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Introduction by Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins

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Contents

Introduction by Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, Yale University

It is often forgotten that in the early days of the Cold War, vital center/consensus liberals were opposed not simply to Communism but also to doom and gloom narratives claiming that post-War welfare states, despite their good intentions, might lead down the path to selfdom. By the mid-to-late1950s, for instance, many liberal proponents of the so-called end of ideology thesis, such as Raymond Aron and Daniel Bell, viewed the neoliberal Mont Pèlerin Society to be an ideological threat to the post-War World order and attacked it as such. As Bell once put it: "The end of ideology was [also] aimed at Hayek's apocalyptic notion that socialism will lead to serfdom and at the apocalyptic notion of Stalinism. A lot of people looked at the end of ideology as an attack on Marxism. To some extent it was. At the same time, it was also aimed at the Hayek version of the apocalypse.[1]" The reason for such concerns is obvious: if the end of ideology assumed that the welfare state made Marxism's appeal to the working classes obsolete, then those free market liberals who sought undermine the welfare state would unwittingly make revolutionary ideologies appealing once more.

It is a strange fact, indeed, that many early members of the Mont Pelerin Society, such as French political thinkers Aron and Bertrand de Jouvenel, and the polymath Michael Polanyi, all left that organization after 1955 due to its growing anti-statism and econocentrism. Consensus liberals proved to be some of the most insightful early critics of the Mont Pelerin Society. But by late 1960s/early1970s, many of them, notably the journalist Irving Kristol and the sociologist Daniel Bell, became neoconservatives or associated with the neoconservative movement. Whether it was due to their disdain for the student protest movements and counter culture, the Vietnam Syndrome, or fear over Soviet Union military superiority, all these thinkers moved further towards the right during the 1970s.

At the same time, in the United States, Evangelical Christians, frustrated by the 1960s, Roe v Wade, and the "death of Christian America" began to look for political outlets to stymie the rise of so called 'secular humanism.' And waiting there all along were the neoliberals of Mont Pelerin who were now gloating over the rise of Thatcherism and Reaganism, whose economic policies they principally influenced. How these three groups came together in the United States to form a coalition in support of the Republican Party and the presidency of Ronald Reagan has long fascinated historians.

Why did a former vital center liberal like Irving Kristol, who once promoted the end of ideology and the New Deal, throw his lot in with the economist Milton Friedman, who promoted the very ideology that vital center liberals had thought too passé for the post-War world? And how could both neoliberals and neoconservatives join forces with Evangelicals: many of whom literally believed that the Soviet Union was the empire of the anti-Christ; and the founding of the state Israel a sure sign of Christ's imminent return?

As this alliance seems to be falling apart today under President Donald Trump, perhaps looking anew at how it was ever established in the first place is of pressing importance. There have been a number attempts to explain the strange tripartite coalition that, until recently, formed the political ideology of the Republican

[1] Quoted from Job L. Dittberner, *The End of Ideology and American Social Thought: 1930-1960* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1979), 327.

Party.[2] The publication of Melinda Cooper's new book, *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism*, offers the most compelling explanation.

Cooper, an Associate Professor in the School of Social and Political Science at the University of Sydney, argues that we are mistaken to think that neoliberals "privilege atomized individualism over familiar solidarity, and contractual freedom over inherited status." On this reading, neoliberals, such as Friedman, Gary Becker, and others, attacked the necessity of the welfare state by claiming that the family was responsible and obligated to provide for health, education, and economic stability. In doing so, and this is the central claim of the book, they revived an American poor law tradition that had been challenged by the New Deal.

For their part, neoconservatives like Kristol and Bell made a direct connection between the faltering welfare state of the 1970s and the hedonistic values of the baby boomer generation. To maintain the Fordist Family wage, they argued, would demand the inculcation and adherence to traditional family values. Although neoliberals and neoconservatives were motivated by different economic and cultural concerns, it was the family, Cooper maintains, that provided the conditions for an overlapping consensus between them. A similar argument is made for why the Religious Right entered into the fray, despite the fact that their concerns were ultimately rooted neither in economics or culture, but theology. A return to traditional family values would make America Christian again. In this way, Cooper is able to provide a convincing account of the driving forces that brought together a rather strange cocktail of thinkers and ideas.

Participating in this *H-Diplo* roundtable are four scholars from different fields who are united by their scholarly interest in the family. Gabriel Rosenberg—a professor of Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies at Duke University—raises a question of pressing importance: How does Trump fit into Cooper's narrative, given the reasonable suggestion that in certain ways his presidency is a revolt against neoliberalism? Moreover, Trump seems anything but the typical proponent of traditional family values.

Andrea Muehlebach, an anthropologist at the University of Toronto, raises the pivotal question as to what Cooper sees as the alternative. For the New Deal was based on a rather exclusionary Fordist family model, despite its challenges to the poor law tradition. How do those on the Left, therefore, not only challenge the neoconservative/neoliberal dismantling of the welfare state but the limitations that were inherent to the welfare state from the very start?

Charlotte Walker-Said is a historian of Modern Africa who teaches at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Walker-Said asks whether shifting a woman's dependency from her husband to the state is really all that liberating. Moreover, she suggests that Cooper has not demonstrated why imposing economic obligations on the family as an alternative to public relief is, in itself, unethical.

[2] See for instance: Wendy Brown, "American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization," *Political Theory* 34:6 (December 2017): 690-714; George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement Since 1945* 3rd edition (Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2006); Jennifer Burns, *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jacob Hamburger and Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, "Why did Neoconservatives join Forces with Neoliberals? Irving Kristol from Critic to Ally of Free-market Economics," *Global Intellectual History* (January 2018), DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/23801883.2018.1423740.

Finally, Kristen Loveland—a recent graduate of NYU Law School and the History Department at Harvard University—raises a few pressing questions: "is it really self-explanatory that Americans would give up free education and welfare redistribution just because the programs seemed to place the nuclear family at risk? Why would the potential dissolution of the family galvanize voters who are not motivated by its economic function?" Loveland, as with Andrea Muehlebach, wonders why or how the family can also be working against, not just with, neoliberalism.

Melinda Cooper offers a generous response to her interlocutors that clarifies, deepens, and defenders the arguments of *Family Values*.

Participants:

Melinda Cooper is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney, Australia. She is the author of *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Er*a (University of Washington Press 2008) and *Clinical Labor: Tissue Donors and Research Subjects in the Global Bioeconomy* (Duke University Press, 2014), with Catherine Waldby. Together with Martijn Konings, she edits the Stanford University Press book series *Currencies: New Thinking for Financial Times*.

Kristen Loveland received a Ph.D. in History from Harvard University in 2017 and a J.D., magna cum laude, from New York University School of Law in 2016. She is the author of "Feminism Against Neoliberalism: Theorising Biopolitics in Germany, 1978-1993" in *Gender & History.* She is currently a law clerk for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Andrea Muehlebach is an Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto. She is the author of *The Moral Neoliberal: Welfare and Citizenship in Italy* (University of Chicago Press, 2012), and is currently working on a book that tracks the politics of water privatization, financialization, and re-municipalization in austerity-era Europe.

Gabriel N. Rosenberg is Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies and History at Duke University. He is the author of *The 4-H Harvest: Sexuality and the State in Rural America* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). He is currently writing a book about the gendered, racial, and sexual politics of livestock breeding and meat production, titled *Purebred: Making Meat and Eugenics in Modern America.*

Charlotte Walker-Said is Assistant Professor in the Department of Africana Studies, John Jay College of Criminal Justice-City University of New York. She has published *Corporate Social Responsibility? Human Rights in the New Global Economy* (University of Chicago Press, 2015) and will publish *Faith, Power, and Family: Christianity and Social Change in French Cameroon* with James Currey Publishers in 2018.

Review by Kristen Loveland, Southern District of New York[1]

Which is more neoliberal? The Republican tax bill's reduction of the corporate rate from 35% to 21% or its increase of the estate-tax threshold from $5.6 million to $11.2 million? The obvious answer would seem to be the reduced corporate rate. If anything, increasing the estate-tax threshold stacks the deck against the independent individual in favor of the dynastic family.

Not so, according to Melinda Cooper in her new book, *Family Values*. Cooper argues that the "self-sufficient family" is as basic to neoliberalism as the individual, if not more so. Neoliberalism may start idealizing the independent individual, but that ideal swiftly confronts the reality of the unwaged dependent, especially the growing child. Who will provide dependents with care and food? Who will teach children the virtues of individual responsibility? Surely it should not be the state or taxpayer. Instead, neoliberals turn to the private family to act as the "primary source of economic security and a comprehensive alternative to the welfare state," Cooper writes (9).

Positioning the family as central to neoliberalism's logic, Cooper argues against leftists like Wolfgang Streeck and Nancy Fraser who want to resist neoliberalism by appealing to the family, which they think neoliberalism, in an elective affinity with the feminist and sexual revolutions, has sought to destroy (10-12).[2] Cooper doubts the family's capacity to resist neoliberalism. She suggests that the real basis for averting the turn to neoliberalism lay outside the family, in the "novel politics of redistribution that de-linked risk protection from the sexual division of labor and social insurance from sexual insurance" that briefly appeared and was quickly snuffed out in the 1970s (21). Her skepticism seems warranted, stemming as it does from her exploration of the interdependence of neoliberalism and the family that appears in the writings of American neoliberal intellectuals and policy debates from the 1970s through today. After *Family Values*, no one can straightforwardly say that the family has been a victim rather than an enabler of neoliberalism.

A number of scholars have claimed that neoliberalism appropriated aspects of the 1960s and 1970s social movements for its own ends.[3] Cooper, by contrast, tells a story of backlash. True, neoliberals may sometimes utilize the language of self-determination, but they have sought to discipline the liberatory elements of those movements and channel them into the family form. Anxious that public education causes left-wing student movements by liberating students from dependence on their parents, neoliberal politicians renounce free tuition in favor of student fees and private loans (248-254). Rather than celebrate sexual freedom, neoliberal thinkers like Richard Epstein and Richard Posner believe that sexual freedom must be limited lest the state be called upon to protect its practice and subsidize its costs (116). Neoliberals thus write an important caveat

[1] All views contained in this review are my own and not those of my employer

[2] See, for example, Wolfgang Streeck, "Flexible Employment, Flexible Families, and the Socialization of Reproduction" in Florian Coulmas and Ralph Lützeler (eds.), *Imploding Populations in Japan and Germany: A Comparison* (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 63-94; Nancy Fraser, *Fortunes of Feminism: From Women's Liberation to Identity Politics to Anti-Capitalism* (New York: Verso, 2013), 218.

