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SW 530.01: History of Social Policy, Justice and Change

Ryan Tolleson-Knee

University of Montana - Missoula, ryan.tollesonknee@umontana.edu

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SW 530 HISTORY OF SOCIAL POLICY, JUSTICE, & CHANGE

Professor: Ryan Tolleson Knee
Office: JRH 14
Phone: 243-4228
E-mail: ryantk@selway.umt.edu
Office Hrs: M (1-4); W (9-11); or scheduled
Class Time: Fridays 8 – 11 a.m.
Credits: Three
Prerequisites: MSW admission or instructor approval

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This foundation course in social welfare policy and services examines the dynamic relationship between the history of social welfare policy and the emergence of the social work profession, with primary emphasis on the U.S. context. Values that shaped social welfare as an institution set the stage for the emergence of the formalized profession of social work and the dynamic interaction of social treatment, support, control, and change. We will explore the cultural and historical contexts and political and economic forces shaping social conditions, professional responses to those conditions, and public debates regarding the nature of social welfare. We consider the place of social policy in promoting or constricting attainment of social justice and well-being, the interplay of policy and practice, approaches to policy analysis and advocacy, and the dynamics of policy change. We critically examine the values, assumptions and knowledge bases that have informed social welfare policies, programs, and delivery of services with particular attention to those related to gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship, age, and class.

COURSE CONTENT

In this course we critically examine the history of social welfare policy, the political and ethical implications of particular policies and the assumptions regarding human difference that inform them. We address the tensions and contradictions therein, consider the history of struggles for social justice-oriented policy change, and examine what has changed and what has remained the same in key policy arenas that shape social welfare services in the U.S. (e.g., income maintenance, child welfare, mental health, disabilities, corrections). In each arena, we address constructions of difference and the ways in which those constructions have and continue to influence policies and services along lines of gender, race, age, class, "ability," and marital, employment and citizenship status. Likewise we examine the economic context and forces which shape the construction of social welfare policies and to which policies respond. Students are introduced to processes of policy formation, frameworks for policy analysis in light of principles of social and economic justice, and possibilities and processes for justice-oriented policy advocacy. While the main focus of the course is the history of social policy and justice-oriented change efforts in the U.S., students are also introduced to policy trajectories and alternative perspectives articulated in other national contexts.

RELATION TO OTHER COURSES

This course provides the historical context and foundation for contemporary policy analysis addressed in SW 531. You will be introduced to frameworks for analysis in this course and required to critically examine and apply them in SW 531. You will also draw on your developing knowledge of difference, discrimination and oppression in SW 511 and apply it to understanding and analysis of social welfare history and the making of social policy in this course. Likewise, you will draw on course content regarding collective efforts and social movements toward just social policy to enhance understanding of practice with groups and communities (SW 525). This course provides you with the foundation from which to examine the historical, political and economic context of your field placement and to understand the policies that have shaped understanding of social problems and service settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of the course you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the values and assumptions regarding gender, race, ethnicity, age, citizenship and class underlying the development of the U.S. social welfare system.
2. Discuss the relationships between the development of social welfare policy and the emergence of social work as a profession and the tensions therein.
3. Understand the history of social welfare policy in the U.S. and how this history has shaped the profession's current structures and issues.
4. Use analytical frameworks to understand and assess the values, assumptions and impacts of social welfare policies.
5. Compare and contrast the perspectives of at least three different theoretical frameworks for understanding the development of social welfare programs.
6. Discuss the role of social policies in contributing to, mitigating, and challenging forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
7. Describe methods and strategies for policy analysis sensitive to and informed by diverse and oppressed populations.
8. Critically examine the roles of social work within the historical development of the social welfare system.
9. Use frameworks for analysis to examine the social, political and historical context of a particular policy area and its impacts on vulnerable or marginalized populations.
10. Conduct library, archival, and web-based research on social welfare history.
11. Describe a specific case history illustrating relationships among social welfare policy, social mobilization, and social justice.
12. Discuss the leadership, strategies, goals and outcomes of at least two specific movements toward social reform.
13. Critically examine the strengths and limitations of at least three frameworks for policy analysis in terms of attention to and promotion of social and economic justice.
14. Describe a model for policy analysis that addresses questions of difference and power and promotes social and economic justice.
15. Contribute to the analysis of social policies and their impacts on client systems, communities, workers and agencies, and contribute to the development of improved social policies.
16. Describe the role of the social worker as policy practitioner.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Zinn, H. (1999). *A People's History of the United States*, New York: Harper's Collins

