#WelfareReformSyllabus Annotated

Week 1. The History of Public Assistance in the U.S.

Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (Basic Books, 1996). Traces the origins of social welfare, both public and private, from the days of the colonial poorhouse through homelessness and the war on welfare in the 1980s.

Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942* (Cornell University Press, 1996). Explores how Anglo American women reformers between the world wars promoted an ideology of domesticity that became the core of maternalist social policy and reinforced existing gender and racial inequality.

Premilla Nadasen, Jennifer Mittelstadt, Marisa Chappell, Welfare in the United States: A History with Documents, 1935–1996 (Routledge, 2005). With a comprehensive introduction this collection of primary documents, chronicles the major turning points in the seventy-year history of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Annelise Orleck and Lisa Hazirjian eds. *The War on Poverty, 1964-1980: A New Grassroots History* (University of Georgia Press, 2011). Essays examine anti-poverty politics from the ground up in rural as well as urban areas, on farms and Indian reservations, highlighting coalitions across race, class and gender that effectively deployed federal poverty program resources.

Karen M. Tani, States of Dependency: Welfare, Rights, and American Governance, 1935-1972 (Cambridge University Press, 2016). Explores what happened to New Deal programs as a centralized public welfare system emerged but how localism, federalism, and hostility toward "undeserving poor" impeded such a project, leaving a language of law and rights rather than one of justice.

Week 2. Federal Policy and the Racialized Ideology of Female Dependency

Mimi Abramovitz, Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy From Colonial Times to the Present. (South End Press, 1996). Traces the development of the ideology of "the family ethic" and how it became embedded in AFDC, Social Security and Unemployment insurance programs, with differential impacts on white women and women of color.

Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (Basic, 2016).

Linda Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare,* 1890-1935 (Harvard University Press, 1998). Uncovers the origins of Aid to Dependent Children and the emergence of a two-track system of public aid, in which single mothers received highly stigmatized "welfare" while other groups, such as the aged and the unemployed, got "entitlements."

Nancy Fraser & Linda Gordon <u>"Genealogy of dependency: Tracing a Key Word of the U.S. Welfare State,"</u> Signs (Winter 1994): 309-335.

Rickie Solinger, Beggars & Choosers How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption Abortion & Welfare in the United States (Hill & Wang, 2002). Shows how historical distinctions between women of color and white women, and between poor and middle-class women, excluded certain women from the class of "deserving mothers," and how a language of "choice" fueled new public policies concerning Medicaid funding for abortions, family tax credits, teen pregnancy, and welfare.

Week 3. The Welfare Rights Movement and Social Activism of the 1960s and 1970s

Rosie Bermudez, "Alicia Escalante, *The Chicana Welfare Rights Organization, and the Chicano Movement,*" in *The Chicano Movement: Perspectives from the Twenty-First Century,* Mario T. Garcia, eds. (Routledge, 2014);95-116. Recovers the history of the Chicana Welfare Rights Organization, and how Mexican American women's organizing to transform an oppressive welfare program intersected with the Chicano Movement in East Los Angeles.

Felicia Kornbluh, *The Battle for Welfare Rights: Politics and Poverty in Modern America* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). Chronicles the history of the National Welfare Rights Organization, the largest membership organization of low-income people in U.S. history, and shows how closely tied that story was to changes in mainstream politics, both nationally and locally in New York City.

Lisa Levenstein, A Movement Without Marches; African American Women and the Politics of Poverty in Postwar Philadelphia (University of North Carolina Press, 2010). Offers an up close view of the daily lives and struggles of poor black women at a formative moment in the history of the welfare state, and how their claims on the state transformed their lives and forced changes in public welfare provision.

Gordon Mantler, Power to the Poor: Black-Brown Coalition and the Fight for Economic Justice, 1960-1974 (University of North Carolina Press, 2013). Tells the story of the Poor People's Campaign, and the fragile coalition forged by African American and Mexican American activists in the long War on Poverty.

Premilla Nadasen, *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States* (**Routledge, 2005**). Recovers the voices of movement women and their experiences as mothers, racial minorities, welfare recipients, tenants, consumers, community members, feminists and activists, demonstrating how race, class, gender, and other identities continually reshape and redefine one another.

Annelise Orleck, Storming Caesars Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty (Beacon Press, 2006). Tells the story of how a group of welfare mothers in Las Vegas built one of this country's most successful antipoverty programs, and proved that poor mothers are the real experts on poverty.