[3] See, for example. Nancy Fraser, "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History," in *Fortunes of Feminism* (New York: Verso, 2013): 209-226; Hester Eisenstein, "*A Dangerous Liaison? Feminism and Corporate Globalization*," *Science and Society* 69 (2005): 487-518.

into their vision of contractual freedom: it should extend to all areas of private life only insofar as the parties involved (e.g. consenting sexual partners) fully internalize any related costs. To the extent that parties are unable or unwilling to do so, the state should impose those status-based obligations associated with marriage and parenthood.

As Cooper writes, from Presidents Bill Clinton through Barack Obama, the answer to single, female-led households has not been state-subsidized childcare but instead programs and penalties, such as the Federal Fatherhood Initiative, to reestablish "proper gender hierarchies" in the home (101-114). Likewise, after an "older, cruder form of homophobia" met its demise in the 1990s, the American state and society conferred recognition on the LGBTQ community through the argument that gay families would be able to "take care of themselves" (159-161, 209-214).

By focusing on the family, Cooper makes a significant contribution to the study of law. For all that "neoliberalism" has become a watchword across the humanities, the legal academy has been reluctant to embrace the same lexicon. The legal scholars David Singh Grewal and Jedediah Purdy addressed this gap in a 2014 special issue of *Law and Contemporary Problems*, yet the issue's contribution on American family law presumes neoliberalism to be identical with negative freedom, portraying any legal victory for privacy rights as neoliberal and any positive state action as the opposite.[4] Cooper, however, demonstrates that neoliberals demand more than mere negative freedoms in family law. They have also championed sanctions against single mothers who do not cooperate in locating absentee fathers; taxes that allow families to build wealth across generations; and an expanded category of "torts of outrage" so that citizens suffering structural harms can be placated by holding individuals, rather than society, responsible. One of Cooper's most interesting sections discusses a new form of lawsuit that treats parents as "private investors in the future capital of their children" and universities as trustees of "this investment – liable for damages if their charges [are] in any way harmed" (254). Such a characterization of the neoliberal legal subject challenges the one presented by Purdy and Grewal. Whereas they cast the neoliberal subject as a consumer-citizen who purchases in abundance and pursues self-actualization, Cooper suggests an *investor*-citizen who delays satisfaction, calculates risk, and protects the investment that is her family.[5]

Cooper's main contribution, then, is to document the centrality of the family in neoliberal thought and policy and compel us to rethink the neoliberal subject. In this light, it is surprising that Cooper never discusses procreation, which would seem to represent the investor-citizen's first deposit.[6] Since the 1980s,

[4] David Singh Grewal & Jedediah Purdy, "Introduction: Law and Neoliberalism," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 77 (2014): 1-23; Anne Alstott, "Neoliberalism in U.S. Family Law: Negative Liberty and Laissez-Faire Markets in the Minimal State," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 77 (2014): 25-42.

[5] See Grewal & Purdy, 14; see also Purdy, "Neoliberal Constitutionalism: Lochnerism for a New Economy," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 77 (2014): 195-213; Zephyr Teachout, "Neoliberal Political Law," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 77 (2014): 215-37. Cooper's image of the investor-citizen is closer to Michel Foucault's conception of the neoliberal subject as *homo oeconomicus*, "an entrepreneur of himself." Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, Michel Senellart, ed., Graham Burchell, trans., (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 226.

[6] Her inattention to it here is particularly surprising because elsewhere Cooper has written cogently on the integration of assisted reproduction into the economic sphere. See e.g., Melinda Cooper, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology*

individuals and families have gained control over that deposit thanks to the development of reproductive and genetic technologies such as in vitro fertilization, amniocentesis, and preimplantation genetic diagnosis. At the same time, such techniques have inspired a cadre of critics from left and right, including feminists, disability rights activists, and theologians. These critics fear that parents now treat reproduction like any other form of economic transaction, hiring surrogates, buying eggs, and preventing the birth of children with disabilities that would burden their time and purse.[7] For some of these critics, reproduction has been not only a locus of neoliberal activity but also the site that led them to theorize the neoliberal political economy more generally. By the same token, neoliberals like Epstein and Posner defended the market orientation of reproductive and genetic technologies.[8] Developments in American law during this period would seem to fit Cooper's narrative well, including wrongful birth suits – where families sue the doctor rather than the state for support of a child born with a congenital defect – or state-level insurance mandates requiring insurers to cover in vitro fertilization but only for married individuals.[9] More work remains to be done on reproduction as a locus of contestation between neoliberals and their opponents in the United States and elsewhere.

The book's silence on reproduction may be explained in part by the fact that Cooper does not settle on a particular conception of neoliberalism. Broadly, scholars have defined neoliberalism in two ways. Those working in political economy, such as Fraser and David Harvey, tend to see neoliberalism as a revival of nineteenth-century liberalism in which the state secures the functioning of the markets but its role is otherwise reduced *tout court*.[10] Others, working in a Foucauldian vein, understand neoliberalism as distinct from nineteenth-century liberalism because under neoliberalism the market and subject must be consciously constructed through the work of an active state.[11] At certain points Cooper appears in the latter camp, for

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and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008): 130-142; Catherine Waldby and Melinda Cooper, "The Biopolitics of Reproduction," *Australian Feminist Studies* 23 (2008): 57-73.

[7] See, for example, Kristen Loveland, "Re-producing the Future Human: Dignity, Eugenics, and Governing Reproductive Technology in Neoliberal Germany," Ph.D. thesis (unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 2017); Kristen Loveland, "Feminism Against Neoliberalism: Theorising Biopolitics in Germany, 1978-1993," *Gender & History* 29 (2017): 67-86.

[8] See Richard A. Epstein, "Surrogacy: The Case for Full Contractual Enforcement," *Virginia Law Review* 81 (1995): 2305-2041; Richard A. Posner & Eric A. Posner, "The Demand for Human Cloning," *Hofstra Law Review* 27 (1998): 579-608.

[9] See, for example, "Rethinking Medical Malpractice Law in Light of Medicare Cost-Cutting," *Harvard Law Review* 98 (1985): 1004-1022; I. Glenn Cohen, "Beyond Best Interests," *Minnesota Law Review* 96 (2012): 1187-1294, 1193.

[10] Fraser, "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History," 221; David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 18-32.

[11] Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," in *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005):37-59; Johanna Oksala, "Feminism and Neoliberal Governmentality," *Foucault Studies* 16 (2013): 32-53.

instance when she describes how inheritance law shapes the investor-citizen and claims that neoliberals see for the state an active role in correcting the disorder of the contemporary family. Yet Cooper does not fully embrace this understanding of neoliberalism. She accepts on their face the claims of neoliberals to see the family as a "natural" unit, even as neoliberals implement policies that seek to refashion the family (58-61). She invokes the poor law traditions of the Gilded Age as analogs of today (69). Most of all, she defines neoliberals as "'inheritors of classical economic liberalism" and neoliberalism as "[n]eo in the simple sense that it comes after the twentieth-century welfare state and must overcome or adapt it to its ends" (311-314). Either Cooper has undertheorized the differences between liberalism and neoliberalism, or she thinks that scholars have overstated their divergence.

Cooper's inattention to conceptual differences between liberalism and neoliberalism is symptomatic of a tendency to invoke concepts as obvious and undynamic inputs of analysis. Hence, Cooper takes as a given the symbolic weight of the family in political combat. For Cooper, the fate of a social welfare program turns on whether it appears to undermine the normative family. But is it really self-explanatory that Americans would give up free education and welfare redistribution just because the programs seem to place the nuclear family at risk? Why should the potential dissolution of the family galvanize voters who are not motivated by its economic function? How has the family figured not just in neoliberal policy but also in the neoliberal imaginary? How have politicians proffered the family to their constituents in order both to sell economic policies and to compensate for their inadequacy? And why did opponents of neoliberalism hold up the family as the antidote to neoliberalism, not realizing that the family was, in Cooper's telling, part of its beating core? In this regard, Cooper cites the enduring influence of early-twentieth-century political economist Karl Polanyi, who imagined that any viable countermovement to laissez-faire capitalism will depend on social institutions like the family that are ostensibly external to the dynamics of capitalism (13-14). Still, Polanyi's influence cannot be the only explanation. Cooper's approach can only get us so far in explaining how neoliberals were able to use the family to put forward a political rationale that convinced citizens to follow the neoliberal program, sometimes without realizing it. In order to go further, rather than merely using concepts as the inputs of analysis, scholars need to examine how concepts were deployed and transformed in the process of political contestation.

Cooper makes a crucial theoretical point: that it is the family, not just the individual, that is a fundamental category in neoliberalism.[12] Scholars such as Wendy Brown and Thomas Lemke, following Foucault, have made similar arguments, which gained particular traction in queer and leftist critiques of marriage equality toward the end of Obama's first term but were advanced as early as Lisa Duggan's 2003 *The Twilight of Equality?*.[13] The primary contribution of Cooper's book, then, is to make the point concrete and indisputable

[12] See also Leigh Claire La Berge and Quinn Slobodian, "Reading for Neoliberalism, Reading like Neoliberals," *American Literary History* 29 (2017), 602-614, 606.

[13] See La Berge & Slobodian, "Reading for Neoliberalism," 605-606; Foucault, *Birth of Biopolitics*, 228-229; Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 105; Thomas Lemke, "The Birth of Bio-Politics": Michel Foucault's Lecture at the Collège de France on Neo-Liberal Governmentality," *Economy and Society* 30 (2001):190-207, 200; Joshua Paven, "'Neoliberalism's Handiest Little Tool'" Against Equality on Marriage: An Interview with Yasmin Nair & Ryan Conrad," *No More Potlucks* (2011), http://nomorepotlucks.org/site/%E2%80%9Cneoliberalism%E2%80%99s-handiest-little-tool%E2%80%9D-against-equality-on-marriage; Jaye Cee Whitehead, *The Nuptial Deal: Same-Sex Marriage and Neo-Liberal Governance* (Chicago:

via empirical research. Yet the book does not go far beyond that project. Outcomes for Cooper lie in policy enactments; change consists of neoliberalism's ever-greater intensification. Neoliberalism, in other words, appears like a leviathan slinking through public and private life. Yet we need to understand not just how neoliberalism has functioned as an apparently hegemonic logic, wielding the family as an instrument, but also how both have functioned as concepts, arguments, and appeals that evolve and often contravene. Nancy Fraser, Wolfgang Streeck, and Melinda Cooper tell very different stories about the family and neoliberalism: Fraser and Streeck about how the destruction of the family spelled the triumph of neoliberalism, Cooper about how neoliberalism has relied on the family for its survival. Cooper's arguments get the better of Fraser's and Streeck's, but in order to understand neoliberalism more multi-dimensionally, we need to ask why a critical group of leftists came to believe the family lay outside neoliberalism. With a more nuanced understanding of the arguments and ideology by which neoliberalism has operated, we might begin to see how neoliberalism succeeds in part by capturing resistance to it, leading critics of neoliberalism to claim that the family can be used to resist neoliberalism when the opposite is the case. The family is a source of important values, but economic equality is not one of them.

