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Social Capital and Welfare Reform: Organizations, Congregations and Community. Jo Ann Schneider.

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viewpoints of marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities, have value. On the other hand, Pardeck and Yuen are firmly committed to an evidence-based approach and the greater use of scientific evidence. Like many other scholars writing on the subject, they are highly critical of social work's lack of scientific rigor. This criticism is strongly expressed in the chapter dealing with professional social work education and the scholarly productivity of journal reviewers. The authors point out that many practice teachers do not have a doctoral degree and that the accreditation process places little emphasis on research and the use of verifiable knowledge in the curriculum. In addition, several leading social work journals are faulted for having editorial boards and reviewers who do not themselves engage in scholarly research.

The book is a welcome addition to the literature on the challenges facing social work today. In expressing their own views, the authors avoid a strident and one-sided approach. Nevertheless, they present their arguments in a firm and coherent way, revealing their commitment to developing a verifiable body of social work knowledge. Their attempt to find a compromise position which accommodates different perspectives is commendable. The book deserves to be widely consulted by anyone concerned with the issue of how social work can enhance its knowledge base and strengthen its role in both the academy and the world of practice.

Jo Ann Schneider, *Social Capital and Welfare Reform: Organizations, Congregations, and Community*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. \$69.50 hardcover, \$29.50 papercover.

Proponents of social capital theory believe it can shed insight on everything from socializing (Robert Putnam's famous example of the "bowling alone" phenomenon), to educational outcomes (James Coleman's empirical studies of the effects of private and parochial versus public schools), to class advantage (in Pierre Bourdieu's study of French society). Jo Ann Schneider adds a new arena where social capital theory may have explanatory power: the efficacy of welfare reform

efforts. The operational definition of social capital employed by Schneider underscores the importance of social bonds characterized by reciprocal, enforceable trust that allows both people and institutions to access to valuable resources such as social services, jobs, and government contracts. Further distinctions regarding the role of "closed social capital" (networks built around similarity) and "bridging social capital" (relationships that cross categorical boundaries of race or class) are made in Schneider's analysis, building upon the seminal work of Mark Granovetter on the role of social networks in employment-seeking.

Reform of U.S. welfare policy in the 1990s relied upon a multiplicity of factors at the macro and micro levels, including government policies, local social welfare implementation systems, local socioeconomic systems, organizations providing services and the population receiving services. Surveying this complex social change environment, Schneider asks, "Why did some families in a community succeed in meeting their education, work, and lifestyle goals while others failed? And what is the role of community institutions in this process?"

To answer these questions, Schneider analyzes data collected from welfare-to-work projects in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Using an ethnographic approach, several methods are employed, including participant observation, qualitative interviews, survey research, and analysis of government data sets and secondary source materials. Schneider finds that social capital is the key element, threaded throughout the five micro and macro levels previously mentioned, that promotes or inhibits institutions and individuals meeting their goals.

The book has much to recommend it as a practical pedagogical text as well as a primer for social capital-focused program development and implementation. Its description of the state and federal government policies that provide the context of welfare reform, as well as in-depth case studies of the two jurisdictions and their implementation strategies, give an excellent overview of the welfare transformation of the 1990s. As such, the text could add much to a social welfare policy course, particularly one with a focus on economic development strategies.

The concluding chapter provides policy and programmatic

suggestions for integrating social capital into welfare reform efforts, giving concrete examples of how the often elusive quality of social capital can be operationalized. One inevitable drawback is the limited geographic scope of the case examples, in two states with similar economic histories of large-scale manufacturing employment gradually being replaced by service employment. Yet Schneider makes a convincing case that the themes of organizational, congregational, and community social capital have wider implications for national social welfare efforts to promote employment.

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Mary Poole, *The Segregated Origins of Social Security: African Americans and the Welfare State*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. \$59.95 hardcover, \$22.50 papercover.

When social policy emerged as an interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry in the 1950s, its concern with inequality was focused largely on class differences in the Western industrial countries. Inequalities were analyzed in monetary terms, and income differentials between industrial workers, the middle class, and the wealthy were emphasized. The way government social policies in these countries reduced or otherwise exacerbated inequalities were phrased primarily in terms of class and little, if any, attention was paid to gender and ethnic inequalities. In time, the prevailing perspective was challenged by feminist scholars, and their critique was subsequently augmented by accounts that stressed the importance of understanding race and ethnicity as key factors in social policy analysis.

Mary Poole's book makes a significant contribution to the literature on what is sometimes referred to as the "color of welfare." Indeed, her work builds on Jill Quadagno's pioneering analysis of this issue which criticized the extent to which studies of the New Deal and its impact on American society neglected race and ethnicity. Quadagno's argument, that African Americans were discriminated against by the 1935