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**Quizzes** (50 points)

You will take a total of nine quizzes worth ten points each throughout the semester. The quizzes will cover the Zinn readings.

Presentation (50 points)

Beginning in week 10 and continuing through the final week of the semester each of you will present your findings to the class by developing an informative and creative presentation. The presentation you create should use an innovative mixture of mediums and challenge your current level of speech-giving comfort. To make the presentation both creative and personally challenging you should select a presentation method you are less accustomed to (e.g., power point, formal speech, classroom teaching/learning interaction). Your presentation will be graded by me (50%) and a panel of your peers (50%) based on a previously established set of objective criteria. Presentations will last 30 minutes and be followed by 5 minutes of questions and answers.

Intellectual Biography/Institutional History (150 points)

A substantial amount of your time and energy this semester will be spent digging through historical content borrowed primarily from public and private archival records, historians, and sociologists in an effort to learn more about a historical social work pioneer or to trace the evolution of one of the state's public health institutions. To jumpstart this process you must begin to seriously explore your area of interest now and begin to narrow down your topic by the end of next week. While you are free to choose either of the two options, I want you to confine your historical time period to between the late 1800s and 1930s (the progressive era and early depression).

It is important that you organize your research efforts well to minimize wasted time and maximize your capacity to identify and locate useful resources. As mentioned, you must begin the research process at the beginning of the term and avoid the temptation to put it off until mid semester. In order to demonstrate continuous research you should:

1. Keep a record of source material and data collected
2. Keep a log of bi-weekly research activities and whether these activities produced new data or led to a dead end.
3. Make a monthly appointment or e-mail me to evaluate your progress/log, and to seek advice and direction (by **February 21, March 21, & April 25**)
4. Make brief in-class presentations to your peers to discuss source materials and research activities

The **intellectual biography** is best defined as the life history of an individual preeminently guided by the intellect as distinguished from emotion or experience. The life history method of social research emphasizes the experiences and definitions held by one person, one group, or one organization as that person, group, or organization interprets those experiences (Denzin, 1970). There are three types of life histories: the

complete, the topical, and the edited. The edited may be either complete or topical. The intellectual biography can adequately be defined as an edited topical life history. As such, the intellectual biography emphasizes only one phase of the subject's life (topical) written with the continual interspersing of comments, explanations, and questions by someone other than the focal subject (edited). For example, the intellectual biography of pioneer social work educator, Dr. George Edmund Haynes would be limited to a description of his activities in establishing an early social work education program (topical). This would include a review of all available primary data. These public and private archival data would be reviewed and analyzed to draw some conclusions about Dr. Haynes's contributions to social work education. Secondary documents would also be used to provide some understanding of how others interpret this scholar's work (edited).

The primary goal of the intellectual biography is to trace the thinking of a particular historical figure to ascertain major contributions to social work knowledge. The historical method in social research is defined as the process of critically examining the records and survivals of the past (Gottschalk, Kuuckhohn, & Angel, 1947). There are three steps involved in this method: (a) collecting probable sources of information; (b) examining these sources for authenticity; and (c) analyzing the data collected (Maraimpolski & Hughes, 1978).

The following questions should help you to make a critical analysis of the scholar's contributions as primary or secondary documents are evaluated.