University of Chicago Press, 2011); Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003).

Review by Andrea Muehlebach, University of Toronto

Thomas Frank recently expressed astonishment over the "bizarre" connection former White House senior strategist Steve Bannon has drawn between the current economic crisis and the counterculture of the 1960s: "Bell bottoms. Drum solos. Dope. That's the thing to blame for the financial crisis and the bailouts. Not the deregulation of derivatives in 2000. It was those kids having fun at Woodstock in 1969." Frank describes how Bannon, a former Goldman Sachs investment banker, made a bunch of movies that draw causal connections between economic crisis and lax cultural values: It was the decade of the 1960s that introduced Americans to an irresponsibility and self-indulgence that somehow translated into a major economic and moral crisis fifty years later. For him, Bannon's wedding of economic to moral crisis is a ridiculous joke; a "vague and squishy" theory and "vast looping diagram of confusion and blame evasion" that is "so easily contradicted" that one wonders why Bannon would use that faulty logic at all.[1]

Reading Melinda Coopers brilliant new book makes chillingly clear that the joke has instead been on us. Bannon, rather than representing an illogical aberration, is in fact the apotheosis of a *longue durée* political formation that has wedded neoliberalism to moral authoritarianism; economic policy to an intensely moral story. The unholy alliance of neoliberals and the new social conservatives that has become hegemonic since the 1980s was made possible precisely through their shared confrontation with the liberation movements of the 1960s and 70s. Their alliance was not a reaction to the New Deal welfare state per se, but a counterrevolution that sought to contain the anti-normative and redistributive promise emerging out of 1960s and 70s feminism and anti-racist liberation movements. These radical projects had sought to expand the redistributive potential of the New Deal welfare state via a critique of the mechanism through which most social distribution and risk protection occurred—the Fordist family wage hinging on the white male breadwinner and the heteronormative family unit. They wanted to radicalize this exclusionary mechanism of Fordist distribution by delinking risk protection from the sexual division of labor and social insurance from white sexual normativity (21). The neoliberal-conservative counterrevolution, in contrast, ended up capturing and containing these critiques via the normative family form. And it was the fetish of the family form—shared by neoliberals and social conservatives despite their profound ideological differences—that allowed for an uncanny return to a political-economic landscape wherein the family operates as primary vehicle through which both fiscal and moral value is restored.

I once read that British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was frustrated by the fact that her most famous quote—"There's no such thing as society"—was often only partially rendered and therefore misunderstood. She insisted that she had said much more: "And, you know, there's no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there are families" (*The Guardian*, 2013).[2] Cooper's crucial argument is that this joining of individualism to a commitment to the family form is precisely the story we have missed, with profound consequences for our analyses and politics. Indeed, "a certain kind of left" has had the tendency to conflate capitalism with the logic of the free market and thus "to reduce its ideological expression to economic

[1] Thomas Frank, "How Steve Bannon Captured America's Spirit of Revolt," *The Guardian*, 20 February 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/10/steve-bannon-spirit-revolt-democrats-gave-up.

[2] "Margaret Thatcher: A Life in Quotes," *The Guardian*, 8 April 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/08/margaret-thatcher-quotes.

liberalism, understood as a form of social disintegration" (14). What we have neglected in our belief in capitalism as dis-integrative force is its profoundly powerful concomitant move towards heavily moralized forms of re-integration and re-solidarization. If we had paid attention to this concomitant process, we would have understood that true hegemony is achieved not through a coherent ideological project, but through the drawing together and articulation of (and I cite Stuart Hall here) "different subjects, different identities, different projects, different aspirations" into a single configuration.[3] But Cooper makes the even more radical claim that it is not simple difference, but seeming incommensuration that is drawn together here. Movements of capital – its restless calculative drive – are not, pace Polanyi, opposed to the counter-movements it inevitably gives rise to (14). Rather, this double movement is better understood as "fully internal to the dynamic of capital" (15). Family, love, solidarity—often the language of anti-capitalist critique in that they all hinge on the restoration of foundational value—are not external to the abstract and individualizing dynamics of capitalism but in fact fully enfolded within it. The contractual and non-contractual, the rational and irrational, the alienated versus non-alienated: All can be contained within the same project. Put differently, capitalism is a project that can contain what appears as its negation—the vision of loving familial relationality and solidarity that is all too often conceptualized as opposed to its forms of alienation. Hegemony and historical efficacy are thus achieved not despite of but *through* what appears as incommensurate.

Family Values takes us to ground zero of this moral-economic story - the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1601 which first introduced filial obligation rules and coerced adult children into caring for their poor, aging parents. These laws brought together classical liberal with moral conservative thought on the obligations of family, allowing for the transfer of the social costs of poverty and dependency onto a heavily moralized and policed private sphere. The Poor Laws were the first time that radical free-market economists and moral traditionalism united into one political-theological project (77). Marriage functioned not only as a kind of legally enforced "health, hunger, and life insurance" (174), but as a means to ground economic theory in foundational value. The Poor Laws where later replicated in the U.S. and mediated by its brutal racial regime. Slave emancipation, for example, was accompanied not just by the fetish of "free" contractual labor but by the obsession with marital bondage, as it were, insofar as marriage in the black family (and by implication, black men's power over wives and children) came to be assiduously promoted. This move was motivated by the worry that former slaves (particularly women and children) were likely to become public burdens if they were not taken care of within the legal family unit (80). While the courts were busy imposing contractual freedom in the workplace, writes Cooper, state legislatures oversaw the corresponding expansion of poor-law family obligations in the domestic sphere through the obsessive application of family responsibility laws and the ruthless policing thereof (87). And yet marriage as a solution was (and is) never simply cheap. Rather, the moral compulsion to bind poor mothers into a relation of personal dependence with men exists in excess of financial sense. Take, for example, the fact that the Poor Laws were in essence restored by President Bill Clinton's Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA). Today, welfare funds are not directly disbursed to impoverished (often black or Latina) women as they were under the early to mid-20th century New Deal and Great Society. Rather, a non-negligible portion of the federal budget is today spent on costly searches for biological fathers who might or might not be able to pay child support (105). Morality, in short, is indissolubly linked to economic projects but never a mere function of it; the free labor contract intimately co-exists with the non-contractual, unbreachable foundation of 'love.'

[3] Stuart Hall, "Gramsci and Us," *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1998), 166.

Read from this vantage point, one might read twentieth-century U.S. welfare policies until the Reagan presidency as a massive attempt at (relative) de-moralization: A movement away from the private family responsibility first introduced by the English Poor Laws towards the public responsibility for the family via the socialization of risk (89). Of course, U.S. welfare operated along highly exclusionary racial and gendered lines. New Deal programs starkly reinforced the privilege of the white male breadwinner family, with white women and children relatively included via the family wage or, in the event of the breadwinner's death, a Mother's Pension (33-34). But by the early 1970s, President Richard Nixon had introduced reforms to social security that included women and African Americans—Fordism's non-normative subjects - and made efforts to extend the family wage to black men, thus seeking to transcend the poor-law tradition of private family responsibility. Public assistance programs, notably in California, had at the same time begun to abolish or restrict Poor Law-era family responsibility clauses for the blind, disabled, mentally ill, aged, and poor (2017: 92).

Despite these efforts, there remained an irreducible vestige of moral authoritarianism that was hard to do away with. It focused on the figure of the unmarried black mother, the "welfare queen" who "functioned as a kind of negative to the white family wage ideal embodied by Mother's Pensions" (36). It was this figure whose morality was continuously questioned; welfare was widely considered to be a system that subsidized her non-normative, unattached life style. Soon, however, even this last vestige as put on trial: New litigation strategies by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) now prohibited welfare agencies from policing the sexual behavior of poor women. The more radical elements in the welfare rights movement asked why recipients of public assistance and public housing—poor women especially - were still subject to intrusive forms of moral surveillance (95). Health activists at the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) fought for a universal health insurance that would divorce healthcare coverage from employment and marital status (2017: 210), while the Supreme Court declared that "pervasively sectarian" (that is to say, religious) organizations could not receive government funding. For an all-too-brief moment in the late 1960s and 70s, writes Cooper, such radicalized welfare policies allowed for income distribution to be separated from the normative policing of childbearing and sexual morality, and for divorced or never-married women to live independently of a man while receiving a state-guaranteed income free of moral conditions (97).

It was thus, writes Cooper, not so much the dependence of women that provoked the outrage of neoliberals and neoconservatives but their *independence* from men; an independence that hinged on the ACLU's argument that sexual expression was a fundamental civil liberty and that unmarried poor women should therefore not be policed by the state when receiving welfare. For social conservatives, such legal reasoning was a result of the perversion of the logics of the welfare state by the sexual revolution, turning it into an amoral machine that broke the family by sanctioning women's "liberation from husbands, liberation from children, liberation from family" (52). For neoliberals, the welfare state created "overinsured Americans" and thus a cesspool of "moral hazards" – perverse incentives that allowed for the poor to engage in fiscally and morally irresponsible behavior (179). Irresponsible social spending, they argued, created massive inflation and, incidentally, also eroded the wealth of the top decile and centile households whose wealth was invested in financial assets such as stocks, bonds, or real estate and whose income derived primarily from interests, dividends, or rents (2017: 126). These wealthiest households thus experienced both their long-term investments and their inter-generational forms of wealth transmission as increasingly uncertain. How could their assets and families be protected from long-term depreciation? Hence the counterrevolution, launched by neoliberals and social conservatives against the 'irresponsible' welfare state. Tying together critiques of the fiscal unviability of the state with a critique of non-normative ways of living, the Reaganite counterrevolution of the 1980s thus entangled the fiscal and moral from the start. Returning to the Poor Law tradition of

private family responsibility, welfare was transformed from a redistributive program into an immense federal apparatus that once again polices the private family responsibilities of the poor, all with the help of re-institutionalized (especially fundamentalist Christian) religious organizations.

