



Double Standard: Social Policy in Europe and the United States

By James W. Russell

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In the second edition of *Double Standard*, James W. Russell shows how and why different models of social and welfare policy developed in the United States and Europe. He comparatively examines how Europe and the United States have handled common social problems such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, family support, health care provision, ethnic and racial conflict, and crime. These different social policy orientations have produced disparate social ways of life, ways of life that are now in contention for the future of western societies.

Today Europeans see their strong welfare states as necessary to counter the worst features of unrestrained capitalism. They pay high taxes to support generous social benefits. Americans, to the contrary, have been conditioned to shudder at the idea of a welfare state, upholding instead a laissez-faire faith in market solutions to social problems. They pay low taxes and have few tax-subsidized benefits.

This new edition includes the latest available statistical information as well as an analysis of the 2010 health care reform in the United States. The book also compares the social consequences of the latest recession in Europe and the United States.

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Editorial Review

Review

James W. Russell has written a sober, well-informed, and temperate overview of the divergent development of social welfare programs in Europe and the United States. As these programs have become more important, the political battles over them have also become more heated. This book is a remarkably sensible antidote to the inflamed politics of the moment. (Piven, Frances Fox)

Russell outdoes himself in this updated second edition of what was already a fine book. He has amassed the latest U.S. and European statistical materials, added a new section on U.S. health care reform, and penned an insightful afterword on how Americans and Europeans are faring in the current Great Recession. *Double Standard* remains an eye-opener and required text for all those committed to self-education and the education of others in the political economy of everyday life. (Levon Chorbajian)

Scholars of comparative social policy often include a chapter on the USA to show how far it has to go before it could be regarded as having a welfare state. In this closely argued, detailed and meticulous book Russell compares the development of social policies in the USA and in European states, pointing out areas where there are significant differences of approach but also those where one has borrowed from another. The strong historical and philosophical basis for Russell's analysis 'continues to make this a novel, engaging and challenging addition to the comparative literature and an important source book for scholars of the US welfare system. (Gary Craig)

In the second edition of *Double Standard*, James Russell hits a home run. By examining the basic facts on a wide range of topics, Russell allows American students to see that there is a variety of forms of capitalism, some more humane than others. Moreover, by examining the policies that have succeeded and failed in the U.S. and other advanced nations, the book offers readers some hope that the current condition of the U.S. can be improved. Kudos to Russell for making a complex topic understandable, even enjoyable, without oversimplifying. (Peter Dreier)

Praise from the first edition: James Russell restores my faith in sociology as the best line of inquiry into nagging political questions that too often get assigned to narrow-minded economists. We need books like this to combat academic provincialism as much as to correct social inequality.... (John R. MacArthur)

Double Standard is accessible, responsible, historically-minded and classically informed comparative social policy and political sociology. One can only hope others take Russell's example of how to write and do the social sciences. While capturing nuanced differences among European countries, this updated *Double Standard* shows students and scholars the main areas of difference between European approaches to social inclusion and American individualism. (Robert J. S. Ross)

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About the Author

James W. Russell is Connecticut State University Professor of Sociology at Eastern Connecticut State University.

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Dwight Bailey:

Double Standard: Social Policy in Europe and the United States can be one of your starter books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to place every word into delight arrangement in writing Double Standard: Social Policy in Europe and the United States but doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one among it. This great information could drawn you into fresh stage of crucial pondering.

James Harris:

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