

Chapter 1 : Alan in Belfast: Democracy without decency - looking back at the race for the White House

Democracy Without Decency. Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty. William M. Epstein "What is it like to fly back in time and then to move forward to the present, stopping off at various agencies, state-funded programs, and other service-providing organizations that have fought poverty?"

Index Preface It is easy to fall into the trap of broad cultural condemnation—any society but this one, any age but the present—invoking superior conditions in other cultures as though the comparisons were informed or sensible. The critical observations in the present work are made entirely within the American tradition and loyal to the hope of social progress here at home. Other societies need to heed their own critics and their own traditions. The United States is a miracle of both achievement and disappointment and offers the eternal opportunity of an open society to reconcile the two. A few noble individuals may live lives of blessed rationality, but they are tortured, depressed, sometimes suicidal, and always obsessed with their behaviors—joyless narcissists. The rest of America has reached an enormous agreement over priorities, rugged and durable through the centuries, that are embedded in the daily free choices of citizens. The full history of domestic social welfare is not the current concern. Rather, the period beginning after World War II is the chunk of time in which contemporary social welfare policy has emerged, engendered by traditional values but worked out through updated arrangements. Perhaps the persistence of American indifference to deprivation and need—the knowing, accepted, and even intended failure of social welfare programs—might offer a small alert, but by no means any point of optimism. Poverty persists, and deep inequality slowly corrodes the American promise. The Introduction opens the central theme—American social welfare policy as the consensual, mandated choice of the American people. The auxiliary themes—romanticism, social efficiency, welfare as patronage, the failure of the rational enterprise in social policymaking, and others—are developed throughout the chapters that analyze social welfare policy. The substance of the discussion involves the War on Poverty and its immediate programmatic precursors, similar programs that followed, old age insurance, public assistance, and the charitable sector. With few exceptions of limited influence, the War on Poverty and public policy in general have largely failed to reduce poverty or income inequality or to provide much income security. The charitable sector has been similarly unsuccessful, even disingenuous. Many social welfare programs are covered, but some are not. Child welfare, formal public education, higher education, urban renewal and housing, most of the social insurances apart from old age insurance, among others, are redundant stories. The goal is not encyclopedic coverage but rather to lay out a theory of social welfare provision and decision making with ample evidence. Preference is best defined as uncoerced choice; enduring public and private policies thus become statements of enduring national priorities. The fundamental proposition that in a free society public and private policy reflects the social will allows American values to be illuminated through the choice of public policy rather than indirectly through devices such as surveys and less structured tools. Public and private policy is probably a more accurate and reliable statement of social preference than social science analyses and historical narratives that customarily build from impaired data to explain how apparent decision makers, tradition, intellectuals, autonomous actors, special interests, economic elites, social institutions, and others determine policy choice. The very choice of public policy defines American values and the relationship of the individual to the state and the society, defines, in a word, citizenship. All theories of social decision making are bedeviled by the absence of proof. Without definitive tests of cause, any assumption of originating or determinative power is speculative. Elites that seem to be the authors of events may be working from a popular consensus or within cultural bounds, neither of which they engendered; the relationship between the individual and the times is maddeningly difficult to sort out. The few must govern, since direct participatory democracy in a large, complex society is impossible; yet the question remains whether their decisions reflect sectarian preferences or broader permissions. True tests of power are usually impossible, as large entities such as nations do not lend themselves to randomized experimentation. Yet even a randomized trial identifies only one cause in what is usually a causal chain. This is not much of a problem when the issue is the effectiveness of a drug. However, it is an enormous problem when actors