Crystal Sanders A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle (University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

Guida West's *The National Welfare Rights Movement: The Social Protest of Poor Women* (Praeger, 1981)

MEDIA:

Video: America's War on Poverty (5-part series by Henry Hampton and Blackside)

Week 4. Historicizing the Backlash Against Welfare

Eva Bertam, *The Workfare State: Public Assistance Politics from the New Deal to the New Democrats* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). Seeks to explain how we got a tattered safety net based on forced labor rather than entitled need, locating the turning point in the 1960s and 1970s with Southern Congressional Democrats seeking to preserve their regional racialized power.

Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). Traces the history of how labor unions, anti-poverty activists, and moderate liberal groups fought to extend the promise of the family wage to poor African Americans families through massive federal investment in full employment and income supports, but also inadvertently paved the way for successful right-wing attacks on welfare.

Daniel Geary, Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). Focuses on competing interpretations of the report from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, and demonstrates its significance for liberals, conservatives, neoconservatives, civil rights leaders, Black Power activists, and feminists, and discusses the report's enduring legacy in gender, race, and class politics today.

Jennifer Mittelstadt, From Welfare to Workfare: The Unintended Consequences of Liberal Reform, 1945-1965. (University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Demonstrates that women, work, and welfare were intertwined concerns of the liberal welfare state beginning just after World War II, and that liberals' public debates and disagreements over welfare in this era caused unintended consequences including a shift toward conservatism.

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *The New Class War: Reagan's Attack on the Welfare State and Its Consequences* (Pantheon Books, 1985).

Ellen Reese, *Backlash Against Welfare Mothers: Past and Present* (University of California Press, 2005). Examines how and why a state-level revolt against welfare, begun in the late 1940s, was transformed into a national-level assault that destroyed a critical part of the nation's safety net, and at how opponents of welfare targeted Puerto Ricans and Chicanos as well as blacks for cutbacks through a powerful, racially coded discourse.

Randy Albelda and Ann Withorn, eds. *Lost Ground: Welfare Reform, Poverty and Beyond* (South End Press, 2002). Essays by well-known feminist, anti-racist, and class-based scholars from a variety of disciplines provide cogent critiques of welfare reform.

Lisa Dodson, *Don't Call Us Out of Name: The Untold Lives of Women and Girls in Poor America* (Beacon Press, 1999). Draws on in-depth interviews with poor girls and women in Boston to explore how they navigate having children at a young age, relying on cash assistance, employment decisions, and child rearing decisions.

Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare* and Low-Wage Work (Russell Sage Foundation, 1997). Examines the lives of low-income mothers in three cities, documenting how they work hard to get and maintain the meager resources available to them to keep their families safe and secure.

Gwendolyn Mink, Welfare's End. (Cornell University Press, 1998). Points to the racial, class, and gender biases of both liberals and conservatives to explain the enduring consensus supporting welfare reforms that force the poor single mothers to relinquish basic rights and compel them to find economic security in work outside the home.

David Zucchino, *Myth of the Welfare Queen* (Scribner Publishers, 1997). Tells the stories of two welfare recipients in Philadelphia as the Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act (welfare reform) is being passed, and details the creative actions welfare recipients take to build a social movement to end poverty.

Week 6. Media Representation, Racial Politics and the Attack on Welfare

Grace Chang, *Disposable Domestics: Immigrant Women Workers in the Global Economy* (South End Press, 2000). Examines the connections between anti-welfare and anti-immigration politics and policies in the 1990s, and the experiences of immigrant women with work, welfare, and motherhood.

Martin Gilens, Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Anti-Poverty Policy (University of Chicago Press, 1999). Analyzes the intersection of race, media and racialized perceptions of poverty and welfare, and how the white public's disdain for the black poor lead many to oppose anti-poverty programs.

Ange-Marie Hancock, *The Politics of Disgust: The Public Identity of the Welfare Queen* (New York University Press, 2004). Shows how stereotypes of African American mothers and politically motivated misperceptions about race, class and gender were effectively used to instigate a politics of disgust that drove the passage of welfare reform in 1996.

Melissa Harris-Perry, Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes and Black Women in America (Yale University Press, 2011)

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (Vintage, 1997).

Bonnie Thornton Dill, Maxine Baca Zinn and Sandra Patton, "Race, Family Values and Welfare Reform" in *A New Introduction to Poverty: The Role of Race, Power, and Politics*, edited by L. Kushnick and J. Jennings (NYU Press, 1999): 263-286. Discusses the intersection of race and gender in the welfare debates and how race was used to demonize and colorize poor mothers.

