

**HDFS 597B – US Social Policy in International Comparison:
Demographic Changes and Social Choices**

Spring 2007

Fridays 9:00 – 11:50

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Office hours: Tuesdays 11:15 – 12:15 and Fridays 12:00 – 1:00

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide graduate students with a comparative perspective on social policies that influence the well-being of children and families in the United States and other industrialized nations. We will pay particular attention to understanding of the complex interconnections between demographic changes, social policies, and child and family well-being. To reach this goal, we will study the various ways that countries conceptualize and organize their social welfare policies. We will focus specifically on policies that are associated with women's employment and fertility (maternity leave and child care) and policies that are associated with changes in family structure (marriage promotion and income supports for single families). Our analysis will focus on understanding the variation in policies and the advantages and disadvantages of these policy choices on a range of outcomes including demographic trends, poverty, child well-being, the economy, and gender equality. Throughout the course we will consider the strengths and weaknesses of the empirical and theoretical models presented in the readings.

Course Goals for Students

- Develop a basic understanding of the different types of social welfare states
- Understand how changes in fertility, women's employment, family structure and aging influence the social policies that are adopted
- Understand how social policies in turn influence demographic trends
- Understand how policies such as maternity leave, child care, employment and income supports interact with each other
- Learn to think critically about how these intersecting domains (demographics, economics, and social policies) cumulatively influence outcomes such as child well-being
- Gain exposure to various empirical approaches to comparative social policy research

Course Requirements

This seminar is designed to act as a "learning community" where students with strengths in different fields come together to study a complicated but exciting topic. Students are expected to prepare for class and participate in class discussions.

Country Demographic and Policy Profiles: While many of the studies that we read will be cross-national comparisons, substantial variation exists between countries in their demographic, economic, and policy contexts. In order to facilitate a better understanding of the strengths, limitations, and accuracy of these cross-national comparisons, each student will become our local "expert" on a particular country. Each student will put together one country profile that

documents the demographic trends and policy context of a country. I will compile copy, and distribute these profiles to the class so that everyone has a guide they can refer to as they read cross-national papers. Each student will also make a short presentation to the class about their country. By having each of you study one country in more detail, we will have the expertise necessary to more fully understand which countries are following trends suggested in cross-national studies and which countries are not.

Response Papers: Each student will write two response papers during the course of the semester. Response papers should be about 3 pages long and should focus on one of the assigned readings. In these papers, you should briefly (1/2 page maximum) summarize the main goals and findings of the article. You then want to select one main issue to write about. Here are a few examples of approaches to response papers:

- Is the article conceptually or methodologically weak? If so, describe the weakness clearly and suggest alternate strategies for addressing these weaknesses.
- Does the article fit well with the broader literature we are reviewing or does it provide contradictory evidence or a very different perspective? If it provides contradictory evidence, consider why this might be the case (different outcome studied, methods used...) then propose a study that would help clear up this contradiction.

The goal of these papers is to help you think concretely about the material you are reading and about the next steps that scholars can take to reconcile contradictions, strengthen conceptual frames or improve empirical designs.

Lectures: There are two very relevant lectures on campus this semester from the Rock Ethics Institute. They are noted on the syllabus. While I cannot require you to attend these, since they are outside of class time, I would very much like everyone to attend unless you have an unavoidable conflict. We will be discussing them in class.

Substantive Discussion Period: Each student will have the opportunity to lead the discussion once during the semester. The goal of these periods will be to help you with your final project. Each student will organize the time so that they receive feedback and assistance with aspects of their final projects that are challenging and where they could benefit from assistance, feedback, and substantive debate from other students in the class.

Final Paper: Each student will research and write a 15 – 20 page final paper for this course. Final papers can be research proposals, empirical papers, or literature reviews that integrate theory and findings from this class into students' own research agendas. All students must meet with the professor to discuss possible paper topics prior to submitting a paper abstract on October 30.

