

Deciphering the Conflicting Values Shaping the U.S. Social Safety Net

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Martha R. Burt has been at the Urban Institute for more than 30 years, conducting research and writing about policies on welfare, homelessness, hunger, teen pregnancy and parenting, and social services. She directed an analysis of how public systems for welfare, child care, and child protective services had changed after welfare reform. Her most recent book, *Repairing the U.S. Social Safety Net*, coauthored with Demetra Nightingale, puts U.S. social policies in historical perspective and discusses the importance of significantly reducing poverty and its effects.

Jason DeParle is a reporter at *The New York Times* who has written extensively about low-income Americans and anti-poverty policy. His 2004 book, *American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and the Nation's Drive to End Welfare*, chronicles the overhaul of the American welfare system. In recent months, he has been writing about the performance of safety net programs during the recession. DeParle won a George Polk Award in 1999 for his reporting on the welfare system and was a two-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Ron Haskins, a former White House and congressional adviser on welfare issues, codirects the Brookings Center on Children and Families. An expert on preschool, foster care, and poverty, he was instrumental in the 1996 overhaul of national welfare policy. Haskins is also a senior consultant at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In 2002, he was a senior advisor to President George Bush for welfare policy. Haskins spent 14 years on the staff of the House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee, first as welfare counsel to the Republican staff, then as the subcommittee's staff director.

Demetra Smith Nightingale is a principal research scientist and faculty member at the Institute for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University, where she teaches graduate courses on social policy and program evaluation. Her research concentrates on employment, skills training, social assistance, women and family issues, immigration, youth development, and welfare reform. She has analyzed programs in every state as well as social and economic policies in Argentina, Chile, Russia, and China. Her most recent book, *Repairing the U.S. Social Safety Net*, coauthored with Martha Burt, puts U.S. social policies in historical perspective and discusses the importance of significantly reducing poverty and its effects.

Emil Daniel Tesliuc is senior economist with the World Bank Social Protection team. He joined the World Bank in 1995 as an economist in Bucharest, where he worked on macroeconomic monitoring, trade, agriculture, rural development and finance, poverty, and social protection. His expertise covers safety net assessments and cash benefits in middle- and upper-income countries. He is finalizing a comparative study of social assistance systems in transition economies.