Week 7. The Politics and Paradigms of Welfare Research

Karen Christopher, "Welfare as we [don't] know It: A review and feminist critique of welfare reform research." *Feminist Economics* 10: 2 (2004): 142-171. Takes to task much of the quantitative academic welfare reform research conducted prior to and immediately after welfare reform using a feminist lens.

Joel F. Handler and Yeheskel Hasenfeld, *Blame Welfare, Ignore Poverty and Inequality.* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). Provides a compendium of data and research on the poor people, especially mothers, in the United States.

Alice O'Connor Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History (Princeton University Press, 2001). Traces the way poverty has been understood and studied across U.S. history, tracing the disciplinary and political influences of research on poverty over the pre and post-welfare eras.

Sanford Schram, Words of Welfare: The Poverty of Social Science and the Social Science of Poverty (University of Minnesota, 1995). Critiques how welfare policy is analyzed and set in the U.S., demonstrating that how we study issues affects what ultimately gets done about them, and how research on these issues can be done differently and more effectively.

Week 8. The Experiences of Welfare Recipients Post-1996

Mimi Abramovitz, *Under Attack, Fighting Back: Women and Welfare in the United States* **u(Monthly Review Press, 2000).** Draws on first-hand reports of women forced to leave welfare and other data to document the impact of welfare reform on the lives of poor single mothers and their children, puncturing the highly publicized claims that falsely equate successful reform with shrunken rolls.

Katherine Boo 2001. "After welfare." The New Yorker, April 9, 93-107. Reveals many of the myths around welfare reform, especially around employment, through the eyes of one family that struggles to survive after welfare reform.

Michael Fix, ed. *Immigrants and Welfare: The Impact of Welfare Reform on America's Newcomers* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2009). Provides a comprehensive assessment of the impacts of welfare reform legislation on ethnically diverse immigrant populations across the United States, including effects of anti-immigrant welfare policies on immigrant integration and health, as well as on the U.S. economy and the labor market.

Luisa Deprez and Mary Gatta, eds. "Beyond the Numbers: How the Lived Experiences of Women Challenges the 'Success' of Welfare Reform" *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*. September 2008.

Sharon Hays, *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform* (Oxford University Press, 2003). Documents the experiences and perspectives of welfare recipients and government case workers in two different cities during the implementation of welfare reform, showing how this policy contradicts traditional family values as it forces women to work and to leave their kids in childcare or at home alone.

Zaid Jilani "The Tragic End of the Woman Bill Clinton Exploited as Poster Child for Ending Welfare" Alternet (May 15, 2015)

Laura Lein and Deanna T. Schexnayder; with Karen Manges Douglas and Daniel G. Schroeder, *Life After Welfare: Reform and the Persistence of Poverty (University of Texas Press, 2007).* Traces the lives of 179 Texas families after the 1996 reforms, showing how impossible it has been for mothers and their children to survive on what they received monthly, how essential support from extended family has been, how often people end up homeless and how relentlessly local officials have pursued recipients for overpayments or perceived "fraud."

Week 9. Work and Welfare in the Neoliberal Era

Jane Collins and Victoria Mayer, Both Hands Tied: Welfare Reform and the Race to the Bottom in the Low-Wage Labor Market (University of Chicago Press, 2010). Ethnographic study of low-wage and low-income women in Milwaukee places the issue of deindustrialization and women's employment coupled with taking care of children front and center in understanding the implications of welfare reform.

Alejandra Marchevsky and Jeanne Theoharis, *Not Working: Latina Immigrants, Low-Wage Jobs, and the Failure of Welfare Reform* (NYU Press, 2006). Documents the consequences of welfare reform for Mexican immigrant women and their families in Southern California, providing a detailed portrait of how welfare reform resulted in the denial of benefits to eligible immigrant families as well as the channeling of immigrant women into unstable, low-wage jobs.

Sandra Morgen, Joan Acker, and Jill Weigt, *Stretched Thin: Poor Families, Work, and Welfare Reform* (Cornell University Press, 2010). Draws on in-depth interviews with poor families and welfare workers, and survey data tracking more than 750 families over two years, to question the validity of claims that welfare reform has been a success.

Jamie Peck, Workfare States (Guilford Press, 2001). Traces the development and implementation of neoliberal workfare policies, and how reforms have been shaped by labor markets and political conditions, how gender and race come into play, and how local programs fit into the broader context of neoliberal economics and globalization.

Loic Wacquant, "Crafting the Neoliberal State: Workfare, Prisonfare, and Social Insecurity" Sociological Forum, Vol. 25, No. 2, June 2010.