perform in a social context within a tradition. Only in the event of a clear difference of self-defined preference between alternative actorsâ€™e. Yet a winner in one event that may not even endure is not a prototypical power. Differences need to be tracked through many issues and across time. However, deep differences among large groupsâ€™that is, deep social cleavagesâ€™rarely exist in contemporary American social politics; the very openness of the society that facilitates an ecology of detached role organizations creates enduring agreement over much of the policy terrain. Without a credible process for testing theory, the identification of the motor of social decision making becomes arbitrary and ideological. The standard histories of contemporary American social welfare argue toward their embedded ideologies, frequently assuming what they hope to prove by selective use of the historical record. That record is infinite and impossible to sort through without initial assumptions. Institutional histories implicitly argue for the importance of the institutions they explore; biographies accord unique prowess to individual actors; histories of group competition assume a particular form and influence for social organization; belief in the influence of the good heart finds instances in which the moral will prevails. While the different theories of social decision making typically acknowledge some influence for mass preference, none accord it a determinative role. Except under the most coercive, authoritarian, and oppressive regimes, social policy and culture may well be the products of popular consent. In turn, a consensual social order is probably the most influential factor in determining events, according roles to all social actors that they depart from at their peril. In an open society, power is extremely diffuse, and the human vehicles of a popular willâ€™the elites of politics, government, commerce, art, the professions, and intellectâ€™embody that power rather than usurp it. The theory of mass dominance cannot test its propositions any better than alternative explanations of social decision making can. It is usually possible to preserve the robustness and plausibility of a theory by isolating inconvenient events and data in special categories that accord them unique status, or that leave their true nature in doubt, or that reinterpret their essential meaning. Disconfirming data can be explained away as ambiguities that have yet to be understood, or as instances of values in transition, or, in rare cases that are relatively unimportant, as inexplicable. In other words, the ecology of detached roles can explain almost all social decision making, at least in retrospect. This is not a virtue, for the true test of theory lies in its predictive ability; no theory of social decision making has survived this level of sophistication. Instead, theories of social decision making reach conclusions through such devices as the consistency of findings, the balance of evidence, and informed guesses. These are troublingly weak substitutes for rigorous theory testing. Without rigorous testing, the acceptance of any theory of social decision making becomes ideological, an instance of faith, convenience, and compatibility. In this way, the Left in the United States, with its theatrical sympathies for supposedly oppressed masses, has grasped theories of class dominance. The patrician view of an autonomous and selfless class of decision makers legitimates the rational pretenses of philosopher kings. Most theories of social policymaking assume that democratic processes in the United States have been subverted. Few accept that the system is true to its assumptions and rules, and therefore they avoid the consequent conundrum: For a theory of mass determination, such as the ecology of detached roles, to gain currency would require an almost unimaginable honestyâ€™we are what we invest in; the failures of American social welfare are intentionalâ€™and perhaps an agreement to improve the conditions of American citizenship. But a revolution in consciousness is unlikely to occur within a complacent America or to be forced on the nation by crisis. Catastrophes such as the Great Depression and two world wars have been absorbed with little challenge to a traditional civic ethos that is as rigid as an iron sculpture.

Chapter 2 : Democracy Without Decency - E-bok - William M Epstein () | Bokus

Read "Democracy Without Decency Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty" by William M. Epstein with Rakuten Kobo. The conservative attacks on the welfare system in the United States over the past several decades have put liberal defen.