There are many ideological differences between neoliberals and social conservatives—first and foremost the fact that neoliberals are laissez-faire when it comes to family composition (hence their support of gay marriage). But what unites them is their commitment to the family as a vehicle towards extracting foundational value, both fiscal and moral. The neoliberals have made sure that the return to "family values" is mediated by the democratization of credit markets. Indeed, writes Cooper, the inclusion of middle and low-income earners into the logic of financial asset ownership and its utopic horizon of rising returns represents one of the central policy innovations of the neoliberal era: Workers are encouraged to entrust their pension savings to the investment strategies of mutual funds (138); policy makers have made home ownership play a similar role in the generalization of private wealth accumulation. Education, likewise, has been transformed from public investment into a family affair, "binding generations together in webs of mutual obligation" in ways that are "quite literally unforgiving" insofar as student debt is intergenerationally held (217). The foundational value upon which creditors bank, in other words, is the family-as-collateral (162); a foundation that allowed for frantic creditors in the 1970s to recommence the process of accumulation. The social conservatives, meanwhile, use austerity and financial asset ownership as a vehicle towards forcing back together what supposedly exists 'naturally'—the family. It seems to me that the family form thus performs a dual, inverted, and mutually constitutive function: Neoliberals use the moralization around family to extract fiscal value. Social conservatives use economic policy to force the family together as moral entity, thus extracting transcendent moral value.

I use the term 'family form' because the success of this unholy alliance rests precisely on form, not content. As Cooper shows, family values can mean many different things to different people, thus making it a productive trope that circulates widely across social and political domains and draws in disparate projects and actors. She also shows how the Right has reworked and cannibalized Leftist language—such as the right to 'freedom of expression' established by the ACLU's landmark obscenity cases in the 1960s. Ironically, this language is today invoked to defend the right to public expression of religion (304), and much more that serves the program of the Right. To put it in Gramscian terms, these are arms stolen from the Left's arsenal. What, then, would a politics of unlikely-coalition-building look like for a Left if it were to take language, meaning-making, and cultural hegemony more seriously? How does one steal that arsenal back? Cooper makes the further crucial point that it is a mistake to see the rhetoric of family values as a distraction – the 'fluff' that diverts us from the 'real' story of monumental wealth redistribution and class warfare. Indeed, the idea that economic processes "can and should be separated from the merely cultural phenomena of gender, race and sexuality" (22) obscures the kind of monumental work ahead of us. This work is, above all, cultural in the sense that we must understand that political projects only become efficacious if they are mediated in culturally, socially, and historically resonant registers that make and unmake, nudge, deconstruct and rebuild social forms. Is the major challenge facing the Left the fact that what has been wrested from it is the capacity to think sociality outside of the family form? Is the task, then, to think 'the social' beyond the family and beyond the Great Society – which itself, as Cooper so well shows, was deeply exclusionary? How then to rethink the social, indeed kinship, especially in light of the fact that the self itself has become so intimately entangled with financial asset ownership? And furthermore: Is this a moment where we turn away from family and individual as asset and towards a politics of the wage and the waged self? Or is this a moment where we rethink assets and wages at once? Cooper's profound and challenging book opens up these, and many more

questions. The work that lies ahead for the Left means facing these challenges and wrestling with and answering these questions.

Review by Gabriel N. Rosenberg, Duke University

In the 1980s and 1990s, a handful of family sitcoms anchored ABC's popular Friday-evening *TGIF* lineup ("Thank God, It's Friday"). Friday evening heralded the start of the weekend, when, ostensibly, people turned from the toil of the workweek to spend time with their families. Most of ABC's family sitcoms—*Growing Pains*, *Full House*, *Family Matters*, *Step-by-Step*, and *Home Improvement*—exhibited a kind of sappy familial optimism, a blinkered, dopey affection for the foibles and idiosyncrasies one endures in the name of family.

Roseanne aired on Tuesdays.

No television family better captured the American working-class's post-Fordist crucible like that of the ABC sitcom *Roseanne*'s Conner family. The show's signature genius was its unsentimental portrayal of a family enduring a series of economic and personal catastrophes, all of which the show brilliantly linked to deindustrialization and the loss of manufacturing jobs, the growth of precarious service labor, and the broader economic decline of the American Rust Belt. You always got the sense that the characters on most ABC family sitcoms genuinely loved one another. On *Roseanne*, you could never be so sure. Among the Conners, resentment, bitterness, and hostility always shadowed affection. *Roseanne* was emotionally resonant because it depicted how economic precarity stirred and exasperated all the negative sentiments that families often quietly manage. *Roseanne*'s painfully realistic familial ambivalence was inseparable from the show's sophisticated engagement with the show's Rust Belt landscape—all the lost jobs and failing businesses that animated the show's plots. Sometimes the Conner family was the raft to which its members clung; sometimes it was the bell about their necks dragging them into the deep.

Melinda Cooper's magisterial book *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism* contends that we must look at the family without sentimentality or nostalgia if we hope to understand the course, trajectory, and costs of post-Fordism. Cooper argues that the family, as a political concept and as an object of policy, has been the glue of the American Right in the past half century and the very foundation of neoliberal economic policy. The Right spans an 'economic' wing dominated by radical free-market neoliberalism and a 'social' wing guided by 'family values' conservatives. Despite the Left's insistence that this alliance would collapse beneath the weight of its own contradictions, this alliance has proven remarkably stable. Cooper contends that this is because both wings share a rhetorical and substantive commitment to reinforcing families as the center of American social and economic life.

Why this would be appealing to social conservatives is relatively straightforward. Cooper's most incisive analysis is that the family is also a neoliberal obsession, a finding contrary to many assumptions that neoliberalism is an intellectual tradition concerned only with the doings of atomized individuals. Neoliberalism's investment in the family is grounded in how theorists conceptualize of the family as an elaborate—and uniquely efficient—risk-management and capital-allocation scheme. With proper incentives, this thinking goes, families will provide social insurance and investments that otherwise devolve to the state. Similarly, neoliberals argue, family life produces a prudent and productive economic subjectivity—the sort of self that gets up early, shows up on time, works hard, hits the gym, skips the snack food, and, above all else, minimizes risky behavior in the name of familial obligations. To be sure, neoliberal theorists sometimes catch the glimmering, ineluctable paradox of all this. Sacrificing for family means elevating the interests of others above one's own interests, the kind of cost-benefit-analysis that cannot be easily squared with an interest-maximizing *homo economicus*. Why should parents leave savings to their children instead of consuming

extravagantly while they are still alive? After all, in the most literal sense possible, we cease to have interests the moment we die.

Given this, I want to make the counter-intuitive observation that the neoliberal *investment in the family* is also functionally *a threat against the family*. In neoliberal theory, familial affection is best understood as a predictable form of human irrationality that can be harnessed for social benefit. Why socialize health care costs if the anguish of seeing a loved one suffer means families will save for unexpected medical expenses? Why finance higher education from tax revenue if parental pride supplies a steady stream of income? Why provide pensions and retirement if filial piety means that people will not let their elderly parents starve? Anguish, pride, and filial piety may not be rational, but they are distinctly human. A neoliberal apologist would frame this all by saying that our families care for us better than the state. But Cooper's analysis suggests we might also recognize this structuring of risk as an implicit threat. That threat is not *shape up because society will not save you from your mistakes*. Rather, the threat is *shape up because the rules mean your mistakes will also destroy those that you love*. The flipside of the neoliberal desire to use families as risk-management schemes is that families also essentially become social ransom and forfeits for bad bets. And, in a society with spiraling economic inequality, there are fewer and fewer safe bets.

They say love is an unusually volatile thing often accompanied by negative emotions that give it contrast, form, and meaning. What does it mean to live in the face of such a merciless and expanding threat? What other political emotions might such a structure of threat bring to the fore? We might lean into Lauren Berlant's analysis that the neoliberal obsession with the calculating sovereign subject—the subject who is always properly hedging *his* bets—is absolutely exhausting when played out in everyday life. The never-ending imperative to choose correctly gives rise to its opposite: the will to not-choose, the desire for non-sovereignty.[1] Similarly, the imperative to love your family, when joined with neoliberalism's intensifying "*or else*," becomes an unbearable weight or, perhaps, a weight no one could reasonably be expected to bear all the time. And, yet, the unescapable gravity of family being what it is in American culture, we live with both the fundamentally unreasonable, inhumane nature of that expectation *and* the difficulty of expressing our familial frustrations in a normative political grammar. (It requires a joyfully riotous text, such as Lee Edelman's *No Future*, to do something like that.)[2]

Perhaps we can recognize this burden less in what we are willing to say in public and more in our popular pleasures. Give some attention, then, to the rising, if subtle antagonism both within and towards the family that shadows predictable familial cheerleading in unexpected ways. This might take the shape of deliciously "bad" families—think *Shameless*, *The Sopranos*, and *Breaking Bad*, for examples—but it might also be the hackneyed but magnetizing narrative of intergenerational electoral antagonism: old coots threatening to cut the lazy millennials off, and millennials waiting impatiently for old coots to just die already. But, if the president is our national father, consider as well the turn in depictions of the presidency from Sorkinesque idealism to the cynical reasoning of *House of Cards* and *Scandal*. Both series express a sneering cynicism about the efficacy of government and political institutions. But the shows offer viewers pleasure by exposing, in melodramatic form, the volatility and untrustworthiness of the presidential family itself, such that familial intimacy becomes corrosive to personal and national sovereignty. Here, dysfunctional presidential families are

[1] Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

[2] Lee Edelmna, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

as much metaphors for dysfunctional politics as the other way around: our broken political institutions are also metaphors for the failed promise of American family life. Finally, this might explain the urgent attraction and proliferation of apocalyptic texts and visions in the past two decades of American popular culture. If children are immortality, the End of the World may not be so bad. It is not so much that we are openly rebelling against the family. It's more that some of us are gleefully watching *Arrested Development* on the sofa next to our parents with a sly, curling smile that says, as Al Czervik put it to Judge Smails in *Caddyshack*, "Oh, it looks good on you though!"