Final Paper Presentations: The last two class periods will consist of final paper presentations. Each student will present the main components of his or her final paper. Presentations should last approximately 20 minutes, with 10 minutes for feedback. These presentations are designed to give you important feedback about your final paper projects and to provide additional information on a range of topics to students in the class.

Course Policies

Students are expected to:

- Attend all seminars, arriving on time.
- Do all assigned reading.
- Participate in meaningful discussion, which includes constructive commentary, thoughtful questions, and active listening.

Grading

Class Participation	10%
Country Profile & Presentation	15%
Discussion Leadership	5%
Response Papers (2)	20%
Final Paper Presentation	15%
Final Paper	35%

COURSE OUTLINE

January 19

Seminar 1. Introduction

January 26

Seminar 2. Background on US social policy system

Main questions to discuss:

- What is social policy?
- What does social policy in the US consist of?
- What factors have influenced our policy system?

Kleinman, M. (2002). *A European Welfare State?* New York: Palgrave, pp. 1 – 7.
Provides a good definition of what kinds of policies are included in “social policy”

Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth, and Family Policies. “United States: Country Summary.” Available on-line at <http://www.childpolicyintl.org/> From the home page, use the menu on the left to select “country profiles” then scroll down to “United States” to get to the article.

Provides a brief overview of US social policy.

Howard, C. (1997). *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 17 – 42.

Describes the extent and distribution of social policy embedded in the tax system.

Skocpol, T. (1995). *Social Policy in the United States: Future Possibilities in Historical Perspective*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 3 – 10, 209 – 227, 250 – 274.

Provides some history related to US social policy.

January 29 Joan Acker lecture “Is Ethical Capitalism an Oxymoron?” 3:00 Foster Auditorium, 101 Pattee Library.

February 2

Seminar 3. International variation in welfare state regimes

Main questions to discuss:

- What do social policies in other countries consist of?
- Why have they developed differently?
- What will influence their future development?
- How useful are typologies both conceptually and methodologically? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 9 – 34.

A classic welfare-state typology

Sainsbury, D. (1999). Gender, policy regimes, and politics. In D. Sainsbury (Ed) *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, pp. 246 – 275.

A critique and reconceptualization of Esping-Andersen’s typology focusing on family policy. Introduces potential “models” of families supported by policies.

Kleinman, M. (2002). *A European Welfare State?* New York: Palgrave, pp. 82 – 109.

Provides a discussion of the influence of European integration on the social policies in member states.

February 9

Seminar 4. Major demographic changes underway

Main questions to discuss:

- What demographic and social changes are underway in industrialized countries?
- What is causing these changes?
- How are various demographic and social changes interconnected?
- How do these changes influence the social problems being debated?
- How do these changes influence taxation and spending in welfare states?

Kohler, H., F. Billari, & J. Ortega. 2006. Low Fertility in Europe: Causes, Implications and Policy Options. In F. Harris (Ed), *The Baby Bust: Who Will Do the Work? Who Will Pay the Taxes?* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, pp 48-109. Available on-line at: www.ssc.upenn.edu/~hpkohler/papers/Low-fertility-in-Europe-final.pdf

Includes information not only on low fertility but also the association between low fertility and women’s employment, changes in marriage and cohabitation, youth unemployment, and migration. Introduces policy options for increasing fertility.

Bongaarts, J. (2004). Population aging and the rising cost of pensions. *Population and Development Review*, 30, 1 – 23.

Describes trends in population aging and strategies for combating challenges to meeting pension costs.

Demeny, Paul. (2003.) "Population Policy Dilemmas in Europe at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century." *Population and Development Review*, 29, 47-72.

February 16

Seminar 5. Country demographic and policy profiles

Country profiles are due and student presentations will occur during class.

Country profiles require that students examine and present information on demographic, economic and policy trends in their selected country.

February 23

Seminar 6. Parental leave, women's employment, fertility and child well-being

Main Questions to Discuss:

- How does childbearing influence women's employment?
- How do various countries organize their parental leave policies?
- What are the impacts of parental leave policies on child health, sex segregation in the labor market, the economy, fertility, and women's employment?
- How do findings from these studies support or contrast theories about the role of parental leave in influencing fertility?
- What is unique about the Ruhm 2000 piece methodologically? How do the specification tests strengthen his argument?

