

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW416 – Social Welfare Policy and Services**

**FALL 2006 (3 credit hours)**

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**Fax:** (865) 974-3701  
**Class time:** Tuesday/Thursday, 9:40 - 10:55 AM  
Jessie Harris Bldg, room 414

**PROGRAM MISSION**

The BSSW program at the University of Tennessee exists to fulfill a need for disciplined, highly educated and trained generalist social workers to help people improve their social functioning in a technologically complex, culturally diverse, and rapidly changing world without borders. There is a focus on the reciprocal relationships between persons and their environments. Social workers are doers; they are problem-solvers who are able to intervene in multiple-level systems and perform various professional roles. Their actions are guided and informed by a broad knowledge-base, code of ethics, and professional values. Social workers are educated and trained to do things right as well as to do the right thing.

The mission of the BSSW program is to develop generalist social workers who are strategic thinkers, life-long learners and opinion shapers. The knowledge-base, skills, and values necessary for generalist practice are taught in an environment that fosters professional development, critical thinking, and leadership and prepares students to take appropriate action guided by the best available scientific evidence. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of today's complex pluralistic world. Since the amount of knowledge doubles approximately every five years, what is taught today may soon be obsolete. Our challenge, therefore, lies in the on-going development and implementation of a curriculum that prepares and energizes students for generalist practice today and in the future.

**PROGRAM GOALS**

Provision of education and training that enable students to become generalist social work practitioners who:

1. are committed to advancing social and economic justice and the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession;
2. are committed to evidence-based practice;
3. are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework;
4. use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems;
5. have an understanding of human diversity, special populations, and domestic and international challenges, that informs practice interventions;
6. use critical thinking, evaluative skills, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing global world; and
7. are committed to continuous development of professional self.

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Policy formulation processes, policymakers in systems and policy-related role expectations. Emphasis on utilizing an analytical framework and social change efforts. Prerequisite: Full progression. Co-requisite: SW 480.

**EXTENDED DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will emphasize a major function of social work practice, "contribution to the development and modification of social policy." Policy -- be it made by legislative bodies (federal, state,

local), executives or government, judicial decisions, public administrative agencies, professional associations, directors and practitioners in social resource systems, or consumer groups, has a profound impact on practice in terms of what and how much is available, who the recipients are, and the delivery of social welfare services. As front-line workers, baccalaureate social workers are in a position to encounter dysfunctional policies, to call attention to these problems, to assist those who are in a position to facilitate change, and to formulate policy which is congruent with the mission of the profession. Social welfare policy is a vital concern and a critical part of practice, and if ignored, decisions which impact practice and the social well-being of others can be rendered by those who are ill-informed.

The course assignments, readings, and discussion content will routinely and deliberately place special emphasis on diversity issues in social work and social welfare, populations-at-risk, social and economic justice, and leadership development by social work students and social work practitioners.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this course are to provide the student opportunities and the environment to understand and analyze:

1. that policy emerges from the influence of values, knowledge and experience;
2. the importance and the relationship of social welfare policy to social work practice;
3. the knowledge and skills necessary to influence, formulate, and evaluate policies that concern generalist social workers;
4. action strategies regarding policies that deny equal treatment and social equity to those assigned to minority status;
5. the importance of utilizing research findings and documentation in proposing policy implementation and reform.

### **BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES**

As a result of actively participating in this course the student should be able to:

1. define and discuss social welfare policy, who formulates social welfare policy and why, where social welfare policy is developed, how it is implemented, and how it is evaluated;
2. discuss the relationship between social welfare policy and baccalaureate social work practice;
3. identify major systems of resources utilized in generalist practice and specific policies that guide these resources;
4. discuss stages of policy formulation and identify points of intervention for generalist practitioners;
5. identify sources of knowledge regarding policies developed in various resource systems;
6. articulate gaps and/or problems in existing social welfare policies and in social welfare programs;
7. identify and utilize a framework for policy analysis, as well as actively participate in the policy formulation process;
8. Delineate strategies which are appropriate to baccalaureate level practice that may influence policymakers on behalf of people in need;
9. Articulate the critical elements and issues regarding a specific social welfare or public policy, aggressively research all aspects of the policy, determine its strengths and weaknesses, and defend the policy in a structured, public speaking and debate forum.