This all leads us to the most deliciously bad dad there is. The nature and structure of the neoliberal threat against the family explains some of the political emotions of the Trumpian political moment. Certainly, the election stirred negative emotions of an intensity we usually reserve for family affairs. But it may be baffling that Trumpism could follow a Rightwing political coalition such as Cooper describes. Trump's most faithful supporters, after all, despise large portions of the neoliberal economic agenda. Trump himself is an outlandish and unpersuasive herald for social conservatism, much less of disciplined and prudent neoliberal subjectivity. In the GOP primary, the interlacing network of rightwing thinkers and institutions in *Family Values* actively worked to defeat Trump; many continue to do so as #NeverTrumps. The degree to which the substance of Trump's policies are predicted by Cooper's analysis is debatable, but a less calculated, if inchoate embrace of vulgar nationalism, class warfare, and racism might explain it just as well but without the cogency that Cooper's careful intellectual history conjures. Ultimately, what seems most conceptually paradoxical is how an alliance predicated on the socially binding emotion of familial affection could lead to a political movement best defined by rage, anger, and social alienation.

A careful reading of *Family Values* will easily resolve this paradox, but only if one works from the assumption that the Trumpian political moment is more than just the latest turn for the alliance Cooper catalogues. I would venture that the political subjectivity of Trumpism is an unintended by-product of the alliance's reshuffling: the ferment of the neoliberal threat against the family leavened by the broader racism, sexism, and xenophobia of much of American culture. This threat raises the stakes of bad bets immensely—an intensification of risk, both real and perceptual—even as racism, sexism, and xenophobia discount the harm we do to other people's families. But this alone seems inadequate. What strikes me about the populist Right is its anarchic quality. The populist Right celebrates every one of Trump's vices that seem at odds with prudent neoliberal subjectivity: his profligate, tacky consumption; his impulsive boorishness; his petty and obsessive vindictiveness; and his vile and assaultive misogyny. They see these vices as virtues, not just because they may offend elite sensibilities, but because such qualities will drive him to punish their perceived foes. Indeed, the most vocal members of the populist Right are unambiguous in their goal not of driving leftists from institutions, but, instead, of dynamiting those 'converged' institutions wholesale and destroying everyone within them. So dramatic! So overwrought! What accounts for this rage?

Cooper suggests that the magnetizing affective textures of family life have been a central political technology of neoliberalism. I would add that we also need to pay attention to the political work of negative emotion—how familial estrangement, animosity, resentment, and bitterness creep inevitably into a politics that pivots about the family. I take Cooper's implied lesson to be that the left must recommit itself to a politics in which neither social viability nor political access are predicated on the family, but, rather, a politics that takes the form of securing robust and broadly accessible public goods. My own sense is that one welcome consequence of such a turn is that it would free those we love from being social ransom, and that it might disarm the neoliberal threat against the family and all the tempestuous emotions such a threat stirs. I doubt this would drain American politics entirely of its late emotional intensity, but it probably wouldn't hurt.

In 2018, ABC will revive *Roseanne* for a tenth season. Roseanne Barr, the show's creator, star, and a likely Trump voter, recently stated that the Conner parents will be Trump supporters in the new season, and that the show will explore the animosity and "hatred" this political identification unlocks within the family.[3] Barr's announcement prompted widespread criticism for its tendentious conflation of "the working-class" with white people, but it probably carried some sociological truth.[4] As a white, married couple in their sixties without college degrees living in Fulton County, Illinois, Roseanne and Dan Conner are in a demographic that voted overwhelmingly for Trump. Regardless, one needed only glimpse the sour, exhausted countenances of Barr's co-stars—her fictive kin—at the same press conference to catch a whiff of the deeper truth that both the old seasons and the new seasons express: no matter what the politicians may tell you, family is never easy and it is certainly never all roses.

[3] Roseanne Barr quoted in Lesley Goldberg and Bryn Elise Sandberg, "Roseanne Barr: 'I'd Be a Better President' Than Oprah, Susan Sarandon, Trump," *Hollywood Reporter*, 8 January 2018, https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/rosanne-barr-id-be-a-better-president-oprah-susan-sarandon-trump-1073135 (retrieved 3 February 2018).

[4] For example, see Aimée Lutkin, "Roseanne Confirms What We Knew All Along," *Jezebel* (blog), 9 January 2018, https://jezebel.com/roseanne-confirms-what-we-knew-all-along-1821906265 (retrieved 3 February 2018).

Review by Charlotte Walker-Said, John Jay College- City University New York

As a historian of religion and society in Africa, I embrace Talal Asad's rejection of recent formulations of "secular" modernity.[1] In pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial Africa, religious movements stemmed from or merged with social, economic, and cultural forces, and often simultaneously emerged from a society's reception of revealed wisdom about God and from resistance to political subordination.[2] Many historians of African religions recognize that religion and politics were rarely separate realms in African societies. Spiritual belief guided action in everyday life and was embedded in mundane social relations. Historian Karen Fields notes that this recognition is equally necessary when studying sixteenth-century Anabaptists or seventeenth-century Puritans—dovetailing Asad's argument that prior to Enlightenment methods of intellectual and political control, religion in Europe was similarly embodied in politics, economics, and social relations and was not considered "an otherworldly belief system."[3] Melinda Cooper's penetrating and relevant new book, *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism,* confirms that religion has been and remains embedded in American political and economic life. While she concedes that there is a relative separation between religious and political authority, Cooper confirms that Christianity—and in particular, evangelical Christianity—is an assertively public religion that has helped transform what many believe to be a profoundly 'secular' domain: economic policy. Throughout this meticulously researched book, Cooper demonstrates that indeed, religion and politics are not distinct realms in modern America and that conservative and neoliberal political theories and their executions are full of signifying processes borrowed from religion. She does much to provide fascinating and concrete examples of the discourses and knowledge of conservative moral philosophy and neoliberal economic theory and their roots in (and inability to be truly separate from) evangelical Christian belief. Indeed, Cooper shows how religion comes to serve public political demands through a particular modernizing project: freeing the market while imposing new moral behaviors.

Family Values, as the title suggests, posits that the essential social unit of neoliberalism is the family. Cooper aptly demonstrates how religious interest groups and organizations with policy goals in mind cooperated with emergent free-market capitalist thinkers to seize upon the American family to further their interests. She

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[1] See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 13-14.

[2] Cheikh Anta Babou, *Fighting the Greater Jihad: Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853-1913*, 1st ed. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007); John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jeffrey Brian Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7* (Johannesburg : Bloomington: Indiana Univ Pr, 1989); Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Karen Elise Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[3] Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Derek Peterson has also detailed the intellectual history of the Enlightenment formation of "otherworldly" belief systems distinct from politics and economics. See Derek Peterson, "Gambling with God: Rethinking Religion in Colonial Central Kenya," in *The Invention of Religion: Rethinking Belief in Politics and History*, ed. Derek Peterson and Darren Walhof (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 37-58.

discusses how conservative Christian and neoliberal thinkers witnessed various historical moments and crises, including the rise of liberal justices, the liberalized sexual culture of the 1960s and 1970s, the AIDS crisis, and state and federal welfare policies, and how they reacted by re-centering and reaffirming married, heterosexual family unity, and, critically, the family's legal, financial, and even moral obligations to their relations as critical counter-measures to what they perceived as the rise in social disintegration.

Cooper's general, organizing argument appears reasonable—even obvious—to those who have followed (or taken part in) conservative organizing since the 1980s. Indeed a quote frequently attributed to President Ronald Reagan that became a famous and resonant rallying cry of social conservatives was "small government requires strong families."[4] Reagan and his like-minded colleagues did not hide that they wanted to capture, deploy, and depend on the family as the bulwark of security provision. Reagan defended this proposal by stating that families were much better than government agencies at providing for the needs of their members and that families had been hamstrung and "fragmented" by government programs that encouraged "dependency."[5] But regardless of whether or not the reduced government welfare initiatives of neoliberals and neoconservatives were well-intentioned measures to preserve family bonds and reinforce family obligations, it is simply incontrovertible that the state could not be pared down without a secure structure to provide the resources and services that would be eliminated—and that structure was to be the family, first and foremost, with religious (mainly Christian) charities and nongovernmental welfarist organizations providing rudimentary and short-term assistance when necessary. With the individual and the indigent secured in the refuges of the family and church, the state could make way for an unfettered capitalism and the new opportunities it would engender. Such a policy was framed as a call for 'responsibility' and an invitation to take part in a movement for greater self-reliance over government 'interference.' Cooper notes that the Reagan, Bush, and even Obama administrations embraced this maxim and that it had strong support from both the right (conservatives, Evangelicals) and the left (New Democrats). As such, it is reasonable to wonder if evangelical Christian believers and organizations—who long feared intrusion and suppression—institutionalized principles of moral autonomy, industry, and self-government, or whether agents of neoliberal capitalism gained the consent of committed Christians for expanded consumerism and unequal wealth by promising them a measure of control over how social welfare would be defined and managed. In brief, who persuaded whom and how? Cooper does not answer this particular question, but does provide considerable food for thought.

Perhaps Cooper's most thorough, nuanced, and insightful chapter is chapter seven, which is an extraordinary intellectual history of the integration of religious charitable and social work into government service provision. Starting with French political theorist Alexis de Tocqueville's nineteenth-century observations of American

[4] It seems that this quote paraphrases from President Reagan's 1988 Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union, in which Reagan stated: "We're for limited government because…that is the best way of ensuring personal liberty and empowering the individual… . With the best of intentions, government created a poverty trap that wreaks havoc on the very support system the poor need most to lift themselves out of poverty: the family… Let's ensure that the Federal Government never again legislates against the family and the home." "Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union," January 25, 1988, *Public Papers of the Presidents: Ronald Reagan 1988* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1990), 85.

