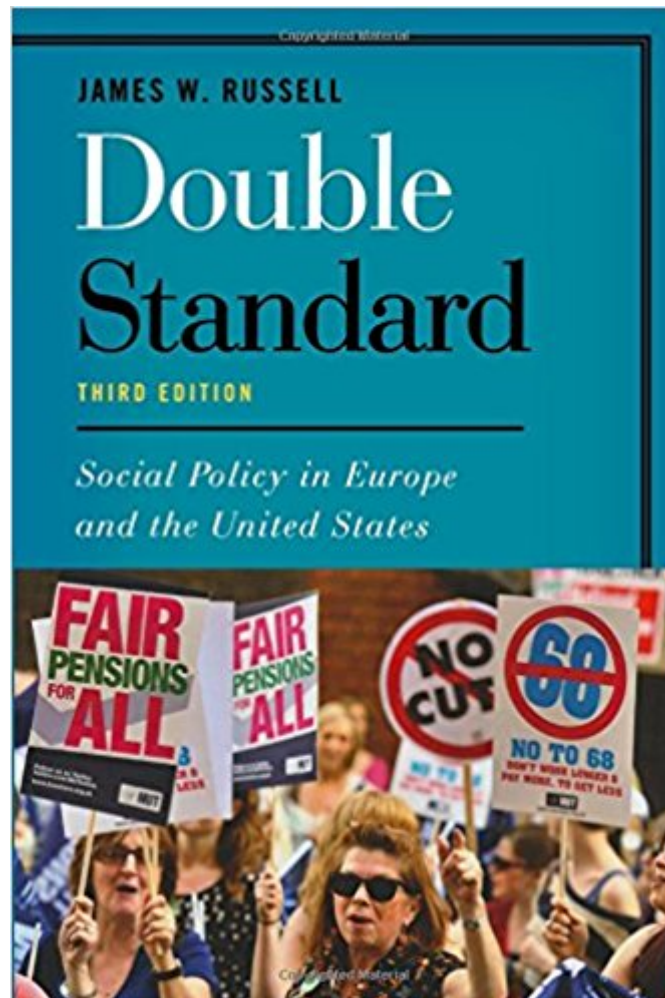


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# Double Standard: Social Policy In Europe And The United States



## 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

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## Customer Reviews

James W. Russell has written a sober, well-informed, and temperate overview of the divergent development of social welfare programs in Europe and the United States. As these programs have

become more important, the political battles over them have also become more heated. This book is a remarkably sensible antidote to the inflamed politics of the moment. (Frances Fox Piven, distinguished professor of sociology and political science, CUNY Graduate Center; author of *Poor Peoples' Movements and Challenges*) *Double Standard* remains an eye-opener and required text for all those committed to self-education and the education of others in the political economy of everyday life. (Levon Chorbajian, University of Massachusetts; editor of *Power and Inequality: A Critical Reader*. forthcoming, 2018) In this closely argued, detailed, and meticulous book Russell compares the development of social policies in the USA and in European states, pointing out areas where there are significant differences of approach but also those where one has borrowed from another. The strong historical and philosophical basis for Russell's analysis continues to make this a novel, engaging, and challenging addition to the comparative literature and an important source book for scholars of the US welfare system. (Gary Craig, Professor Emeritus, University of Hull, United Kingdom) Russell allows American students to see that there are a variety of forms of capitalism, some more humane than others. Kudos to Russell for making a complex topic understandable, even enjoyable, without over-simplifying. (Peter Dreier, Dr. E.P. Clapp Distinguished Professor of Politics, Occidental College) *Double Standard* is accessible, responsible, historically-minded, and classically informed comparative social policy and political sociology. One can only hope others take Russell's example of how to write and do the social sciences. (Robert J. S. Ross, Clark University) *Double Standard* has become a welcome core reading in our "Social Policy: History and Concepts" course at the Boston University School of Social Work. In remarkably clear and succinct language, Russell sets forth the contributions of central social policy theorists and highlights critical differences in how the United States and European nations address social and economic problems. His treatment of the ideological "isms" is especially useful. (Robert B. Hudson, professor of Social Policy, Boston University) In an era of rising income inequality and neoliberal policy solutions, Russell provides a timely, thoughtful analysis of policy differences in the United States and Europe. By the end of this book it is clear how various approaches to social policy are possible but carry "dramatically different consequences" for individuals and society. (Jennifer Hook, University of Southern California)

Praise from the first edition: James Russell restores my faith in sociology as the best line of inquiry into nagging political questions that too often get assigned to narrow-minded economists. We need books like this to combat academic provincialism as much as to correct social inequality. (John R. MacArthur, Publisher of Harper's Magazine and author of *The Selling of Free Trade*) It reads like an

introductory textbook for students or an accessible social policy book for the politically interested....By introducing the reader to the fundamental political conceptions and main social policy areas, the book provides a helpful introduction for those not familiar with social policy thinking and development. (Journal Of Social Policy)

This book is a compare and contrast between United States and Europe on social policy. This book goes in depth on each policy that the United States and Europe has implemented to help their citizen. He uses data, statistics, and facts to support his views. He also shows how religion has shaped social policy, and theories. Overall a easy read, very informative, and I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in social policy abroad, activist and psychology major!

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.

fine

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).

Pro-socialist garbage.

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