Week 10. Welfare Reform and Education

Vivyan Adair, "Poverty and the (Broken) Promise of Higher Education." *Harvard Educational Review*: July 2001, Vol. 71, No. 2, pp. 217-240. Presents a compelling argument about the benefits low-income women get from receiving college degrees, and shows how work-first legislation discourages their education.

Amanda Freeman "Single moms and welfare woes: A higher-education dilemma" The Atlantic (August 16, 2015). Presents more recent post-recession findings about the struggles low-income women in higher education face since welfare reform.

Peggy Kahn, Luisa S. Deprez, Sandra S. Butler and Valerie Polakow, *Shut Out: Low Income Mothers and Higher Education in Post-Welfare America*. (State University of New York Press, 2004). Portrays the struggles of single mothers who aspire to attain higher education in the context of a work-first post-welfare regime.

A. Jones-DeWeever, "When the spirit blooms: Acquiring higher education in the context of welfare reform. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy, 27*(3-4) 2008: 113-133. Highlights the importance of higher education for low-income women and reports findings from a study in California that looked at obstacles faced by welfare recipients in their pursuit of higher education.

Lorna Rivera Laboring to Learn: Women's Literacy & Poverty in Post-Welfare Era (University of Illinois Press, 2008).

Carla Shedd *Unequal City: Race School and Perceptions of Injustice* (Russell Sage, 2015).

Week 11. Food Insecurity, Housing, and Federal Policy

Matthew Desmond, "Forced Out: For Many Poor Americans, Eviction Never Ends" The New Yorker (February 8 & 15, 2016).

Roberta Feldman and Susan Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents'*Activism in Chicago Public Housing (Cambridge University Press, 2004). Chronicles the four decade history of Chicago's Wentworth Gardens public housing residents' grassroots activism, challenging portrayals of public housing residents as passive, alienated victims of despair.

Susan Levine, School Lunch Politics: The Surprising History of America's Favorite Welfare Program (Princeton University Press, 2010). Examines the history of school food programs, from their origins in early twentieth-century nutrition science, through the establishment of the National School Lunch Program in 1946, to the transformation of school meals into a poverty program during the 1970s and 1980s.

Caitlin Rathe, "<u>The Right's Food Stamp Embarassment: A history lesson for the haters</u>" *Salon* (September 1, 2014)

Loretta Schwartz-Nobel, *Growing Up Empty: How Federal Policies are Starving America's Children* (Harper Perennial, 2003). Shows that hunger has reached epic proportions, running rampant through urban, rural, and suburban communities, impacting the working poor, who have jobs but do not make enough to support their families.

Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing; Black Women's Struggles against Urban Inequality* (Oxford University Press, 2005). Challenges the notion that low-income housing was a resounding failure that doomed three consecutive generations of post-war Americans to entrenched poverty, and recovers a history of black women's grassroots activism, of political awakening, and of class mobility, all facilitated by the creation of affordable public housing.

Rhonda Y. Williams, "'Something's wrong down here': Low-Income Black Women and Urban Struggles for Democracy"," *African American Urban History Since World War II*, eds. Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe W. Trotter (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Week 12.The Criminalization of Poor People

Jeanne Flavin, Our Bodies, Our Crimes: The Policing of Women's Reproduction in America (New York University Press, 2008).

Kaaryn Gustafson, Cheating Welfare: Public Assistance and the Criminalization of Poverty (New York University Press, 2011). Uses interviews with California recipients of public assistance and legal records to critically examine the construction of the idea of "welfare fraud" and the criminalization of poverty.

Elizabeth Hinton, From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America (Harvard University Press, 2016).

Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, "Guns and Butter: The Welfare State, the Carceral State, and the Politics of Exclusion in the Postwar United States," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (2015), 87-99

National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty et al., <u>Criminalization of Homelessness</u> in the United States of America: A Report to the U.N. Committee Against Torture (2014).

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare (Pantheon, Revised Edition 1993).

Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording and Sanford F. Schram, *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Week 13. Family Life and Gendered Care Work

Randy Albelda "Time Binds: US anti-poverty policies, poverty and single mother's wellbeing" *Feminist Economics* (2011).

This article traces the ways in which anti-poverty policies in the United States moved from the expectations of non-employment to employment, without regard for the time mothers spend raising children.

Eileen Boris and Jennifer Klein, *Caring for America: Home Health Workers in the Shadow of the Welfare State* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Shows the ways in which social policy made home care a low-waged job that was stigmatized as welfare and relegated to the bottom of the medical hierarchy, and also tells a story about a powerful social movement by women of color.