1. Note societal responses to the scholar's ideas. Were the ideas taken for granted or were they novel or radical for the times?
2. Draw conclusions about the scholar's professional support system – Was the scholar a part of a network, or did operations take place in relative isolation? Was the isolation self-imposed because of the nature of the work, because of personality conflicts or geographical factors?
3. Evaluate where the scholar's writings were published. Did the scholar's writings appear in conference proceedings? Were many of the works in journals described as socialist, e.g., *The Messenger*? Were the writings found primarily in the literary organs of various organizations, (e.g., *Opportunity* or *The Commons*)? The location of the publications will provide some clues about the scholar's allegiances and philosophical preferences.
4. Analyze the social work profession's response to the scholar's ideas. Was he or she invited to speak at national or local conferences or meetings? Were there clear themes in the scholar's speeches and/or writings? Was the scholar involved in planning meetings or active in establishing various organizations or clubs?
5. Determine whether the scholar's ideas were of national, regional or local interest.
6. Examine the interplay that took place between producing and disseminating original ideas.
7. Describe general conclusions about the scholar's motives for action. What was the personal and/professional impetus that drove her or him in the struggle for social change?
8. Draw conclusions about the scholar's contributions to social work?

The **institutional history** is similar to the intellectual biography although the richness and availability of resources could be far greater since relatively few social work pioneers began their work in Montana. The purpose of the institutional history is to define the primary care activities and contributions of a public health institution or agency that was developed around the turn of the century. This may, for example, include the founding of such institutions as the Montana State Hospital, Montana Developmental Center, one of the state's many orphanages (i.e., Paul Clark, Twin Bridges) or county poor farms. You might, also consider the possibility of narrowing your focus on a particular aspect of the services provided within a public institution or agency. For example, you might trace Montana State Hospital's admission rates for women who presented symptoms similar to post-partum depression, their course of treatment, and corresponding lengths of stay. Similarly, you might review county pension funds and poor records to learn more about the desperate attempts that were made by poor people to be institutionalized because of hunger and homelessness. A final idea might involve an analysis of admissions to one of the state's orphanages and the child's treatment plan, length of stay, family contact, and educational opportunities.

The following questions can serve as a guide as you consider information relevant to the development of an institutional history.

1. How were the primary care and treatment responses related to prevailing societal and cultural attitudes and beliefs of the time? What were the predominant economic and political factors that might have contributed to the delivery of care?
2. What types of value systems drove social work interventions? How were decisions made about resource allocation based on who was deemed worthy and unworthy of being helped? How was care treatment rendered if you were a woman with children, an able-bodied worker, a person of color, or someone coming from a 'genetically inferior' family system?
3. What was the predominant theory base or model of practice at the time? Did interventions have a theoretical or philosophical grounding or were they largely based on personal/professional preferences or fashionable popularity (i.e., electro-shock, isolation, drugs, and psychosurgery)? Was there a body of research that supported the selected forms of intervention?
4. Based on your findings, what are the contemporary implications for social work practice?

For both options you should consider developing a cumulative chart to make relationships and connections more apparent. The chart could include the following information: (a) major contributions to social work/welfare thought and knowledge; (b) time period of major activities; (c) opponents and supporters of scholar's works/treatment approaches; (d) reflections of the scholar's works/treatment decisions in present day programs or policies; (e) primary reference sources used.

Very little archival data is available on-line and you will most likely need to contact an archivist and hand search card catalogs to locate the most relevant information possible. While your orientation will be to the University's archive department, many of you will find a vast array of archival data at the Montana Historical Society (open Saturday 9 - 1:00). To contact a general reference archivist at the Montana Historical Society call 444-2681. The archivists working here have been notified of the research you will be conducting. Similarly, you will need to complete a confidentiality agreement form to have access to patient records. We will travel to Helena on Wednesday, February 19 to conduct research and observe legislative meetings.

The final paper is not due until May 9. As mentioned, however, you must e-mail or meet with me each month (by **February 21, March 21, & April 25**) to review your progress and discuss possible next steps. The paper should not exceed 25 pages and include a maximum of 40 references. You must also adhere to APA guidelines for writing professional papers.

