdevelopment of social welfare in the four developmental states is not accidental. It has been a deliber-
ate policy attempt (except South Korea) pursued since their formative years to forestall the development of a Western type welfare state.

Chapters 3 to 6 are individual country chapters outlining the uniqueness of social welfare development in the respective tiger states. The Capital Investment State was a starter and a key concept used to explain Singapore. Though not sufficiently defined, capital investment state is taken to mean that prime responsibility is assumed by the state in orchestrating growth-oriented social investment. As a form of legally enforced personal savings, the Central Provident Fund (CPF) system is described as the centrepiece of Singapore’s socio-economic structure. Capital accumulated through the fund is not meant simply for old age. It is used throughout one’s family life cycle for consumption such as home purchase, higher education, health insurance and personal investments. Tang is right to indicate that the CPF system is essentially non-redistributive. It has been reported that a majority of Singapore citizens have a rather low CPF account balance, which therefore triggered the fear that if the world economy continues to decline, they might face substantially contracted liquidity in future retirement.

Chapter 4 presents Taiwan as a paternalistic variant of the development state. To achieve political stability and legitimacy, the Kuomintang (formerly Taiwan’s main political party) has successfully utilised an array of public welfare to gain the support of public servants, servicemen and teachers. However, the democratisation process in the eighties has seen the demand for a more equitable distribution of welfare amongst different social groups. This was marked by the establishment of a universal health programme in 1995. Tang argues that as Taiwan goes into an era of political uncertainty, the likelihood that Taiwan will expand welfare is doubtful. Chapter 5 presents South Korea as an authoritarian developmental state very different from the other three. Though having suffered enormously from successive political turmoil and economic crises in the last two decades, South Korea is the only East Asian state that aspires to become a welfare state. Tang suggests that the unemployment insurance scheme introduced since 1995 proved extremely helpful to distressed families soon after the Asian financial crisis. However, the international financial rescue package from the IMF has set many restrictive fiscal and monetary constraints on public spending. A recessionary economic environment has led to massive lay-off and unemployment, which in turn, has strengthened the already strong unions and worker militancy.

The chapter on Hong Kong is perhaps most substantial. In chapter 6, Tang argues that, while Hong Kong does not fully fit into the definition of a development state, the new Special Administrative Region government has demonstrated strong intervention efforts in both the economic and social arena in the first four years of its reign. The onset of the Asian financial crisis, it is argued, provided an opportunity for new government to prove itself in developmentalism. However, partly due to the result of persistent economic decline and also partly to the result of a rather incompetent new administration, Tang argues that the chance that Hong Kong will develop welfare further is bleak. The benefits of the new mandatory private central provident fund scheme implemented since 2000 is in fact unclear. Many middle-class people are sceptical about whether the scheme would weather the world’s unstable economic environment and provide real income support in the long run.
Chapter 7 makes some interesting comparative observations in social expenditure and income inequality patterns amongst the four tiger economies. One observation is that while Korea and Taiwan were supposedly more paternal and directive in their social policies, their overall welfare expenditure as a percentage of GDP is in fact lower than those of Hong Kong and Singapore, suggesting the possibility that social expenditure level might not be the best description of the state of welfare. Table 7.2 (p. 138) further suggests an anomaly in welfare expenditures. Amongst the four states, Hong Kong and South Korea almost spent the same percentage of social expenditures (7.6 per cent and 7.7 per cent of GDP) in the mid nineties, while Singapore spent only 6.6 per cent. Hong Kong is always supposedly lagging behind in social expenditures amongst all developmental states, but on paper, it spent more than Singapore and Taiwan. Another interesting observation concerns income inequality in Table 7.7 (p. 149). While Hong Kong and Singapore spend more on welfare, the pattern of income distribution is in fact more unequal than in Taiwan and Korea. So higher social spending does not necessarily redress social inequality. To answer these puzzling questions, Tang draws our attention to the distributive effect of various social policies and suggests that perhaps comprehensive social security is the most effective way to improve income inequality. Both Singapore and Hong Kong lack a redistributive social security system and therefore continue to be haunted by massive income inequality.

There are still many unanswered questions about the nature and the institutions of social welfare in East Asia. Tang’s seminal work is undoubtedly a primer in understanding the region’s basic shape. It will certainly add much vibrancy to an already fervent debate on East Asian societies and social welfare.