[5] "Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union," January 25, 1988, *Public Papers of the Presidents: Ronald Reagan 1988* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1990), 85.

biblical instruction, voluntary association, and religious influence in the public/political sphere, and leading the reader all the way to Attorney General John Ashcroft's "Charitable Choice" legislation, Cooper's chapter brilliantly shows the endurance of Puritan ideas of civic freedom, respect for divine authority, and, most critically, the necessity of 'moral law' in preventing a free and decentralized government from descending into chaos. This first half of the chapter is sophisticated and absorbing and leads cleanly into the second half, which penetrates the late twentieth-century roots of ideological alliances made between evangelical Protestant and conservative Catholic factions and their criticisms of and distancing from mainline Protestant churches (many of which had become quite liberal with regard to issues of race, gender, and sexuality by the 1960s).[6] Cooper demonstrates how and why these schisms and affiliations made the rise of faith-based (as opposed to government-based) welfare not only possible, but ascendant, in contemporary America. This chapter is highly compelling and should be assigned in all course syllabi covering twentieth-century American religious history. Again, as stated in the outset of this review, because American religion has never inhabited a separate realm from politics, this book is as much a work of religious history as it is an economic and political analysis. (As an aside, it is a fascinating read when paired with Sam Haselby's *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism* and Frances FitzGerald's *The Evangelicals: The Struggle to Shape America*.[7]

In earlier chapters, Cooper does a formidable job at fluidly narrating the rise in neoliberal ideologies from an unlikely place in the post-New Deal era where the executive branch (most notably, President Richard Nixon) and a compliant Congress created new programs and bureaucracies, and worked with interest groups to create what conservatives scornfully term "the activist state." In the 1960s and 1970s, Supreme Court justices expanded state welfare programs and enabled welfare applicants to dismiss efforts at securing child support from spouses. "The overall message conveyed by these rulings," writes Cooper "was that the welfare of poor women was a public responsibility…"[8] More boldly, Cooper expresses that this evolution—and the progressive Warren Court—were "an affirmation of juridical rights," which "emboldened women" and "liberat[ed] women from the confines of private family dependence."[9] While Milton Friedman complained that this kind of development was "the growth of the state at the expense of the individual,"[10] social

[6] Milton J. Coalter and Louis B. Weeks, *The Confessional Mosaic: Presbyterians and Twentieth Century Theology* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990); Frederick Heuser, "Culture, Feminism and the Gospel: American Presbyterian Women and Foreign Missions, 1870-1923" (Temple University, 1991); William J. Weston, *Presbyterian Pluralism: Competition in a Protestant House*, 1st edition (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997); Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[7] Sam Haselby, *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*, 1st edition (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Frances FitzGerald, *The Evangelicals: The Struggle to Shape America*, 1st ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017).

[8] Melinda Cooper, *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017), 96.

[9] Cooper, *Family Values*, 96.

[10] Milton Friedman, "Introduction," Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* Fiftieth anniversary edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

conservatives perceived another 'victim' of the untethering of women from the family: children. Cooper does not fully address this concern in Chapter 3 and concurs with Stephanie Coontz's claim that neoliberals and neoconservatives were 'outraged' that welfare was making *women* independent of individual *men*. This is a slight misreading of the underlying principles that stirred outrage against public assistance benefits for poor unmarried women, which is that these benefits (which Cooper admits were "menial") encouraged women to remove their children from a family sphere into a single-parent household, exposing those children to greater risks of poverty and its attendant risks. Marriage may no longer have counted in determining the *legal* status of children, but neoliberals and neoconservatives fretted that marriage still determined children's *economic* status, which would (theoretically) be considerably more diminished on public assistance than within a stable family. Throughout the book, Cooper's tone is stridently leftist and highly critical of both conservative Christian political influence and neoliberal economic trajectories, and while reductive and insulting deductions, such as Scott Coltrane's claim that "attempts to reinstate marriage and traditional fatherhood stem from white men's insecurity and their fear that women no longer need them,"[11] are not on offer in this book, Cooper does occasionally veer into reducing all neoconservative and neoliberal opposition to the welfare state to misogyny. This notwithstanding, Cooper largely supports her harsh criticisms of marriage and traditional fatherhood initiatives with meticulous and exhaustive research into the religious and economic thinkers and the mobilizations of their followers who conceived of these conservative (some might say regressive) agendas and their complex goals and ideologies.

Nevertheless, without leaning too hard on Friedman, is it fair is to ask: is shifting a woman's dependency from her husband to the state really a 'liberation?' And, as social conservative theorists as well as neoliberals strongly argue (and provide evidence for), is it possible that transferring this dependency could disincentivize women from forming stable attachments to a husband if by marrying she would foreclose on government support?[12] And, as religious conservatives and free-market economists agree, if such a disincentive is a liability for *marriage*—a holy and revered sacrament (or sacramental rite) in Christianity, and regarded by generations of political theorists as a contribution to well-being—then it is deeply problematic, if not potentially catastrophic. Cooper correctly posits that expansive ideas of government-secured forms of social welfare were a novel innovation of the late 1960s and 1970s, and they were indeed a radical departure from older, poor-law traditions that required (and extracted) financial obligations from relations. However, she does not

[11] Scott Coltrane, "Marketing the Marriage 'Solution': Misplaced Simplicity in the Politics of Fatherhood," *Sociological Perspectives* 44:4 (Winter 2001): 390.

[12] The previous American welfare system, known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), had the "100-hour rule" that made low-income married couples, but not single-parent households, ineligible for welfare if one adult in the household worked more than 100 hours the previous month, even if the earnings were not enough to lift the family out of poverty. Another AFDC rule required married households, but not single parents, to wait 30 days after the principal wage earner lost work before receiving benefits. In 2001, the Brookings Institute published an article declaring that financial disincentives to marriage are "inherent to welfare." Wade F. Horn, "Wedding Bell Blues: Marriage and Welfare Reform," *Brookings*, 1 June 2001, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/wedding-bell-blues-marriage-and-welfare-reform/. For other examples of political theories and beliefs concerning welfare disincentives to marriage, see Robert Rector, "How Welfare Undermines Marriage and What to Do About It," The Heritage Foundation (website), 17 November 2014, https://www.heritage.org/welfare/report/how-welfare-undermines-marriage-and-what-do-about-it; Daniel J. Mitchell, "Dependency, Work Incentives, And The Growing Welfare State," *The Federalist*, 27 April 2015, http://thefederalist.com/2015/04/27/dependency-work-incentives-and-the-growing-welfare-state/.

consider the possibility that this abrupt unfastening of commitment, liability, and duty from the individual (or family member) created compelling new incentives to shift costs (real financial costs as well as social costs) to the newly reliable and generous state. As such, the book contains the implication that this is a feature, not a bug, of 'non-normative' and 'justice-minded' social policy. Beyond failing to address the real and serious issue of 'moral hazards' (Cooper quite casually dismisses fears about the moral hazards inherent to redistributing risks and costs), the book's more significant shortcoming, however, is a failure to provide the moral-philosophical foundations that uphold Cooper's belief in the 'fairness' of the welfare state and of redistribution in contradiction to individual or family responsibility.

Critics like Cooper argue that conservatives support proposals to fortify marriage and responsible parenthood because they focus on morality and family structure rather than on wages, job security, poverty, neighborhoods, childcare, or health care.[13] However, her main opposition to neoliberal family initiatives seems to arise from the fact that they mingle religion and public policy. But as Cooper, herself, shows, Christianity has (with some exceptions such as the late 1960s and early 1970s) sharply intervened in American civic and political life throughout the history of the United States. If assumptions about secularization and the eventual decline of religion in public life must be rethought, is it reasonable to think that the family is *not* going to figure in government policy in the future? Cooper proves that the Warren Court was an exception, a brief historical moment, and not a bellwether for American law. Can a society and a government with a longstanding affinity for a religious system with such legitimating political authority really dislodge social and economic policy from the bedrock of the family? If thinkers from the English philosopher John Locke to Pope Pius XI believed that the womb of the household was where the nation takes its shape, it is hard to believe that simply scaling back neoliberal economic policies will move American politics away from the domestic sphere.

As alluded to earlier, Cooper offers no argument for why imposing economic obligations on the family as an alternative to public relief is, in of itself, unethical. Attendant with this is Cooper's highly problematic assumption that imposing economic obligations on the state (and hence, on society and taxpayers) *is* ethical. Philosophically, Cooper argues for the welfare state from the vantage point of a rights-based framework of social justice. However, social justice has a longer history of relying on a duty-based framework that emphasizes the role of obligation in securing the commitments that guarantee social welfare.[14] Paradoxically, Cooper argues that government has a duty or a moral obligation to provide for poor women, single mothers, the sick, and the poor, but these entities' own families do *not*. Why? This is never explicitly explained. Cooper also does not allow for the possibility that public relief or government forms of social welfare are also often economically precarious and contribute to inequality.[15]

[13] Cooper discusses responsible fatherhood particularly in pages 109-117.

[14] For a very good discussion of the duty-based framework in the history of human rights, see Samuel Moyn, "Rights vs. Duties: Reclaiming Civic Balance," *Boston Review*, 16 May 2016, http://bostonreview.net/books-ideas/samuel-moyn-rights-duties.

[15] The disastrous case of Illinois state budget crisis provides an illuminating example of how generous public programs can create severe economic precarity for all. See John O'Connor, "Illinois Is Struggling to Dig out of the Nation's Worst Budget Crisis," *Business Insider*, 10 October 2017, http://www.businessinsider.com/illinois-is-struggling-to-dig-out-of-the-nations-worst-budget-crisis-2017-10; Molly Olmstead, "Illinois Is Still Facing the Nation's Worst

Further, while it is true that social conservatives and neoliberals ignore the manner in which widespread or entrenched poverty, lack of support in the form of affordable child or health care, and low minimum wages contribute to divorce among those in the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder, it is not clear that their pro-family and responsible fatherhood initiatives are, in of themselves, evil or contribute to negative outcomes in of themselves. Cooper offers no evidence that 'responsible fatherhood' initiatives have dangerous or seriously negative results. The book demonstrates only that as an ideology, 'responsible fatherhood' and 'pro-family' policies emerge from what she believes are problematic origins, including, romantic puritanism and cherished myths of a self-reliant American ethos. Throughout the book, Cooper treats 'responsible fatherhood' as a reprehensible initiative, but it might be fairer to say that it is, at worst, useless. In other points throughout the book, Cooper pillories or derides conservative theories or conclusions without providing any evidence for rejecting them. This kind of hasty argumentativeness, coupled with a presumption that the reader is equally scornful of all conservative policy premises, at times make the book a frustrating read. Still, *Family Values* does more than make sense of the strategies, influence, and success of the neoliberal-religious conservative alliance that has developed over the past forty years. It reveals how American democracy is affected by the agents of this alliance and how political discourse on the right and the left in the United States has profoundly embraced the ethic of 'personal responsibility' as the bedrock of government efficiency, economic stability, and social welfare. Cooper blends analysis with reflection and is very attentive to theory as well as historical contingencies. She demonstrates the evolution of an epistemology she believes undergirds modern American society and modern systems of economic and political knowledge and reveals how it has informed the choices political leaders have made in weighing the costs of human development against the demands of the market.