I plan to keep all your papers and organize many of them into a monograph or reference book that will be placed in the department's holdings. Similarly, I will strongly encourage a number of you to consider submitting your paper for publication to an appropriate social work journal or historical magazine.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week One January 31

Course Introduction, Discussion of readings/assignments

9:30 a.m. – Archive presentation (Mansfield Library – fourth floor)

Week Two February 7

Quiz **Chs. 1-3**

The policy making process....which is it?

- a. a formalized democratic process that encourages citizen participation
- b. a mucked up process that is best influenced by bribing 'public servants' with Disneyworld junkets, Enron-style campaign contributions, or good ol' fashioned Montana style guided raft trips
- c. one that benefits those who get the most press coverage whether through tree sitting or throwing salmon on the governor
- d. b, c, and not a
- e. none of the above

Columbus discovers a new world. The real story behind a guy getting lost, brutalizing peaceful people, and getting a national holiday named in his honor. The contemporary implications of history as translated primarily through the eyes of wealthy, land-owning aristocrats.

Week Three February 14

Quiz **Chs 4 & 5**

European brutalization and enslavement of non-whites continued—contemporary implications

Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution.....idealism in the face of hypocrisy

The significance of both documents, the inherent opportunities and challenges of the Bill of Rights

Constitutional rights in the face of 1) a violent record industry, and an explicitly sexualized television and motion picture industry (amendment 1) ; 2) US ownership of the world's highest gun violence rate (amendment 2); a growing fear of middle easterners and terrorist activity (amendment 4)

Week Four **CLASS ON WEDNESDAY, FEB. 19**

Wednesday, February 19 Helena Lobby Day/Montana Historical Society Research

Friday, February 21— no class

Week Five February 28 **class time 1- 4:00 p.m. (SB 336)**

Quiz **Chs. 6-9**

How the other half lives: women, natives, and Africans

White man's property, obstructionists to "progress"

Suffrage, emancipation

 The Politics of Containment: From Poor Houses to Prisons. Case Studies

Week Six March 7

Quiz **Chs. 10-13**

America to the Civil War

 Government responses

 Treatment of non-white minorities & women

Post war economy

 Emerging philosophies

 Public welfare efforts

 Professionalization of Social Work

Week Seven March 14

The Progressive Era

 Oppression of native and African people

 Labor and Unions

Women's movements

Who Counts for What? Age, Ability and Citizenship

Week Eight March 21

Quiz **Chs. 14-15**

The Great Depression and Social Security

U.S. Political and Social Climate

Social Insurance in the U.S.

Social Security Act/Fair Labor Standards Act

The Social Security Act and Ideologies of Family, Work and Difference
Case Studies

Week Nine March 28

Spring Break No Class

Week Ten April 4

Quiz **Chs. 16-18**

Presentations

Civil and Welfare Rights

Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Administrations

Influence of MLK and

Week Eleven April 11

Quiz **Chs. 19 – 20**

Presentations

A Return to the Past??

Social programs and civil rights in the 70's

Week Twelve April 18

Quiz **Chs. 21-22**

Presentations

A reactionary vision

Conservative political economy

New federalism

Deinstitutionalization and homelessness

The new civil rights

Week Thirteen April 25

Quiz **Chs. 23 – afterword**

Presentations

“I did not have sex with that young woman” – the trials and tribulations of an increasingly moderate democratic party; botched health care reform, the Brady Bill, Gays in the Military, NAFTA, & PRWORA (welfare reform).

Week Fourteen May 2

Presentations

Growing conservatism and coerced conformity in the name of faith-based initiatives, patriot act, annual academic testing, the marriage initiative and abstinence only programs

An analysis of Montana’s future and federal reform efforts

Week Fifteen May 9

Presentations

Advocacy and Policy Change: Where do we go from here?
Ongoing privatization and inherent contradictions

Finals Week May 12-16

Probable Final Examination (scheduled toward the latter part of the semester)

ATTENDANCE

While attendance will not be taken, it is assumed that you will be present for every class session. Please notify me ahead of time if, for some momentous reason, you are unable to attend class.

GRADES

90%	A
80%	B
70%	C
60%	D
59% & below	F