Description Brief Description An analysis of social and economic policies in the United States, with emphasis on the s War on Poverty. Learn More about the Book The conservative attacks on the welfare system in the United States over the past several decades have put liberal defenders of poverty relief and social insurance programs on the defensive. In this no-holds-barred look at the reality of American social policy since World War II, William Epstein argues that this defense is not worth mounting that the claimed successes of American social programs are not sustained by evidence. Rather than their failure being the result of inadequate implementation or political resistance stemming from the culture wars, these programs and their built-in limitations actually do represent what the vast majority of people in this country want them to be. However much people may speak in favor of welfare, the proof of what they really want is in the pudding of the social policies that are actually legislated. The stinginess of America s welfare system is the product of basic American values rooted in the myth of heroic individualism and reinforced by a commitment to social efficiency, the idea that social services need to be minimal and compatible with current social arrangements. His previous books include *Psychotherapy as Religion: How Social Science Fails the Poor* What is it like to fly back in time and then to move forward to the present, stopping off at various agencies, state-funded programs, and other service-providing organizations that have fought poverty? A careful reading of William Epstein s book allows one to do just that. It is an exciting journey, one that is full of meaning and social importance. This is an engrossing study for social-change makers, policy and program creators, sociologists, and students from various disciplines. There is a great deal of knowledge to be gained here. And there are many lessons to be learned by those who address inequalities in social services, health care, and education, and by those who work to end the polarization of classes. This book has the potential to change social policy. Torry Dickinson, *Contemporary Sociology* " 2. This masterfully conceptualized book turns policy debates upside down. Economists from Adam Smith to Larry Summers have ignored the facts that breed poverty in the land of plenty. William Epstein s critique highlights the inanity of the poorly designed programs of the War on Poverty as well as subsequent antipoverty efforts and their consistency with mass preferences. Not many social scientists, especially economists, realize that poverty is not an economic issue. The roots of poverty lie in a political climate. It s the poverty of culture that sustains inequality as a national character. In this case, American individualism and its rituals of affirmation of good citizenship perpetuate the corruption of rationality. Epstein s brilliant analysis brings home the stark realities of the nation s unfortunate preferences which usually escape the attention and ability of most policy thinkers in a very engaging discussion. Students, academics, and policy makers will find this book refreshingly useful in their professional deliberations. Brij Mohan, Louisiana State University " 3. William Epstein s *Democracy Without Decency* is a shattering of shibboleths, an exercise in iconoclasm, and a sober and in-depth critical analysis of the lamentable failures of many large-scale American social welfare programs. He effectively demonstrates that hugely expensive programs intended to materially assist the poor and oppressed within the United States have accomplished very little except, all too often, to add to the burdens of those they are aimed at helping. This volume should be required reading for all students of social welfare, government, public policy, and public administration. It would also make an excellent gift for your congressional representatives and senators. Epstein dissects the supposed accomplishments of major welfare programs those dealing with poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, and housing one by one. Using both government and independent research studies, he shows how these programs have failed to produce their anticipated gains. This is a steep and thorny path, and not for the faint of heart, but those who undertake this admirable and exceptionally scholarly intellectual journey will be well rewarded. Thyer, Florida State University " 4. Appearing during the Great Recession, *Democracy Without Decency* is a timely indictment of the nation s failure to address the poverty experienced by millions

of Americans. Despite the advent of the welfare state, social programs that evolved during the New Deal and the War on Poverty are notable for their inadequacy. Nor do complementary efforts by voluntary private groups compensate for the failure of government social programs. Epstein attributes protracted poverty and widening inequality to Americans philosophical romanticism, managers adherence to a cult of social efficiency, and patronage on the part of stakeholders, all bound by popular consensus. Required reading for Obama supporters worshipping at the altar of hope and change. David Stoesz, Virginia Commonwealth University " 5. Despite a screen of self-deceiving rhetoric, the United States remains one of the most ruthlessly unequal societies in the world. William Epstein s disturbing argument constructed so powerfully that effective rebuttal seems at times impossible is that this is so because that s the way the American people want it. Anyone seeking to understand the nature of Western societies needs to engage with this book. Epstein makes an interesting case for seeing public policy, in a relatively open society such as the United States, as a generally reliable indicator of popular wishes. His arguments are always vigorously expressed. This book will be of interest to students of American social policy, and will give food or thought to readers in countries, such as the UK, that have looked to the US for social policy ideas. Connell, Political Studies Review " 7. This is a compelling work. Epstein is a wordsmith. The writing is concise and prickly. The reader will remember his words and thoughts. It is one of the great social welfare muckraking books of all time. Harris Chaiklin, Research on Social Work Practice " The images represent actual product though color of the image and product may slightly differ. Was this information helpful to you? Yes No Select an issue.

Chapter 3 : Democracy Without Decency: Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty By William M. Epstein

The conservative attacks on the welfare system in the United States over the past several decades have put liberal defenders of poverty relief and social insurance programs on the defensive.