JAMES LEE
Department of Public and Social Administration
City University of Hong Kong


*JSP*, 31, 2002, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402416637

In the world of public policy the reflective practitioner is all too rare a species. Too often the academic community and the real world of public administration remain separate, neither understanding the perspectives, pressures and constraints on the other. The ability to bridge this gap is a precious commodity and individuals who are able to operate in, contribute to and enhance the world of theory and practice rarer still. Henry Neuburger was one such person. An econ-
omist by training, he entered the civil service in 1966 serving in Transport and the Treasury before leaving to take up a political role as an economic advisor to the Labour Party serving Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock and later Brian Gould and having a significant impact on the development in Labour’s alternative economic strategy. He returned to the civil service in the early 1990s and served in the Department of Health, Customs & Excise, the Office of National Statistics and the Treasury before dying tragically young late in 1998.

Too often a criticism of edited volumes is that the individual contributions do not connect. This cannot be said here since the intellectual glue that welds it together is the work of Neuburger himself. In his career as academic, policy advisor and civil servant he published, polemised and contributed creatively to a vast variety of different policy areas, often clearly ahead of his time. His work therefore ranged from macro-economic modelling via taxation to efforts to rethink and reshape economic appraisal techniques such as cost benefit analysis. Elsewhere he probed the complexities of transport planning, industrial relations, unemployment and wage levels, and the complexities of assessing health benefits, and sought to rethink and redesign national accounts.

This book is a recognition of the variety, diversity and value of Neuburger’s work. Yet it is less a tribute in the traditional sense of looking backwards but a set of thoughtfully written, wideranging and up to date assessments of a variety of areas in public and social policy that take, as their starting point, an element of Neuburger’s interests. The volume is divided into four main sections: tools for analysing public policy (Chs. 2–6), issues effecting the economy as a whole (Chs. 7–9), sectoral policy issues (Chs. 10–13) and finally a section that focuses on economic policy making in the Labour party between 1980–90 (Wickham-Jones, Ch. 14) and an appreciation of Neuburger himself (Ch. 15).

As noted above, the chapters of this book cover a vast range of areas and are, almost uniformly, informative, relevant and up to date. They are perhaps biased towards the economics of public policy but, again, this reflects Neuburger’s work and indeed he could never be said to be a traditional economic thinker. Hence, in the first section, Wren-Lewis explores the evolution of macro-economic models and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of developments in this area (Ch. 2); Harrison (Ch. 3) explores national economic accounts arguing that they need to be made more alive and relevant if they are to make a significant contribution to contemporary public policy making, while Desai (Ch. 6), in a particularly thoughtful and provocative contribution, argues that measures of ‘welfare’ are in error in neglecting to assess ‘well being’. Hence, many contemporary policies (including those of New Labour) which seek to reform the welfare state may be at fault for promoting paid work with little assessment of their wider effects.

In other contributions Hills (Ch. 8) is perhaps not so pessimistic on the current initiatives offering a detailed, thoughtful and analytical exploration of recent trends on taxation and public spending, with specific reference to the developments and effects of the New Deal, which link back to Neuburger’s belief in the need for a ‘productive enabling state’ (p. 115). This vision also embraced the perceived need for a national minimum wage whose emergence and effects are recorded by Metcalf (Ch. 10). Elsewhere, Neuburger’s reform ambitions for appraisal techniques are dealt with first by Fraser (Ch. 4) who worked with him on ideas to refine economic policy analysis beyond cost effectiveness analysis.
(CEA) to what they term ‘democratic decision analysis (DDA)’. Such proposals may be seen as utopian and demanding, however, the need to refine appraisal and assessment methods is given further force by Nash and Mackie’s assessment of the development and current state of appraisal in transport policy (Ch. 11).

In all these and other contributions on dilemmas in housing policy (Julia Neuburger, Ch. 12), pricing parenthood (Joshi & Davies, Ch. 5) and priority setting in health care (Mooney, Ch. 13) one is offered short, concise and analytical essays that deal in different but always interesting ways with contemporary issues of central relevance to students of public and social policy. They stand as valuable and readable contributions in themselves and considered tributes to the man to whom this book is dedicated.

This reviewer never knew Henry Neuburger nor, until reading this volume, was aware of his range of contributions and influences on the world of policy and practice. The success of this collection is in making one feel that this was indeed an omission and a loss.

BILL JENKINS
University of Kent at Canterbury