### **INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

- Demonstrated growth, development, and maturation in critical thinking capacity as it relates to social work practice, social welfare policy, and current national and international events related to social welfare policy;
- Demonstrated ability to effectively work in teams to complete a sophisticated and challenging policy analysis group project in a timely manner;

- Demonstrated ability to prepare for and actively engage in high-level, structured discussions and debate regarding past and current social welfare policies and their impact on the public-at-large.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

Barusch, A. (2006). *Foundations of social policy: Social justice in human perspective*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Note: The textbook and reserve reading content will be supplemented to a significant degree with Power Point class presentations by the instructor. The Power Point slides will include content from assigned reading, as well as current scholarly literature and research on social welfare policy. The Power Point slides will be provided to the class electronically and students are responsible for knowing the information.

### **RECOMMENDED READINGS**

Bowie, S.L., & Stepick, A. (1998). Diversity and division: Ethnicity and the history of Miami. In F.W. Becker, & M.J. Dluhy (Eds.), *Research in urban policy: Solving urban problems in urban areas characterized by fragmentation and divisiveness* (pp. 19-32). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Bowie, S., Stepick, C.D., & Stepick, A. (2000). Voices from the welfare vortex: A descriptive profile of urban, low-income African American women on the eve of devolution. In L.G. Nackerud, & M. Robinson (Eds.), *Early implications of welfare reform in the southeast* (91-111). Hunting, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

Diller, J.V. (1999). *Cultural diversity: A primer for the human services*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Jansson, B.S. (2005). *The reluctant welfare state: American social welfare policies—past, present, and future*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

McInnis-Dittrich, K. (1994). *Integrating social welfare policy & social work practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole.

Rae, A., & Nocholas-Wolosuk, W. (2003). Social work, social change, and policy practice in the agency and community. In *Changing agency policy: An incremental approach* (pp. 1-22). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

### **CLASS REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADING**

The final grade in the class will be based upon the following criterion and their corresponding grade percentages:

<u>Event(s)</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Date</u>
Midterm Examination	30%	October 17
Group Policy Analysis Term Paper	30%	October 26
Group Policy Debate	30%	November 2- 21
Peer Review Evaluation	<u>10%</u>	November 30
Total = 100%		

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

If any student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall, 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Absences and tardiness are not permitted in this class. The consequences of a combination of more than three (3) absences and/or tardiness is the final course grade being lowered one letter grade. Emergencies, illness, accidents and inclement weather do occur. You may need to be late or be absent sometime during the semester. This policy allows three absences and/or tardiness for such events before your final grade is lowered.

## **MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATION:**

### **Assignment #1: Policy Analysis and Intervention Group Term Paper (30% of Grade)**

Class groups are required to select and evaluate a specific social policy (proposed or existing) involving the needs of a specific vulnerable client population. The policy must be selected by group consensus and approved by the professor. The policy analysis will be done in accordance with the ANALYSIS model in the McGinnis-Dittrich (1994) materials on reserve (pages 126-132). The ANALYSIS model will be presented and discussed thoroughly.

Each group will also develop a policy-related intervention plan and provide an agenda for implementing the plan. Chapter Six in the McGinnis-Dittrich textbook (pp. 98-111) provides guidelines for doing this in accordance with the problem-solving approach. The plan must also clearly address identified gaps in the existing social policy, anticipated obstacles to the proposed intervention, and an evaluation strategy.

Policy analysis papers are also required to include content on diversity and multi-culturalism issues. In other words, how is the policy you are writing about related to, or how might it affect the various “outgroups” discussed in class?

Each group will collaborate and prepare a written report (term paper) not to exceed 25 typed and double-spaced pages. The paper must be written strictly by APA V guidelines and must include appropriate citations and references. The term paper is due on Tuesday, October 24.

Individual student grades will be given for both the debates and the term papers. *This means that each individual will be graded for his/her work alone, but they will also be graded on the extent that their section of the paper flows well and logically fits with the other sections.* Each group will be required to maintain a detailed log of group meetings, attendance, and indicate what tasks were completed by whom, including which group members wrote specific sections of the term paper. The instructor will hold 1-2 meetings with each group to assure adequate progress on the group assignment.

