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**Review of *Combating Poverty: Quebec's Pursuit of a Distinctive Welfare State* Axel Van Den Berg, Charles Plante, Hicham Raiq, Christine Proulx, and Sam Faustmann**

Jaewon Lee  
*Michigan State University, jlee88@csu.edu*

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Axel Van Den Berg, Charles Plante, Hicham Raiq, Christine Proulx, and Sam Faustmann, *Combating Poverty: Quebec's Pursuit of a Distinctive Welfare State*. University of Toronto Press (2017), 232 pages, \$37.50 (hardcover).

In this book, the authors address how Quebec has achieved a lower level of poverty when compared to the other three largest provinces in Canada, Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta. Using a quantitative approach, these authors explain the differences in social and labor market policies across these four provinces, and introduce how these differences result in dissimilar levels of poverty in the three provinces.

Policy approaches in Quebec emphasize a social investment perspective, labor force participation (particularly amongst females with young children) and support for families with children. This exceptionalism in social and employment policies has become more pronounced since the mid-2000s in comparison with other provinces. Based on social investment, this approach results in benefits for both two-parent families and single-parent families in Quebec, leading to lower levels of poverty. These authors attribute Quebec's success in reducing poverty rates to active labor market policy, which is derived from the "Swedish model" of maintaining work for everyone. This is especially accurate considering the province's focus on encouraging women with children to participate in the labor force. In addition to successful labor market policies, there is indication that providing more generous welfare benefits to families contributes to the low levels of poverty in Quebec.

This book contains new information explaining Canada's current status of poverty as well as recommendations regarding how to reduce poverty levels. Given that the authors used quantitative data and compared findings from Quebec to those in other provinces, their arguments are acceptable and reliable in so far as their analysis of the data is appropriate. However, readers should be aware of Quebec's specific demographic, cultural, and geographic characteristics when interpreting the findings in this book. Such factors are often disregarded here, factors that may influence poverty rates across the four provinces. Because such factors are ignored in explaining the lower levels of poverty in Quebec compared to other provinces, their argument may not be as strong as it otherwise could be. Additional analysis and data

are needed to supplement their argument. In other words, when generalizing the effectiveness of Quebec's policies to reduce poverty compared with other provinces, readers may cast doubt on the feasibility of their recommendations because each place has its own set of characteristics, some of which are fixed and have developed over a long period of time. Although the authors do explain how Quebec's policy approach achieves lower levels of poverty, it would improve the analysis to include the mission and values of the Quebec government. After all, policies do not operate independently from a government sense of mission and values. This approach might be more helpful to understand how Quebec has been able to develop and cultivate policies that lead to lower levels of poverty.

Quebec's following of the Swedish model has its own disadvantages in terms of sustainability in a province with a smaller population of younger taxpayers and larger population of older adults receiving services, as well as an increasing influx of immigrants who seek benefits. Thus, readers need to consider the sustainability of Quebec's current policy approach.

Overall, this book is worth reading to understand different poverty levels in Canada, and how Quebec has achieved the lowest level of poverty. It remains open for educators, students, researchers, and policymakers to decide the extent to which Quebec's policies may be applied to other regions.

Jaewon Lee  
Michigan State University

Cathleen A. Lewandowski, *Child Welfare: An Integrative Perspective*.  
Oxford University Press (2019), 320 pages, \$65 (paperback).

Logically organized, with an integrative and holistic approach to child welfare, Lewandowski introduces the historical evolution and present practices of child welfare in the United States, providing constructive suggestions for future directions of this field. The historical review on development and evolution of child welfare policy and practice in the United States starts from the alternative care policies in the colonial era, such as the Elizabethan Poor Law, and continues to the modern-day