Joshi, Heather. (2002). "Production, Reproduction, and Education: Women, Children and Work." *Population and Development Review*, 28, 445-474.

Gornick, J. and Meyers, M. (2003). *Families that Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 112 - 146.
Good description of US policy, good description of international variation.

Moss, P. & O'Brien, M. (2006). *International Review of Leave Policies & Related Research*. Available on-line at www.dti.gov.uk/files/file31948.pdf Read pp. 1 – 30 + 2 country profiles.

Ruhm, C. (1998). The economic consequences of parental leave mandates: Lessons from Europe. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 113, 285 – 317.

Ruhm, C. (2000). Parental leave and child health. *Journal of Health Economics*, 19, 931 – 960.
This reading documents an association between length of parental leave and infant mortality.

March 2

Seminar 7. Child care, women's employment, and child well-being

Final Paper Abstracts are due

Main Questions to Discuss:

- How do various countries organize their child care supports?
- What explains the variation in countries' child care policies?
- Do these studies support or contradict theories about the role of child care in employment and fertility decisions?
- How generalizable is research on the impacts of child care on child development to other countries?
- How does research on child care impacts influence discussions about ideal family types?

Gornick, J. and Meyers, M. (2003). *Families that Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 185 – 235.

Describes child care policy, use, cost, and availability in the US to other countries.

Meyers, M.; Gornick, J.; and Ross, K. (1999). Public childcare, parental leave, and employment. In D. Sainsbury (Ed) *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, pp. 117 – 146.

NICHD Early Child Care Research Network. (2006). Child-care effect sizes for the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development. *American Psychologist*, 61, 99 – 116.

Describes the positive and negative impacts of child care on children's development.

Gauthier, Ann, Timothy Smeeding, and Frank Furstenberg, Jr., (2004.) "Are Parents Investing Less Time in Children? Trends in Selected Industrial Countries." *Population and Development Review*, 30, 647-672.

Rindfuss 2004 – cc on fert in Norway

March 9

Seminar 8. Changing family structures and policy responses: Marriage promotion

Main Questions to Discuss:

- How have family structures changed over time?
- How does the US response differ from other countries?
- Does it matter if a country has an “ideal” family type and a unified family policy?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of supporting single parent families, encouraging marriage, and/or recognizing cohabitation?
- What are the implications for policy? For child well-being?

Kiernan, K. (2003). Cohabitation and divorce across generations. Center for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London. Available on-line at <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cp/casepaper65.pdf>

Ginther, D. & Pollak, R. (2004). Family structure and children's educational outcomes: Blended families, stylized facts, and descriptive regressions. *Demography*, 41, 671 – 697.

Pong, S.; Dronkers, J.; and Hampden-Thompson, G. (2003). Family policies and children's school achievement in single versus two-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65, 681 – 699. *Estimates the differential impact of family structure on achievement across countries.*

Mathematica. (2005). "What We Know About Unmarried Parents: Implications for Building Strong Families Programs." *Mathematica In Brief*. Available on-line at <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/bsfisbr3.pdf>

Heritage Foundation – arguments for marriage promotion
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Family/bg1741.cfm>

NOW Legal Defense Fund – arguments against marriage promotion
<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/hearings.asp?formmode=view&id=2496>
This document is argument about full TANF reauthorization, but first half is about marriage promotion.

March 16 – NO CLASS, Spring Break

March 19 Nancy Folbre "Who Cares? Why We Need a New Social Contract" 3:00 Foster Auditorium, Pattee Library.

March 23

Seminar 9. Changing family structures and policy responses: Income supports and employment of single mothers

Main Questions to Discuss:

- What kind of income supports do various countries provide?
- How do different income supports reinforce or support countries' ideas about ideal family types?
- How do income supports influence women's employment, family structure, and economic well-being?

