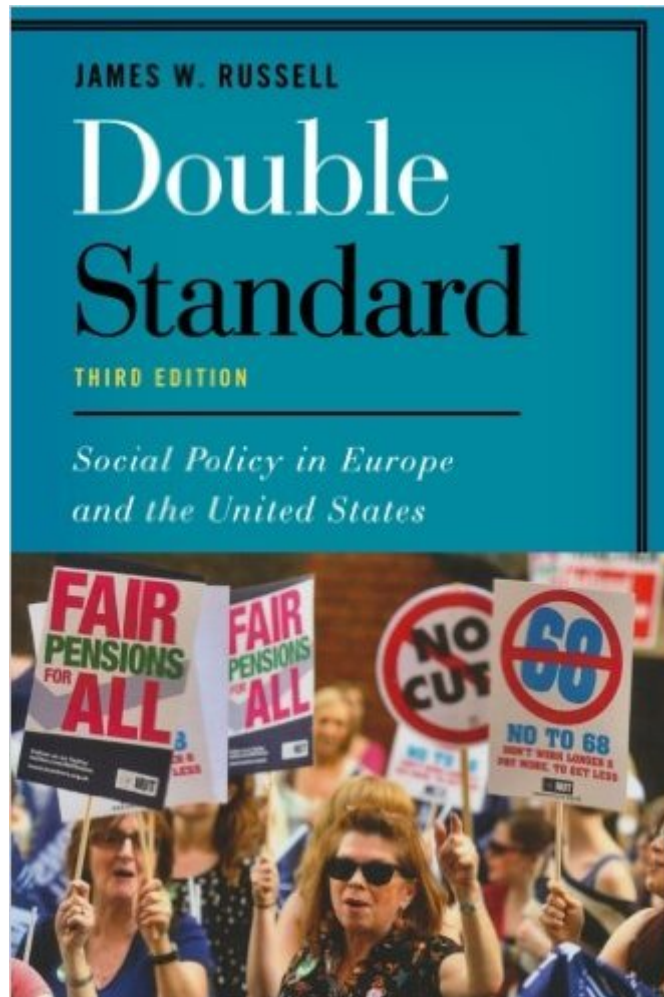


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Double Standard: Social Policy In Europe And The United States



Synopsis

In *Double Standard*, James W. Russell shows how and why different models of social and welfare policy developed in the United States and Europe. The third edition comparatively examines how Europe and the United States have handled common social problems such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, family support, health care provision, ethnic and racial conflict, and crime. These different social policy orientations have produced disparate social ways of life, ways of life that are now in contention for the future of Western societies. Retaining its exceptionally clear exposition of the relationship between social policy and the history of social thought, social theory, and political ideology, the third edition contains new material on: The Affordable Care Act in the United States compared to European health care programs The influence of Milton Friedman on the reduction of social spending and privatization of social programs Paid vacation differences between Europe and the United States A new Afterword on the continuing social effects of the 2008 recession (the "Great Recession") in Europe and the United States A thorough updating of statistical information The third edition of *Double Standard* is a thought-provoking and up-to-date exploration of the distinctive differences in social policy in the U.S. and Europe that helps students approach key issues through a new perspective.

Book Information

Paperback: 202 pages

Publisher: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; 3 edition (June 18, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1442230258

ISBN-13: 978-1442230255

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #92,155 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Security](#) #52 in [Books > Law > Legal Theory & Systems > Non-US Legal Systems](#) #54 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Political Science > Comparative Politics](#)

Customer Reviews

The book does a great job of presenting the contrasts that exist between the social policies of European nations, many of which have very successful socialist type systems, and those of the

USA. The difference in outcomes is sometimes staggering, with income inequality, unemployment, and other major social problems worse in the USA than in most of Europe. It's a real eye opener.

This is a fairly brief introduction to a fascinating subject, ranging from historical attitudes towards the role of state and family (including St. Augustine and Machiavelli), to the theories and studies of Marx and Durkheim and Weber, to comparisons between European states (from Austria to the United Kingdom) with references to Chile, Algeria, etc., thrown in for good measure. Because of its brevity and lack of detail on such a wide array of subjects, I'd be tempted to give it something like four stars--except that we have so few books that attempt such comparisons. That's a shame, because we have a lot to learn from the track records of different approaches to social programs. Russell believes that the government does have the primary role in providing at least basic access to education, health care, and unemployment and retirement security--even those who disagree should find some of his examples interesting and perhaps even supportive of their arguments. (For instance, how economically conservative Switzerland implemented universal health care.) Unfortunately, these kinds of sober comparisons are rarely made in public discussions, probably because no politician or pundit would want to suggest that his/her country might benefit from adopting policies that originated in other countries. So, this is just a sketch of what's out there, but it is the best one that I've been able to find so far. It is a nice companion piece to *European Politics: The Making of Democratic States* (Walter and Catherine Opello).

fine

Pro-socialist garbage.

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