Budget Crisis," *Slate*, 10 October 2017, http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2017/10/10/illinois_budget_problems_are_still_the_nation_s_worst.html; Rachel Greszler, "Overly Generous Compensation Drives Illinois' Budget Woes," *The Heritage Foundation*, February 26, 2017, https://www.heritage.org/budget-and-spending/commentary/overly-generous-compensation-drives-illinois-budget-woes.

Author's Response by Melinda Cooper, the University of Sydney

I would like to begin by thanking Daniel Jenkins for organizing and introducing this roundtable, and my reviewers – Andrea Muehlebach, Kristen Loveland, Charlotte Walker-Said and Gabriel Rosenberg - for their thoughtful and thought-provoking responses to my book. Writing a book is a necessarily solitary process no matter how many voices are chattering away in its pages, so to finally confront the views of readers, with their different archives of politics and scholarship, is an energizing experience. I am grateful to the reviewers for inspiring me to think these questions anew and reminding me why I was interested in them in the first place. The reviews are especially interesting to me because they were written after the election of Donald Trump and so, at least it seems to me, have been colored in some ineffable way by events that I was unable to take account of in the book. As Gabriel Rosenberg notes, there is something very new and unsettling about the set of cards we have been dealt in the last year. However uncertain Trump's politics have turned out to be – an interregnum perhaps rather than a clean rupture – his transformation of the American and global political scene has been so profound that I suspect my book has already acquired a historical aura. If that is the case, it would not be so surprising. It was in the 1970s, when Fordism was entering its decline, that we saw a spate of critical literature on the experience of Fordism. It seems that we are only able to recognize a political formation when it is most under threat.

Perhaps then I should begin by attempting to respond to Rosenberg's observation that it is "baffling" that "Trumpism could follow a Rightwing political coalition such as Cooper describes." After all, as Rosenberg correctly suggests, many of Trump's most faithful supporters and certainly most of those who belong to the white (former) working class of the American Rustbelt are actively hostile to elements of the neoliberal agenda. Trump himself is neither a virtue-emanating religious conservative nor a free-trade neoliberal, and large swathes of the neoliberal/neoconservative alliance I analysed in the book see him as a threat to their settled coalitions of power. No doubt Trump cultivated a deliberately protean persona before he came to power. But there was a moment during his electoral campaign when Trump looked like more of an economic nationalist than a neoliberal. His hostility to free trade, along with his promise to abolish central bank independence and pour fiscal stimulus into grand infrastructure projects seemed to presage the form of economic nationalism we usually associate with the mid-twentieth century European far right. And as long as Steven Bannon—the economic nationalist and pro-life Catholic conservative—remained in power as White House Chief Strategist, any educated observer could be forgiven for assuming that he would be the strongest influence on Trump's presidency. This had its attractions to certain authoritarian currents on the left, who saw Trump's promises of fiscal expansion as a credible alternative to neoliberalism and were prepared to dismiss the impassioned xenophobia and misogyny of his supporters as symptoms of false consciousness, easily rectifiable after the fact.

But Trump's rise to power was also accompanied and nourished by a much more nebulous constituency, materializing variously as online troll swarms and reddit lurkers, campus free speech militants and white supremacist militias. And it is here that things get complicated. This congeries of white supremacists and misogynists, collectively known as the "alt right," is also somewhat protean in its political tendencies but, until recently at least, was most closely associated with the economic libertarianism of the Austrian-school neoliberal Murray Rothbard. More precisely, it was associated with a peculiar alliance between economic libertarianism and paleoconservatism which Rothbard anointed as "paleolibertarianism." This represents a further transmutation of the alliance I analyse in my book, which saw Chicago and Virginia school neoliberals as the primary actors on the neoliberal side of the alliance and neoconservatives, new paternalists, religious conservatives and communitarians as primary currents on the conservative side. The "alt right" reprises the

neoliberal/social conservative alliance, but takes it further to the extremes on both sides. Murray Rothbard is the chief American exponent of Austrian (von Misesian) neoliberalism *and* a paleoconservative. His brand of economic libertarianism was too extreme even for the Cato Institute, which ousted him in 1981. The so-called paleoconservatives emerged as a reaction formation to neoconservatism in the 1990s. Harking back to figures such as Russel Kirk, they accused the neoconservatives of being too liberal, too sympathetic to certain aspects of the New Deal, the civil rights movement, and to Jews. Murray Rothbard was deeply anti-feminist, a (Jewish) Holocaust denier and white supremacist. His student and protégé Hans-Hermann Hoppe defected from the Mont Pèlerin Society to found the Property and Freedom Society (PFS) in 2006, a schism that allowed him to develop the frankly fascistic views on race that were not welcome at the Mont Pèlerin Society.[1] Much of what Hoppe has to say about the effects of public welfare on family will be familiar to any reader of (Chicago school) Milton Friedman or (Virginia school) James M. Buchanan, but neither of these ever came close to Hoppe in his yearning for autochthonous community and organic social bonds.[2] This then is the peculiar alliance of neoliberal and social conservative tendencies that characterizes one part of Trump's grass roots support base.

However, the lines are seriously blurred here and, as Rosenberg indicates, there is a mercurial quality to the present conjuncture which seems to foster some unusually accelerated political realignments. However distant Bannon and the alt-right are in ideological terms, they are not averse to opportunistic coalitions. The economic nationalist and Catholic conservative Bannon has given space to Milo Yiannopoulos and countless other libertarians in the pages of his former journal *Breitbart*. And post-Charlottesville, some of the most powerful figures on the alt right have been moving towards an economic nationalism and fiscal expansionism that is closer to both Bannon and the new European far right. When the journalist Donna Minkowitz infiltrated a white supremacist meeting in Poolesville, Maryland, she found the alt-right figurehead Richard

[1] The historian Quinn Slobodian is currently researching this schism and its importance for an understanding of the alt-right. Quinn Slobodian, "A Brief History of Neoliberal Problems: How Race Theory Spawned the Alt Right," *New Directions in European History Study Grou*p, *Harvard University*, Seminar Paper, 1 September 2017. https://ces.fas.harvard.edu/events/2017/09/a-brief-history-of-neoliberal-problems.

[2] This is Hoppe in a recent speech to the Property and Freedom Society: "the ruling elites have been conducting for many decades what Pat Buchanan has identified as a systematic 'culture war,' aimed at a trans-valuation of all values and the destruction of all natural, or if you will 'organic' social bonds and institutions such as families, communities, ethnic groups and genealogically related nations, so as to create an increasingly atomized populace, whose only shared characteristic and unifying bond is its common existential dependency on the State. The first step in this direction, taken already half a century or even longer ago, was the introduction of 'public welfare' and 'social security.' Thereby, the underclass and the elderly were turned into State-dependents and the value and importance of family and community was correspondingly diminished and weakened. More recently, further-reaching steps in this direction have proliferated"; "Instead of continuing and expanding this increasingly unsightly social disaster, then, it should be ... loudly demanded that one take heed of the biblical exhortation that he who can, but will not work, also shall not eat, and that he who truly cannot work, due to severe mental or physical deficiencies, be taken care of by family, community and voluntary charity." Hans-Hermann Hoppe, "Libertarianism and the *Alt-Right*. In Search of a Libertarian Strategy for Social Change." Speech delivered at the 12th annual meeting of the Property and Freedom Society in Bodrum, Turkey, on 17 September 2017. https://misesuk.org/2017/10/20/libertarianism-and-the-alt-right-hoppe-speech-2017/.

Spencer denouncing Trump's tax cuts as "Reaganite nostalgia" and others calling for the creation of a right-wing worker's movement as a final frontier against neoliberalism.[3]

In the meantime, Trump himself has forged ahead with a thoroughly hybrid political program, seemingly unimpeded by the suasions of his short-lived advisors. Apart from the protectionist trade policy, Richard Spencer was correct in noting that Trump's economic decisions are of the most retro neoliberal persuasion. Rather than the promised infrastructure investments and "jobs for Americans," we have seen a return to and amplification of the well-worn economic tricks of the 1970s and 1980s - supply-side tax cuts for the rich and tax revolt *ressentiment* for the poor. Now that he is in power, Trump looks very much like the inheritor of the Southern tax revolt, a George Wallace figure who plied the white working class with promises of a return to segregation, a renewed white welfare state and taxes on the wealthy, but who, in power, really only delivered on the racism. With all his political contradictions, Trump might well be the last cry of the tax revolt.

At this point, it might be useful to turn to Kirsten Loveland's question concerning the popular attachment to ideas of family crisis and the role it played in galvanizing support for the neoliberal counterrevolution of the 1970s. Pointing to what she sees as under-explanation on my part, Loveland asks: "is it really self-explanatory that Americans would give up free education and welfare redistribution just because the programs seemed to place the nuclear family at risk? Why would the potential dissolution of the family galvanize voters who are not motivated by its economic function?" None of this is self-explanatory per se. However, as motivation for the neoliberal turn of the 1970s, both the theoretical literature and the political choices of American voters make it abundantly clear that the obsession with family crisis was paramount. Perhaps the best insight into this motivation is provided by "ordinary American taxpayers" themselves who, with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, voted to constitutionally limit their own access to essential public services such as well-funded schools and urban infrastructure.

California's Prop 13 was hailed as a resounding success by anti-tax-crusaders and the neoliberal economists who had supported them. And indeed it can be seen as the key turning point in which neoliberalism moved out of academic and policy circles to acquire real popular momentum. Yet many who observed the unfolding of the tax revolt were perplexed by the apparent cognitive dissonance of voters who in survey after survey seemed to avow an abiding faith in the welfare state. What could have motivated these people to seemingly vote against their own self-interest as recipients of public services? Basing their analysis on survey data collected between 1977 and 1980, the social scientists David O. Sears and Jack Citrin found that when Californians were asked whether or not spending should be increased on a series of specific budget items (as opposed to government spending in general), respondents consistently supported either a continuation of the status quo or, more often, an *increase* in resources.[4] Those surveyed were almost unanimously in support of increased spending on public services that principle were available to everyone - the police, the fire department, public transportation, parks and schools. The one item that was repeatedly singled out for cuts

[3] Donna Minkowitz, "The Racist Right Looks Left: At Richard Spencer's Secret Conference, White Supremacists Denounce Corporate Capitalism," *The Nation*, 6 December 2017, https://www.thenation.com/article/the-racist-right-looks-left/.