### **Assignment #2: Social Welfare Policy Debate (30% of Grade)**

Social welfare policies are debated at every level of the U.S. government system. In order to facilitate the critical thinking process and to help understand the dynamics of that process, each student will participate in a social welfare policy debate regarding specific (and controversial) topics of concern to social workers. This exercise will provide students with (1) an understanding of the policy-making process; (2) the opportunity to “debate the issues” relevant to them and the social work profession; (3) a forum to research, analyze, and evaluate specific policies through a group process; and (4) a public speaking event.

### **Policy Debate Schedule**

Debate #1	Alpha Team	Thursday, November 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Debate #2	Beta Team	Tuesday, November 7 <sup>th</sup>
Debate #3	Delta Team	Thursday, November 9 <sup>th</sup>
Debate #4	Gamma Team	Thursday, November 16 <sup>th</sup>
Debate #5	Kappa Team	Tuesday, November 21 <sup>st</sup>

### **Policy Debate Format**

The debate format used in this exercise is the most widespread form of debate. The debate issues or topics are policy-oriented (for example: “All people who receive welfare benefits should undergo mandatory drug testing.”) Two to three students will take an affirmative position on the topic area (“pro”) and two to three students will take an opposition position (“con”). Each team will be required to take a firm stand on the issue, explain the logic of their position, use quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (personal or telephonic interviews with experts) data to support their arguments, and help the audience understand why their idea is more reasonable than that of the opponent (s). There is a strict format for the debates that includes specific time limits for presentation of affirmative and negative positions, cross-examinations by opponents, rebuttals, and closing arguments. The audience will also have an opportunity to ask questions, provide written comments to each debate team, and vote their preferences on which team presented the best arguments.

The professor recognizes that some students will be forced to take a position that they do not personally agree with. This is, however, a realistic aspect of social policy dynamics and will provide a valuable perspective on the political complexity of the policy-making process, as well as the role of personal and/or societal values. It will also help to elucidate the ideas of stakeholders, balance of power, out groups, oppression, and environmental influences on social policy.

The debates will be 44 minutes in length, with another 10 minutes allotted for class inquiries and discussion. Any group that exceeds this time limit will receive a 10% penalty. All debate team members must equally participate in the debate. Any debate team that does not have equal participation by all group members will receive a 10% penalty. The specific times allotted will be as follows:

Affirmative Position Statement on Issue	7 minutes
Opposition Position Statement on Issue	7 minutes
Opposition Cross-Examination	10 minutes
Affirmative Cross-Examination	10 minutes
Closing Affirmative arguments	5 minutes
Closing Opposition Arguments	5 minutes
Audience Questions	10 minutes
<b><u>Total Debate Time = 54 minutes</u></b>	

### **Written Debate Product** (Outline of Debate Plan)

Students on each side of the social policy debate are required to prepare a written document and submit it prior to the beginning of the presentation. The paper should include the following: (1) a clear statement of what your debate objectives were; (2) an outline of your strategy for achieving those objectives, including a summary of information to be presented, questions to be used in the cross-examination, etc. (this should be in numbered or “bullet” format); (3) definitions of key terms that may have a bearing on your topic (do not assume that the audience is familiar with “specialized” terminology); and (4) a brief summary of where you obtained your quantitative and qualitative data. A minimum of two interviews are required with individuals who are knowledgeable about your topic and can provide “legitimate authority” perspective. These interviews should be referenced in

“personal communication” format (See APA V). A minimum of four written references are required and at least two other references should originate from internet sources. References are required to be documented with the APA V guidelines, which will be discussed in class.

## **OTHER SPECIFICATIONS**

### **Diversity and Multi-culturalism Content Requirement**

Policy debates are required to include content on diversity and multi-culturalism issues. In other words, how is the debate topic related to, or how might it affect the various “outgroups” discussed in class? This issue must be addressed in a substantive manner during the debate.

### **Comparative Perspectives**

Comparative and international perspectives are salient in relation to social policy. At least one part of the presentation and one reference in the written summary should address the experiences of another country and another state (other than Tennessee) with respect to the selected issue. This should be examined in the context of, “what can be learned about this issue from the experience of another country or another state in the U.S.?” That information should be used to buttress the affirmative or negative debate positions on the matter.