Lisa Dodson & Wendy Luttrell, "Families Facing Untenable Choices," *Contexts*, **Vol. 10, No. 1,Winter 2011: 38-42.** Features the perspectives of low-wage mothers and children growing up in low-wage households about the stigma and punishment they face when they put family care ahead of the inflexible demands and organization of workplaces and schools, highlighting the critical care consciousness and interdependence necessary to ensure survival.

Madonna Harrington Meyer, Care Work: Gender Labor and the Welfare State (Routledge, 2000). Analyzes the clash of market demands, private care responsibilities, and the retreat of social welfare under neoliberalism.

Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America* (Harvard University Press, 2010). Examines the organization of care labor and how it persistently reproduces poverty, gender and racial inequality.

Dorothy Roberts, Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare (Basic Books, 2002).

Week 14. Twenty Years After Welfare Reform

Mimi Abramovitz "The Largely Untold Story of Welfare Reform and the Human Services" . Social Work 2 (2005):175-186. Documents the largely untold story of how nonprofit agencies' workers responded to the devastating impact of welfare reform on their clients, jobs, and the delivery of services.

Haksoon Ahn, "Economic well-being of low-income single-mother families following welfare reform in the USA." *International Journal of Social Welfare* (2015) Vol. 24.: 14-26. Analyzes the impact of welfare reform on single working mothers, whose income was negatively impacted by higher childcare costs and a decrease in TANF benefits.

Stan L. Bowie and Donna M. Dopwell, "Metastressors as Barriers to Self-Sufficiency Among TANF-Reliant African American and Latina Women." *Journal of Women and Social Work*: 2013, pvol. 28, No. 2, pp. 177-193. Focuses on the experiences of African

American and Latina women in their struggle to obtain and maintain employment, and concludes that TANF hurts women of color instead of promoting their economic independence.

Peter Edelman "The War on the Poor" The American Prospect (December 21, 2015).

Kathryn Edin and H. Luke Schaefer \$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America (Houghton Mifflin, 2015).

Ron Haskins "<u>Are Conservatives Serious About Fighting Poverty</u>" (Brookings Institute, 2016).

Annie Lowery "It's Time For Welfare Reform Again" New York Magazine

Alejandra Marchevsky and Jeanne Theoharis "Why It Matters that Hillary Championed Welfare Reform," The Nation (March 1, 2016).

MEDIA:

Interactive Website: Your State on Welfare

Podcasts: Poverty in America: The Struggle to Get Ahead

Infographic: Thirty Years of Poverty

Video: Welfare and the Politics of Poverty New York Times (May 3, 2015).

Week 15. New Movements Rising

Willie Baptist and Jan Rehmann, *Pedagogy of the Poor: Building the Movement to End Poverty* (Teachers College Press, 2013). Mixes stories and lessons coming out of 50 years of the poor organizing the poor with chapters on social theory and social analysis.

The Reverend Dr. William Barber and Jonathan Wilson Hartgrove *The Third*Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics and the Rise of a New Justice Movement
(Beacon Press, 2016).

The Poverty Initiative, A New and Unsettling Force: Re-Igniting Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign, (The Poverty Initiative at Union Theological Seminary, 2009). Emphasizes the important role of those most impacted by poverty have to play in efforts to alleviate and eliminate poverty, from the Poor People's Campaign of 1967-68, to contemporary poor people's organizing in the 21st century.

William Baptist, Mary Bricker-Jenkins and Monica Dillon, "Taking the Struggle on the Road: The New Freedom Bus—Freedom from Unemployment, Hunger and Homelessness," *Journal of Progressive Human Services* 10:2 (1999): 7-29.

Kathleen Coll, *Remaking Citizenship: Latina Immigrants and New American Politics* (Stanford University Press, 2010). Looks at Mexican and Central American immigrant women's grassroots activism in San Francisco in the aftermath of immigration and welfare reforms of the mid-1990s.

Ellen Reese. "They Say Cutback, We Say Fightback!" Contemporary Welfare Rights Activism in an Era of Retrenchment. (Russell Sage, 2011).

Rose Ernst, *The Price of Progressive Politics: The Welfare Rights Movement in an Era of Colorblind Racism* (New York University Press, 2010. Shifts the focus of discussion from aid recipients to reformers, taking a critical look at the people fighting for reform and showing a gap between how black and white activists come at the issue in very different ways.

Video:*Living Broke in Boom Times*, **Skylight Pictures**, **2009.** Focuses on the National Union of the Homeless of the 1980s and 1990s, the Kensington Welfare Rights Union in the wake of welfare reform, and the formation of a national Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

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