SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO ENDING FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING

Kay Young McChesney

Female genital cutting (FGC) is practiced in 28 African countries; infibulation is practiced in nine African countries. Six unsuccessful approaches to ending FGC are reviewed: cultural absolutism, cultural relativism, health education, feminism, human rights legislation, and psychosocial approaches. Two successful programs that have resulted in communities abandoning FGC, including Tostan in Senegal, are described. Successful programs are community-led, aim to change social norms in the whole community, and empower women. Governments and NGOs should use community-led programs based on participatory methods as recommended interventions in order to promote community-wide abandonment of FGC.

THE 47 PERCENT: U.S. TRENDS IN INCOME MAINTENANCE AND MEDICAID SPENDING, 1990-2011

Elgin Mannion and Gordon C. Chang

We analyze trends and variations in state-level expenditure growth for Medicaid, SSI, SNAP, and TANF. We explore three areas of interest: (1) How program structure impacts growth; (2) How programs responded to the 2008/2009 recession; and (3) How state preference for limited government, measured by Right-To-Work (RTW) status and political affiliation, impacts program expenditure growth. Findings show that program structure impacts expenditure growth: the state-matched programs like TANF and Medicaid grew slower from 1990-2011 than did open-ended federal programs like SNAP. OLS models found states with RTW policies and large Hispanic populations positively associated with higher income maintenance and Medicaid expenditure growth.

UNDERSTANDING FRINGE ECONOMIC BEHAVIOR: A BOURDIEUSIAN-INFORMED META-ETHNOGRAPHY

Peter A. Kindle and Mary A. Caplan

This paper is a meta-ethnography of four low-income communities in order to explore fringe economic behaviors. Rejecting the interpretation of fringe economic behaviors as irrational, we affirm these behaviors as viable alternatives for people marginalized in the mainstream economy. Using a meta-ethnographic method and employing the concepts of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, we identify the habitus and social capital values of each community as distinct Bourdieusian fields and conclude that an awareness of the localized development of a fringe economic cluster with distinct goals and rules undermines one-size-fits-all social welfare programs.
TACTICAL DECISION-MAKING: COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS DESCRIBE ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN SOCIAL ACTION CAMPAIGNS

Donna Hardina, Mathew Ari Jendian, and Catherine Garoupa White

Social work curriculum on social action-oriented organizing methods is often devoid of content on the day-to-day role of the organizer in recruiting diverse participants, facilitating group decision-making, and planning and implementing campaigns. Little attention is paid to how tactical decisions are made and how the ethical implications of these decisions are weighed. In this study, professional organizers were interviewed about how they viewed their work, their relationships with their constituents, and the values and ethical principles used to make tactical decisions.

RELIEVING HUMAN SUFFERING: COMPASSION IN SOCIAL POLICY

Mary Elizabeth Collins, Sarah Garlington, and Kate Cooney

Human suffering is always present in society. There is general consensus that action should be taken to address suffering, but there are differing views as to the appropriate means of doing so. In this paper we utilize a classical understanding of the virtue of compassion to answer the research question: How does contemporary U.S. policy address human suffering through compassionate response? To answer this question, we conduct a critical analysis of three policy domains (hospice care, domestic violence, and disaster relief) to determine variation in response to human suffering. Comparisons among the domains suggest the various ways in which compassion can be observed within formal social policy. We discuss the implications of a compassion-focused approach to analysis of policies that address human suffering, and more broadly, the use of a virtue-oriented perspective on policy.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC EMERGENCY WORK IN URBAN LABOR MARKETS DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION: THE CASE OF INDUSTRIAL CITIES

Robert L. Boyd

Self-employment and public emergency work were frequent reactions to the economic dislocations of the Great Depression. Census data for men show that in urban-industrial centers, self-employment reduced the demand for public emergency work by absorbing displaced workers into the entrepreneurial sector. Census data for women reveal that, in these centers, self-employment and public emergency work coexisted due to mutually beneficial relations between women who were self-employed and those women who worked on government projects. The results suggest that, contrary to popular theoretical and ideological views, there is no inherent conflict between private- and public-sector responses to stagnant labor markets.

DIFFERENCES IN EXPERIENCES OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC MICROAGGRESSION AMONG ASIAN, LATINO/HISPANIC, BLACK, AND WHITE YOUNG ADULTS

Shandra Forrest-Bank and Jeffrey M. Jenson
Racial and ethnic discrimination is a significant risk factor for health and mental health problems among non-White children, adolescents, and adults. Recent evidence suggests that a form of discrimination known as microaggression, characterized by subtle and often unintentional acts of discriminatory behavior, is associated with detrimental effects on the psychological and emotional wellbeing of non-White individuals. We examined differences in microaggression experiences among a sample of 409 Asian, Latino, Black, and White young adults. The Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (Nadal, 2011) was used to measure respondents’ experiences of racial and ethnic microaggression. Young adults in all the non-White groups reported significantly higher rates of microaggressive experiences than respondents in the White group. Black participants experienced the highest levels of microaggression, followed by Latinos/Hispanics and Asians. Exploratory post-hoc comparisons yielded significant differences in the nature and type of racial and ethnic microaggressions experienced by members of different racial or ethnic groups. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.

HEALTH STATUS, MEDICARE PART D ENROLLMENT, AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE AMONG OLDER ADULTS

Jin Kim

To account for potential selection factors in the observed relationship between Medicare Part D coverage and prescription drug use, this study uses data from the 2010 and 2012 waves of the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) to first examine the determinants of Medicare Part D enrollment, paying particular attention to the role of functional health status on the enrollment decision. Next, the study assesses whether and to what extent Medicare Part D coverage moderates the effect of functional health status on prescription drug use and monthly out-of-pocket spending among older adults. As prior studies indicate, the findings reveal that individuals who take up Medicare Part D have poorer (functional) health relative to nonparticipants, and thus, exhibit greater demand for prescription drugs. Taking functional health status into account, Medicare Part D coverage is significantly associated with greater prescription drug use among those with few health limitations, and is also significantly associated with greater out-of-pocket spending among those with the most health limitations. Thus, while prior studies have compared Medicare eligible- to non-eligible individuals to find that Medicare Part D coverage significantly lowers out-of-pocket costs, and therefore, increases prescription drug use, this study compared Medicare Part D enrollees to eligible non-enrollees to generate findings that imply that the presumed effect of Medicare Part D coverage on prescription drug use may be spurious. In turn, advocacy efforts may be best directed at ensuring that the existing coverage gaps in Medicare Part D are continually addressed.

BOOK REVIEWS

Social Development Theory & Practice.
James Midgley and David Piachaud (Eds.). Reviewed by Tanusha Raniga.


Youth Work: An Institutional Ethnography of Youth Homelessness.
Naomi Nichols. Reviewed by Melinda McCormick.

Gary Cameron, Marshall Fine, Sarah Maiter, Karen Frensch, and Nancy Freymond (Eds.). Reviewed by David Tobis.

Migrant Youth, Transnational Families, and the State.
Lauren Heidbrink. Reviewed by Laurie Melrood.

Uncertain Justice: The Roberts Court and the Constitution.
Laurence Tribe and Joshua Matz. Reviewed by Margaret Burnham.