Heuveline, Patrick et al., (2003.) Shifting childrearing to single mothers: Results from 17 western countries. *Population and Development Review*, 29, 47-72.

Gray, J., et al. (2006.) The rising share of nonmarital births: Fertility choice or marriage behavior. *Demography*, 43, 241-253.

Millar, J. and Rowlingson, K. (2001). *Lone Parents, Employment, and Social Policy*. Introductory chapter plus one country profile.

Kilkey, M. and Bradshaw, H. (1999). Lone mothers, economic well-being, and policies. In D. Sainsbury (Ed) *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, pp. 147 – 184.

March 30

Seminar 10. Cross-national variation in child poverty: Demographic and policy differences

Main Questions to Discuss:

- What are the differences in child poverty across countries?
- How are these differences linked to family policies?
- What are the different ways that poverty can be measured? What are the strengths and weaknesses of different measures?
- Could a more sophisticated analysis of the hypotheses in this book be developed? What would that look like?

Rainwater, L. and Smeeding, T. (2003). *Poor Kids in a Rich Country: America's Children in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 1 – 166 + Appendix D: Reweighting to Assess the Impact of Demography versus Income Packaging.

Iceland, J. (2003.) Why poverty remains high: The role of income growth, economic inequality, and changes in family structure, 1949-1999. *Demography*, 40, 499-519.

Gundersen, C. & Ziliak, J. (2004.) Poverty and macroeconomic performance across space, race, and family structure. *Demography*, 41, 61-86.

April 6

Seminar 11. Combined policy impacts on fertility and child well-being

Main Questions to Discuss:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of looking at clusters of family policies instead of specific policy components?
- What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses of each article?
- What are the implications of thinking about within-country variations in child and family outcomes for family policy?
- What are the kinds of outcomes that we should be considering when measuring “well-being”?

DiPrete, T.; Morgan, S.P.; Engelhardt, H.; and Pacalova, H. (2004). Do cross-national differences in the cost of children generate cross-national differences in fertility rates? *Population Research and Policy Review*, 22, 439 – 477.

McLanahan, S. (2004). Diverging destinies: How children are faring under the second demographic transition. *Demography*, 41, 607 – 624.
Within country variation in employment and family structure, by education level.

Mickelwright, J. and Stewart, K. (1999). Is the well-being of children converging in the European Union? *The Economic Journal*, 109, F692 – F714.
Broader list of outcomes besides poverty – youth unemployment, education... Does not include US, see OECD social indicators at
http://www.oecd.org/document/24/0,2340,en_2649_33933_2671576_1_1_1_1,00.html#selection

April 13

Seminar 12. Subjective well-being and theories about low fertility

Main Questions to Discuss:

- How do these studies about subjective well-being support or contradict theories about the role of work-family conflict in fertility and employment behavior?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses in making comparisons of subjective well-being across countries?
- Are there better ways to test the hypotheses in these papers?

Brayfield, A.; Jones, R.; and Adler, M. (2001). Harmonizing work and family in the European Union: public perceptions of children as an obstacle to women's employment. In T. van der Lippe and L. van Dijk (Eds) *Women's Employment in a Comparative Perspective*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, pp. 179 – 202.

Spector, P. et al. (2005). An international comparative study of work-family stress and occupational strain. In S. Poelmans (Ed) *Work and Family: An International Research Perspective*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, pp. 71 – 84.

Fine-Davis, M.; Fagnani, J.; Giovannini, D.; Hojgaard, L.; and Clarke, H. (2004). Fathers and Mothers: Dilemmas of the Work-Life Balance, A Comparative Study of Four European Countries. *Social Indicators Research Series, 21*, pp. 89 – 95 and 179 – 246.

Kohler, H.P. et al., (2005.) Partner + children = happiness? The effects of partnership and fertility on well-being. *Population and Development Review*, 31, 407-446.

April 20

Seminar 13. Student presentations

April 27

Seminar 14. Student presentations

May 4 FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 4:00 PM - my mailbox, 105 White Building