Alan in Belfast In a world where a blog is created every second does the world really need another blog? An irregular set of postings, weaving an intricate pattern around a diverse set of subjects. Comment on culture, technology, politics and the occasional rant about life. It has also called into question the morals and behaviour of the candidates. The conduct of some of their supporters has been dubious too. Politics and religion are intertwined throughout history and across the world. People who take their faith seriously "Christian or otherwise" will seek to live out their beliefs and make the world a better place by applying their convictions through the political structures that govern most societies. And perhaps by focussing on the external we can learn lessons that can be applied to elections and political machinations on this island. Both leading candidates claim a Christian background. So there is no state-established church in the US. But it does not preclude a religious dimension to the political realm. He describes himself as Presbyterian. Jerry Falwell Jr is the son of the late televangelist. And that means be a good citizen and choose who would be the best leader for the country. Preacher and author Max Lucado seeks the decency which society appreciates, applauds, teaches and seeks to develop. After all, Luke 6: So what kind of world leaders should we desire? No one is without sin. And clay feet are a common feature of Biblical heroes. King David was a murderer and an adulterer. Although he repented, his sin still ripped his family and his nation apart. By now we will know whether the electorate accepted his promise. Nehemiah certainly set a precedent for building walls, though he was seeking to protect a minority who remained in Jerusalem and were under attack. And it only took 52 days, by hand. The prophet Nathan boldly pointed his finger at King David. This creates a sense of humility about my citizenship that shapes my views on those who seek a place here. Back in January in a town hall meeting in Knoxville, Iowa, she opened up about her beliefs in an answer to a question from the floor. I am a Christian. I am a Methodist. I have been raised Methodist. I feel very grateful for the instructions and support I received starting in my family but through my church, and I think that any of us who are Christian have a constant conversation in our own heads about what we are called to do and how we are asked to do it. The good news of the gospel, especially for the poor and vulnerable, should surely prevail over ideological politics. Virtue should allow one leader of a superpower to look a peer in the eye and powerfully challenge their attitudes and behaviour. Truth should overpower falsehood. Back to David and Psalm In humble leadership of the Shepherd King he confessed and begged forgiveness and a fresh start. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgement. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Chapter 4 : Democracy Without Decency : William M. Epstein :

Democracy Without Decency: Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty [William M. Epstein] on blog.quintoapp.com
**FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. The conservative attacks on the welfare system in the United States over the past several decades have put liberal defenders of poverty relief and social insurance programs on the defensive.*

A volume in the series: Studies on Education and Society. Marc Pruyn, Monash University. Published Democracy can mean a range of concepts, covering everything from freedoms, rights, elections, governments, processes, philosophies and a panoply of abstract and concrete notions that can be mediated by power, positionality, culture, time and space. Democracy can also be translated into brute force, hegemony, docility, compliance and conformity, as in wars will be decided on the basis of the needs of elites, or major decisions about spending finite resources will be the domain of the few over the masses, or people will be divided along the lines of race, ethnicity, class, religion, etc. Often, these frameworks are developed and reified based on the notion that elections give the right to societies, or segments of societies, to install regimes, institutions and operating systems that are then supposedly legitimated and rendered infinitely just because formal power resides in the hands of those dominating forces. This book is interested in advancing a critical analysis of the hegemonic paradigm described above, one that seeks higher levels of political literacy and consciousness, and one that makes the connection with education. What does education have to do with democracy? How can we teach for and about democracy to alter and transform the essence of what democracy is, and, importantly, what it should be? This book advances the notion of decency in relation to democracy, and is underpinned by an analysis of meaningful, critically-engaged education. Is it enough to be kind, nice, generous and hopeful when we can also see signs of rampant, entrenched and debilitating racism, sexism, poverty, violence, injustice, war and other social inequalities? If democracy is intended to be a legitimating force for good, how does education inform democracy? What types of knowledge, experience, analysis and being are helpful to bring about newer, more meaningful and socially just forms of democracy? Throughout some twenty chapters from a range of international scholars, this book includes three sections: The underlying thread that is interwoven through the texts is a critical reappraisal of normative, hegemonic interpretations of how power is infused into the educational realm, and, importantly, how democracy can be re-situated and re-formulated so as to more meaningfully engage society and education. Thomas, Julie Gorlewski and Brad J. The Ascendance of Democracy: Writing and Restoring Democracy: Education, Democracy, and Decency: Unschooling for Citizen Creation, Kristan Morrison. Educating To Act Decently: The Isolated Irish and Education for Democracy: Education in Undemocratic Democracies, Pamela J. Hickey and Tim W. Mobilizing Citizenship Education in the Arab World: Toward a Pedagogy for Democracy, Wisam Kh.