### **Policy Debate “Set-Up” Teams**

The physical set-up for the policy debates is a vital aspect of the overall experience. It is important, therefore, that the preparation for the 5 consecutive weeks of debates be as efficient as possible. The six (5) debate teams will be responsible for the physical set-up and logistical implementation of at least one debate by another team. The rule is simple: the team that participates in their scheduled debate is responsible for set-up and management of the following debate. Example: When the Beta Team (#2) debates, the Alpha Team (#1) will be the set-up crew. The following week, the Beta Team will manage the set-up for the Delta Team.

Set-up areas of responsibility include the following:

- Clock management
- Videotaping
- Shiloh Room logistics (e.g., microphone, extension cords, etc.)
- Debate protocol
- Question/Answer facilitation
- Administration and collection of written class critiques

Set-up teams are responsible for all aspects of managing the debate, and for making sure all equipment is operational, dismantled upon completion of debates, and returned to the instructor’s office. Set-up team members will sign up for the different areas of responsibility and the instructor will be given a copy of the sign-up sheet in advance. Set-up teams must have the room “debate ready” by 9:30 AM, so the debate can begin promptly at 9:45 AM

### **Debate Grading:**

The policy debate will represent 30 percent of the final class grade. The debates will begin on November 2 and will take place weekly through November 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **MIDTERM EXAMINATION** (30% of Grade)

In addition to the social policy debate and group term paper, there will be a midterm examination on Tuesday, October 17, 2006. The examination will consist of materials from assigned readings and from other material presented in class. Students are strongly urged to keep up with assigned readings to avoid getting too far behind and creating unnecessary stress. All reading assignments indicated for a particular date should be read before the class in which it will be discussed.

### **PEER REVIEW EVALUATION BY DEBATE/POLICY ANALYSIS TEAM MEMBERS** (10% of final Grade)

The BSSW Program goals include a deliberate process of developing “generalist social work practitioners who...are committed to continuous [personal] development of professional self.” With that goal in mind, all team members will be accountable to their peers in terms of handling their tasks, duties, and responsibilities related to the Policy Analysis and Policy Debate projects. At the end of the semester, each team member will conduct an anonymous Peer Review Evaluation Rating of their other team members that addresses the following:

- Extent of participation at group meetings, including attendance and punctuality;
- Extent of active involvement in planning and completing Policy Analysis Group Term Paper;
- Extent of active involvement in planning and preparing for the Policy Debates, and
- Extent that member handled overall responsibilities (i.e., “carried their weight”) with both the Policy Analysis Term Paper and Policy Debates in a responsible and productive manner.

### **ASSIGNMENT/EXAM “MAKE-UP” POLICY**

If an assignment is not completed by the deadline date, or an examination is missed, the grade will be recorded as a “0” grade (no points). Make up examinations or assignment extensions will only be given in cases of verifiable emergencies. If there are extenuating circumstances, the instructor must be notified prior to the date of an examination or the due date of an assignment. Be prepared to verify any emergency in writing, and possibly back-up verification, if requested.

### **GRADING SCALE**

A	100-90	C	74-70
B+	89-85	D	69-60
B	84-80	F	59- Below
C+	79-75		

### **HONOR STATEMENT**

The University of Tennessee is proud of its students' commitment to academic integrity and their pledge to abide by the Honor Statement found in *Hilltopics*: "As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my personal commitment to honor and integrity." This tradition of intellectual honesty is maintained by the cooperation of students and faculty members. According to *Hilltopics*, "each faculty member is responsible for defining, in specific terms, guidelines for preserving academic integrity in a course." I shall discuss the important Honor Statement, as it relates to both individuals and groups in this particular course, at either the first or second class meeting.

### **EXTRA CREDIT**

It is the BSSW Program's expectation that all social work majors will participate in the BSSW Student Social Work Organization (BSSW-SWO) and/or the University of Tennessee student Chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW-UT). All students who are enrolled in SW 416 (Social Welfare Policies and Services) are welcome. The BSSW-SWO meets every Tuesday from 11:10 -12:25 in Room 209, Henson Hall. This time slot is built into the class schedule as a lab. Given the time of the meetings, students are encouraged to bring their lunch. The NABSW-UT meetings are held on Fridays at 6:00 PM, dates to be announced.

The BSSW-SWO and NABSW-UT are student organizations that provide an excellent opportunity for leadership development, community and university service, the enhancement of group skills, research opportunities, and socialization. This organization and its activities are viewed as an extension of the BSSW curriculum.