[4] David C. Sears and Jack Citrin, *Tax Revolt: Something for Nothing in California* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 47-49.

was "welfare" – public assistance programs for the non-contributing poor (the aged, the disabled and children). Yet even here there was considerable confusion. As noted by Sears and Citrin, the word "welfare" was so negatively weighted that when its constituent programs for the elderly and disabled were singled out and presented separately, they received much stronger support.[5] Again the one exception was AFDC, the welfare program for single mothers and their children that was most heavily stigmatized in the popular imagination.

The irony here is that in most cities, certainly Los Angeles, AFDC was not funded from local taxes at all but rather from a combination of state and federal budgets. And yet because this one particular welfare program had come to represent all that was wrong with the welfare state as such – its combined corruption of racial, sexual, and economic norms – it was this program that came to serve as a symbolic lightning rod for organizers of the tax revolt. Throughout the post-war era, the largely unmarked nature of asset-based subsidies to white homeowners flattered them into thinking that their lifestyles were sustained only by private initiative and the intergenerational transmission of familial wealth. The welfare disbursed to inner-city renters was heavily marked as illegitimate (because unearned) income and widely stigmatized as subsidizing the familial dysfunction of the urban black poor. By extension, public spending as a whole was associated with the demoralization of the white family through the subsidization of student radicals and the short-lived Medicaid coverage of abortion after *Roe v. Wade*. As noted by Romain Huret, the destruction of family at the hands of the fiscal state was a recurrent complaint among anti-tax crusaders and one that linked the fate of the welfare poor (assumed to be black or migrant) to that of middle-class whites: "Middle-class tax resisters expounded in newsletters and pamphlets their belief that the leviathan state has increased both permissiveness among citizens and the waste of tax-payers' money...Taxpayers feared that liberal policymakers were usurping their authority as parents...In San Francisco, the organization Parents and Taxpayers established a place for itself by attacking welfare policy as an agent of moral decay...The association's bulletin devoted many articles to the multiple causes of evil, including busing, the Black Panthers, and welfare programs. ... The *Roe v. Wade* (1973) decision was compared to the *Dred Scott* (1857) decision, prophesying a civil war to come."[6] Here then is an answer to Loveland's question as to why "Americans would give up free education and welfare redistribution just because the programs seemed to place the nuclear family at risk."

It was this popular uprising against the redistributive welfare state, more than the machinations of wealthy investors, that ultimately made the Reagan revolution possible, gifting neoliberal policymakers with a policy mandate to undertake a much more wide-ranging set of tax reforms. By articulating a defense of the private family as an economic institution against the redistributive functions of the welfare state, the conservative populism of the 1970s provided the template for the fiscal and monetary politics of the Reagan era—and beyond. As I explain in detail in my book, it was the tax revolt that authorized the monetary and fiscal counterrevolution performed by Paul Volcker and Ronald Reagan. The long-term consequence of this counterrevolution has been to reverse the relationship between wage and asset inflation that prevailed in the postwar era. Thus, while wages and welfare kept pace with consumer price inflation throughout the 1970s as assets plummeted in value, the tables were turned with the 'Volcker shock.' After about 1982, wages and welfare struggled to keep pace with anemic levels of consumer price inflation while the asset-based holdings of the richest households went up and up. (Andrea Muehlebach is surely right to suggest that the key strategic

[5] Sears and Citrin, *Tax Revolt*, 49.

[6] Romain D. Huret, *The American Tax Resisters* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press: 2014), 211.

question for the left now turns on how we play the trade-off between wages and assets – in her words, "Is this a moment when we return to the wage and the waged self, or one where we think assets and wages all at once"? Taking up Muehlebach's challenge, one way of splitting the difference would be to take neoliberal human capital theory at its words and demand that income on labor—wages—be made equivalent to income on assets—interests, dividends, and rents—and thus subject to the same vertiginous inflation. The thought experiment has the merit of troubling the seemingly self-evident distinction between assets and labor and highlighting its inherently political nature.)

The neoliberal coupling of asset inflation and wage stagnation not only facilitated a phenomenal resurgence of large family fortunes—assuming monstrous proportions with the arrival of the Trump dynasty in power—it also restored inherited wealth to a decisive position in the general process of class stratification. The effect has been compounded by cutbacks to public education, health care, and other social services, which have progressively transferred costs back to the private family and compelled parents to take on debt on behalf of their children. The appreciation of house prices (the most democratic of asset classes) means that access to home ownership often depends on a loan or gift from parents; the de facto privatization of education and rise in student fees means that students wanting to pursue a college education is now more directly dependent on the wealth of their parents than at any time in the recent past; while the absence of familial wealth can condemn a young person to a life of revolving debt.

As noted by Loveland, I see this moment as being in some ways reminiscent of the Gilded Age. The parallels are especially marked when we look at the post-Reconstruction era and Gilded Age project of welfare retrenchment and the reinvigoration of poor law "family responsibility" rules. It seems to me perverse to completely detach American neoliberalism from the much longer tradition of American economic liberalism. However, much of the book is dedicated to the task of explaining the distinctiveness of the American neoliberalism of the 1970s, a movement that really only makes sense as a response to the expansion of the New Deal welfare state that took place under Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Fellow travelers of the neoliberal "thought collective" such as Ronald Reagan did indeed seek to revive the state's family responsibility rules, in ways very reminiscent of the Gilded Age, but Reagan also (necessarily) had to reinvent these rules by accommodating new forms of sexual relationship and cohabitation and extending his ambitions to the federal stage. Beyond this, much of my book focuses on the specific evolution of finance that allowed neoliberals to both accommodate and capture the anti-normative demands of the student and welfare rights movement in expanding webs of private credit. The expansion of consumer credit that was facilitated by the Federal Reserve's anti-inflationary policy and low interest rates after the Volcker shock meant that household debt could always blunt the force of increasing inequality and allow the wage-poor to live on credit. None of this was possible under the conditions of late nineteenth century liberalism. This, it seems to me, represents a more historically realist and nuanced account of the specific qualities of neoliberalism than the observation (borrowed from Michel Foucault's reading of German Ordoliberalism) that neoliberalism required a constructivist state, a claim that could just as easily be made of nineteenth century liberalism.

Another very obvious way in which the past four decades might seem to recall the final decades of the nineteenth century lies in the renewed role of moral conservative, paternalist and Christian agendas in the shaping of welfare practice. Charlotte Walker-Said is one of the few readers of this book (at least so far) to have paid serious attention to the final chapter on faith-based welfare and it is significant to me that she does so from an avowedly Christian and socially conservative position. It is also significant to me that she extends Talal Asad's anti-modernist anthropology of religion to both Africa *and* the United States: to the extent that Asad proposes a theological rather than a properly historical reading of secularism, I see his work as a *specific*

symptom of the alliance between neoliberal economics and far-right Salafism that engulfed the Middle East and North Africa in the 1980s, and a *general* symptom of the same alliance as it manifested elsewhere, in its various Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist and Jewish forms. In this respect, the rise (or return) of faith-based welfare is far from being unique to the United States and indeed has become a key component of U.S. foreign aid initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa.[7]

I am perplexed by the fact that so-few critical scholars of social policy have paid attention to this seemingly monumental transformation in the field of welfare practice, when so much work has been done on parallel developments such as workfare. One notable exception here is Andrea Muehlebach, whose monograph *The Moral Neoliberal: Welfare and Citizenship in Italy*, examines the complex symbiosis between neoliberal and new Catholic conservative philosophies of welfare in contemporary Italy.[8] Although such influences might seem diametrically opposed at the level of political discourse, Muehlebach's study suggests that the neoliberal project to undercut wages and retrench welfare would quickly generate intolerable social contradictions were it not simultaneously buttressed by a Catholic philosophy of unpaid labor – hypostasized and feminized in the form of the gift – and often unwittingly embraced by the left.

The redemptive inflections of faith-based welfare should not blind us to its coercive functions. Walker-Said asks why we should be concerned about the "ethics" of family responsibility rules that impose economic obligations on kin. In her words: "Cooper offers no evidence that 'responsible fatherhood' initiatives have dangerous or seriously negative results…Throughout the book, Cooper treats 'responsible fatherhood' as a reprehensible initiative, but it might be fairer to say that it is, at worst, useless." My analysis suggests that "responsible fatherhood" initiatives, however compatible they may be with a certain Christian ethics, also serve the highly "useful" function of enforcing unfree labour. This was true in the post-Reconstruction era, when African American men and women could be subject to convict labour for failing to marry and thus produce legitimate children. It is also true today when an expansive welfare-to-work sector sentences low-income, mostly African American men to unpaid "community service" work when they are unable to liquidate their child support debts through free labour.[9] Conversely, what Walker-Said sees as the "highly problematic" practice of "imposing economic obligations on the state (and hence, on society and taxpayers)" may well be "unethical" in conservative Christian terms but it is a necessary political corrective to a situation in which taxation has become so regressive that kinship obligations have once again become a source of permanent indebtedness and unfree labour.

It is not a question here of substituting one form of dependence (on the family) for another (on the state) but of recognizing that *we are all necessarily dependent* on the governmental distribution of wealth and income under the conditions of permanent public debt generation, mass taxation, and large-scale fiscal transfers that

[7] Melinda Cooper, "The Theology of Emergency: Welfare Reform, US Foreign Aid and the Faith-based Initiative," *Theory, Culture & Society* 32:2. (2015): 53-77.

[8] Andrea Muehlebach, *The Moral Neoliberal: Welfare and Citizenship in Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[9] Noah Zatz, Tia Koonse, Theresa Zhen, Lucero Herrera, Han Lu, Steven Shafer, Blake Valenta. *Get to Work or Go to Jail: Workplace Rights under Threat. Research Brief.* March (Los Angeles: UCLA Labor Center, 2016).

characterize the modern state. The crucial point is that those who are most dependent on governmental transfers and wealth-subsidies are those who believe they are not dependent at all.[10] And those who receive the least in terms of public transfers are those who are routinely accused of dependence and subject to the most intimate forms of surveillance. One reason why the welfare rights movement figures so prominently in my narrative of the left is its unique ability to operate in both registers, the redistributive and the normative.

[10] Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).