Chapter 5 : IAP || Book || Democracy and Decency

RESUMEN Democracy Without Decency The conservative attacks on the welfare system in the United States over the past several decades have put liberal defenders of poverty relief and social insurance programs on the defensive.

Epstein is a wordsmith. The writing is concise and prickly. The reader will remember his words and thoughts. It is one of the great social welfare muckraking books of all time. His arguments are always vigorously expressed. This book will be of interest to students of American social policy, and will give food or thought to readers in countries, such as the UK, that have looked to the US for social policy ideas. Connell, Political Studies Review "Despite a screen of self-deceiving rhetoric, the United States remains one of the most ruthlessly unequal societies in the world. Anyone seeking to understand the nature of Western societies needs to engage with this book. Despite the advent of the welfare state, social programs that evolved during the New Deal and the War on Poverty are notable for their inadequacy. Nor do complementary efforts by voluntary private groups compensate for the failure of government social programs. Required reading for Obama supporters worshipping at the altar of hope and change. He effectively demonstrates that hugely expensive programs intended to materially assist the poor and oppressed within the United States have accomplished very little--except, all too often, to add to the burdens of those they are aimed at helping. This volume should be required reading for all students of social welfare, government, public policy, and public administration. It would also make an excellent gift for your congressional representatives and senators. Epstein dissects the supposed accomplishments of major welfare programs--those dealing with poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, and housing--one by one. Using both government and independent research studies, he shows how these programs have failed to produce their anticipated gains. This is a steep and thorny path, and not for the faint of heart, but those who undertake this admirable and exceptionally scholarly intellectual journey will be well rewarded. Thyer, Florida State University "This masterfully conceptualized book turns policy debates upside down. Economists from Adam Smith to Larry Summers have ignored the facts that breed poverty in the land of plenty. Not many social scientists, especially economists, realize that poverty is not an economic issue. The roots of poverty lie in a political climate. In this case, American individualism and its rituals of affirmation of good citizenship perpetuate the corruption of rationality. Students, academics, and policy makers will find this book refreshingly useful in their professional deliberations. It is an exciting journey, one that is full of meaning and social importance. This is an engrossing study for social-change makers, policy and program creators, sociologists, and students from various disciplines. There is a great deal of knowledge to be gained here. And there are many lessons to be learned by those who address inequalities in social services, health care, and education, and by those who work to end the polarization of classes. This book has the potential to change social policy. His previous books include *Psychotherapy as Religion: How Social Science Fails the Poor*

Chapter 6 : Democracy Without Decency - Sinopsis y Precio | FNAC

What is it like to fly back in time and then to move forward to the present, stopping off at various agencies, state-funded programs, and other service-providing organizations that have fought poverty? A careful reading of William Epstein's book allows one to do just that. It is an exciting.

Chapter 7 : Democracy Without Decency: Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty

The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare Volume 38 Issue 3September Article 10 Democracy without Decency: Good Citizenship and the War on Poverty. William M. Epstein.

Chapter 8 : Democracy Without Decency: Buy Democracy Without Decency Online at Low Price in India on

Politics and religion are intertwined throughout history and across the world. The US Presidential election campaign has been a bruising affair for the candidates after 18 months of canvassing.