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Some Useful Sources on US Policy Reform

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1 Books

Weaver, R. Kent (2000) *Ending Welfare as We Know It*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.
The definitive punch-by-punch, line-by-line account of the introduction of the 1996 US welfare reform laws covering the polemics, politics, personalities and policies.

Weil, Alan and Finegold, Kenneth (eds.) (2002) *Welfare Reform: The Next Act*, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
This presents in one volume key findings from six years of the Urban Institute's Assessing the New Federalism project, an ongoing effort to analyse the devolution of responsibility for social programmes, including welfare, from the federal government to the states.

Blank, R and Haskins R. (2001) *The New World of Welfare*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
A major contribution to the debate on the reauthorisation of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act from welfare experts – liberal and conservative, academic and non-academic. It is based on a conference organised by the Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan on 1–2 February 2001 only days after the President George W. Bush took office. Tommy Thompson, former Governor of Wisconsin and the new Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) would have attended the conference, but was prevented from doing so by a coalition of claimant groups who picketed the conference.

Card, D. and Blank, R. (2000) *Finding Jobs: Work and Welfare Reform*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
A collection of quite technical papers, often by economists, that provides a comprehensive analysis of the US labour market and the initial impact of the 1996 welfare reforms.

Walker, R and Wiseman, M. (2003) *The Welfare We Want: Britain's challenge for US reform*, Bristol: Policy Press
An unusual volume in that it attempts to reverse the direction of policy transfer by encouraging the US policy community to review recent reforms in the UK with a view to informing the direction of US reform. Alongside articles that document New Labour's welfare to work policies in Britain since 1997, it includes a detailed account of both the 1996 and 2002 reforms in the US as well as suggestions for further change.

Committee on Ways and Means (2000) *The 2000 Green Book Background Material and Data on Programs within the Jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means* (17th

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edition), 6 October 2000, Washington, DC: US House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means. (Available at http://aspe.hhs.gov/2000gb/index.htm)
This wonderful document gives a mass of legal and statistical information about US social security and social assistance systems. It is prepared for the use of Members of the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means by members of its staff. The document, which used to be published annually, does not seem to have been updated since 2000. Although treated as a definitive statement by many, it was not officially approved by the Committee and had the disclaimer that it might not reflect the views of its Members.

2 Websites

There are a vast number of relevant websites. The small number selected is as non-partisan as the US political arena allows. All were visited on 5 October 2002.

Government sites

http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/hspwelfare.htm
This is the section of the vast website of the US federal Department of Health and Human Services, devoted to the research work on welfare and work undertaken under the auspices of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. It contains large numbers of research and evaluation reports concerning welfare to work and the 1996 TANF reforms in PDF format for downloading and other useful links.

http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/hspincpov.htm
This is the section of the US Department of Health and Human Services website devoted to research on income and poverty initiated by the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. A surprising percentage of the material is old but it has direct links to current research. It includes the US definitions of poverty.

http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/NEWWS/index.htm
This is the official website devoted to the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies undertaken by the Department of Health and Human Services to study the effectiveness of welfare-to-work programmes. The NEWWS evaluation is a study of the effectiveness of eleven mandatory welfare-to-work programmes in seven locales: Atlanta, Georgia; Columbus, Ohio; Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Portland, Oregon; and Riverside, California. The website includes reports dating from 1991 until the present and will in time provide access to public use data files from the original evaluations.

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/researchers/
This site is the research page posted by the Food and Nutrition Service of the US Department of Agriculture that administers the Food Stamp Program. It includes numerous links including one to the Economic Research Service (ERS) that posts relevant research reports and another to data regarding programme administration.

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University research centres

http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp
The Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, was established in 1966 as a national, university-based centre for research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the United States. It is non-profit and non-partisan. The website contains a vast number of original research publications, many of which are down-loadable and a set of poverty-related links including one on welfare reform. This site also includes the full version of the special 'Reauthorizing TANF' issue of the Institute's house journal (*Focus*, 22, 1, 2002), from which a number of the articles in this issue of *Social Policy and Society* were sourced.

http://www.jcpr.org
The Joint Center for Poverty Research, linking researchers at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago, aims to advance our understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and the effect of policies designed to reduce poverty. It is part-funded by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The site includes on-line working papers, policy briefs, a poverty research newsletter and links to other relevant sites.

Policy research centres

http://www.abtassoc.com/html/parsefile.cfm?filepath=reports/welfare-download.html&search_string=Welfare
Founded in 1965, Abt Associates undertakes research and consultancy over a wide range of issues in social and economic policy, international economic development, business research and consulting, and clinical trials and registries. The web address is to its research on welfare programmes.

http://www.mathematica-mpr.com
Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., is a for-profit research organisation with a reputation for high-quality policy-related research. The website has sections devoted to welfare, labour and disability among other topics. Recent research reports can be downloaded in PDF format.

http://www.mdrc.org/welfare_reform.htm
The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation is a non-profit, non-partisan research organisation based in New York that has been involved in the evaluation of welfare to work and other programmes for 25 years. A large number of state welfare programmes that have been evaluated have used random assignment. Most of their most recent research reports are down-loadable from this site in PDF format.

http://www.urban.org/Template.cfm?NavMenuID=24
The Urban Institute (UI) was created in 1968 to monitor and evaluate the Great Society initiatives of the Johnson administration. From its foundation the Urban Institute has undertaken independent analysis and research to inform public policy decisions and

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improve understanding of persistent domestic problems such as poverty, education finance, unemployment, urban housing shortages and decay, transportation, and welfare reform. While its interests have broadened, the Assessing the New Federalism Project, which monitors state policy choices and the transformation of America's safety net system, is particularly relevant to the welfare debate. The web address is to the research page, which organises research on-line reports by topic, including welfare reform and safety net issues and families and parenting.

http://www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/
The Brookings Institution traces its origins to 1916 with the founding of the Institute for Government Research, the first private organisation devoted to public policy issues at national level in the US. It is financed largely by endowment and by the support of philanthropic foundations, corporations, and private individuals and is committed to independent, factual and non-partisan research and publication. It is not the easiest website to navigate but a search on 'welfare' revealed 300 hits, mostly to downloadable reports and papers. Policy Briefs and the Brookings Review are particularly useful to browse.

Policy advice organisations

http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs_Reauth
The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a non-member, non-profit organisation that was founded in 1968 by Charles Halpern and three other lawyers, with the assistance of Justice Arthur Goldberg. Today, CLASP is an organisation whose work is concentrated on family policy and access to civil legal assistance for low-income families. The website address takes you to a series of well researched policy briefings concerning the 2001/2 reauthorisation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act.

http://www.welfareinfo.org
The Welfare Information Network is a clearinghouse for information, policy analysis and technical assistance related to welfare, workforce development, and other human and community services. It is funded by The Finance Project as a non-profit, policy research, technical assistance and information organisation created to help improve outcomes for children, families and communities across the US. The site includes welfare notes that address the emerging policy issues that confront states and communities, lists of publications and electronic resources on specific issues, examples in states' implementation of welfare reform, and design briefs that provide TANF agencies and others with information and resources to assist them in designing specific programme interventions and service. It also includes resources that were intended to assist decision makers, their staffs, and public opinion leaders to engage in reauthorisation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act.

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