Students in this class will have the opportunity to earn five (5) final grade points for extra credit by attending and participating in the BSSW-SWO and/or NABSW-UT this semester. Your attendance and participation must be documented. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. You must attend seven

(7) or more BSSW-SWO meetings during the term. Also, you must participate in one of the organization's standing committees. NABSW-UT participants must attend seven (7) meetings, participate in one of the standing committees, and participate in at least one community service activity. Both attendance and participation are required for extra credit. You will need to complete a form listing your activities in the organization throughout the term. The form will be signed by a committee chairperson and the faculty liaison to the BSSW-SWO and NABSW-UT. The completed, signed form must be handed in to the instructor one week prior to the end of class. Without the signed form verifying your attendance and participation, the extra credit will not be provided. No other extra credit is available in this class.

### SEMESTER TIMETABLE

<u>WEEK #</u>	<u>MAJOR DISCUSSION TOPICS</u>
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#1, Aug 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student/Instructor Introductions</li> <li>– Overview of program goals, course, and required assignments</li> <li>– Debate group assignments</li> </ul>
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#2, Aug 29 Aug 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Social welfare policy context and definitions</li> <li>– Social work and social justice</li> <li>– Outgroups, deficit/non-deficit perspectives, and social welfare policy</li> <li>– Contextual factors in social welfare policy</li> <li>– Moral dilemmas in social welfare policy</li> <li>– Policy in the news</li> </ul>
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Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 1, 2

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#3, Sept 5 Sept 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Policy analysis and policy practice</li> <li>– The Social Security Act</li> <li>– Debate prep</li> <li>– Policy in the news</li> </ul>
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Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 3, 4

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#4, Sept 12 Sept 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Social welfare and poverty</li> <li>– Social welfare and physical illness</li> <li>– Debate prep</li> <li>– Policy in the news</li> </ul>
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Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 5, 6

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#5, Sept 19 Sept 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Social welfare and mental illness</li> <li>– Social welfare and disability</li> </ul>
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Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 7, 8

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- #6, Sept 26 – Diversity, multi-culturalism, and people of color  
 Sept 28 – Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender issues  
 – Debate prep  
 – Policy in the news

Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 9, 10

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- #7, Oct 3 – The Problem-Solving Approach and Policy Analysis  
 Oct 5 – Social welfare and children, women, and the elderly  
 – Debate prep  
 – Policy in the news

Reading Assignment:  
Barusch – Chapters 11, 12, 13

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- #8, Oct 10 – Midterm Examination Preview  
 Oct 12 \*\*\*\***Fall Break – no class on Thursday** \*\*\*\*
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- #9, Oct 17 – Midterm Examination  
 Oct 19 – Policy Analysis Prep Time (Mandatory Group Attendance)
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- #10, Oct 24 – In-class video: “Eyes on the Prize: The History of the Civil Rights Movement, Part 1”

**NOTE: POLICY ANALYSIS PAPERS ARE DUE TODAY (10/24/05)**

- Oct 26 – Class viewing of full-length policy debate
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- #11, Oct 31 – Class time for final debate preparation  
 Nov 2 – **Policy Debate #1:** Alpha Team  
 Setup Team: Kappa
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- #12, Nov 7 – **Policy Debate #2:** Beta Team  
 Setup Team: Alpha

- Nov 9 – **Policy Debate #3:** Delta Team  
 Setup Team: Beta

Reading Assignment:  
Bowie, Stepick, & Dutton-Stepick – “Vortex of welfare reform”

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- #13, Nov 14 – Class discussion - “Welfare Vortex”  
 Nov 16 – **Policy Debate #4:** Gamma Team  
 Setup Team: Delta
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- #14, Nov 21 – **Policy Debate #5:** Kappa Team  
 Setup Team: Alpha
- Nov 23 \*\*\* **Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class** \*\*\*
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- #15, Nov 28 – Policy Debate Class Assessment and Recapitulation  
 Nov 30 – Future Social Welfare Policy Challenges  
 – Review of Debate Highlights

Reading Assignment:  
 Barusch – Chapter 14

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- #16, Dec 5 Final Class. Wrap-up and course evaluation.
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### BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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- Gordon, L. (1994). *Pitied but not forgotten: Single mothers and the history of welfare*. New York: Free Press.
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