

and tracing developments in India, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Finkel's conclusion is that a capacity for compassion is common to all human beings, but cultural developments determine how broadly any individual or group extends their compassion. History illustrates both the emergence of social welfare policies in many countries, but also the exponential growth of global income disparities in the twentieth century. While compassion has become harder, mobilising to struggle for a more perfect world remains a human obligation.

This, then, is necessarily broad-brush, and there are some unsubtle or sweeping statements. With the mass of detail, it is at times difficult to pick out key themes. It is unfortunate that the point size is so small, and that the bibliography is on a separate website. Nevertheless there are helpful comparative Gini coefficients, and this is a readable survey that students will find useful. Some of the most interesting sections are those that move the focus to Argentina and Mexico; to Central and Eastern Europe; to Cuba; or to the situation of women in the former Soviet Empire. Overall, Finkel certainly offers a comprehensive and ambitious survey of the international history of welfare.

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Ona Brooks-Hay, Michele Burman and Clare McFeely (eds) (2018), *Domestic Abuse: Contemporary Perspectives and Innovative Practices*, Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press, £21.50, pp. 132, pbk.

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In 1999, under the then UK Labour Government, Scotland became a devolved nation with its own Parliament and right to legislate and decide about key areas such as health and social work, education and training, local government and housing, and justice and policing. Since then it has been possible for Scotland to forge its own approach to tackling domestic abuse. As Marsha Scott, from Scottish Women's Aid, the main umbrella group for specialist support to victims-survivors, points out at the beginning of the book: 'It's different in Scotland' (p. xi). Importantly, Scotland has a strong history of feminist activism and feminist organisations working to tackle domestic abuse, while being a small country where networking and contact with politicians may consequently be easier. Scotland has thus been able to create a more radical agenda on domestic abuse than that espoused by the UK Government.

The book edited by Ona Brooks-Hays, Michele Burman and Clare McFeely is a useful collection that captures the essence of the 'Scottish approach', outlining the underpinning ideas, policy shifts and professional practices to tackling domestic abuse that have resulted. The book is divided into eight chapters, organised largely around policy areas related to criminal justice, health, education and children's social work – the areas that the devolved Scottish government has legislative control over.

The book conveys the excitement and optimism of the Scottish work on domestic abuse, and shows how Scotland leads the UK in having a distinctly feminist agenda at the heart of policy with a gendered definition of domestic abuse that specifically recognises intimate partner domestic abuse 'as a function of gendered inequalities' as Brooks-Hays *et al.* observe (p. 7). Scotland was also the first of the UK countries to have a specific criminal offence of domestic abuse, and is still the only UK country where such an offence covers all aspects of domestic abuse. Crucially, the Scottish approach is built on the elements well

known to be key, such as use of specialist services working with statutory agencies in coordinated multi-agency settings. The book shows how, despite cuts to services in the past decade imposed by the UK government, Scotland has managed to continue to prioritise and embed such an approach, with specialist expertise in police domestic abuse units, dedicated prosecutors, use of specialist domestic abuse courts, and involvement of specialist advocacy and perpetrator programmes. Since devolution, Scotland has been able to create a unified police force, with domestic abuse deemed core police business. Behaviour change work with perpetrators has also been unified across Scotland within one programme model, entitled *the Caledonian*.

While the UK government has had a general policy of marketizing service provision, the book highlights how in Scotland the health service continues to be funded directly, thus avoiding competition and facilitating 'a consistent national approach' according to McFeely and Cosgrove (p. 56). Continuing with the theme of co-ordination, an action plan on domestic abuse and other GBV was developed, based on a systems approach (the CEL_41), and providing 'an ambitious programme for addressing GBV as service providers, employers and partners' (p. 66). A National Gender Based violence and Health programme manager was appointed, and a national GBV team established to implement the work across the health service. The approach includes routine enquiry across health service departments, for a range of GBV, and includes emphasis on domestic abuse and other GBV experienced by health sector staff themselves. As the authors conclude, the approach has meant that domestic abuse and other GBV is now regarded as core business for the health service.

At the same time the book is clear about challenges and shortcomings of the Scottish approach thus far. For instance, that the Scottish policy is at an embryonic stage in addressing wider intersections, including age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic and health status. Also that a gendered definition is not reflected in the otherwise ground-breaking Scottish legislation that resulted in a domestic abuse criminal offence from 2019. While the book outlines the positive work that has taken place in criminal justice and health sectors to deal with the impacts of domestic abuse on victims-survivors, the chapter on education show that where prevention of domestic abuse is concerned there is still much work to be done. Many of us have looked to Scotland for the inspiring work of the group Zero Tolerance, who since the 1990s have developed materials for schools and young people to develop awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence, and 'to promote positive, non-violent relationships based on equality and respect' according to Lombard and Harris (p. 75). However, despite this work and also the development of positive policies that go much further than other countries of the UK to ensure 'whole school approach' and relationship education across schools, the authors' own research indicates that the understanding of domestic abuse as 'core business' and linked to gender inequality is not yet evident across schools, and lacking from the primary school sector. None the less, as they argue, the building blocks are in place, with a Curriculum for Excellence and other policies that could and should ensure that a preventative domestic abuse can flourish.

Other work to support children, through children and family social work, is considered by the authors to be developing in a positive direction, but also held back by the highly entrenched notions of focusing on and blaming mothers for domestic abuse that affects their children, rather than focusing on the perpetrators as the problem (Morrison and Mitchell, Chapter 7). Following the wider 'Scottish approach' to domestic abuse, the City of Edinburgh has been implementing the *Safe and Together Model*, which tackles these weaknesses in social work by being child centred, working on strengths of non-abusive parents, and focusing on perpetrator behaviour. As the authors conclude, this 'appears to be a promising approach'. Indeed evaluations elsewhere have, since the book was published, increasingly showed positive results (Bocioaga, 2019).

Overall it is a book well worth reading to gain an overview of how a country can have a unified approach to tackling domestic abuse, including pitfalls and solutions. My one wish would be a further chapter, on housing, which is a crucial issue for women leaving violent men. Housing, or rather homelessness, is mentioned briefly in relation to civil protection in Chapter 3, where Brooks-Hay highlights that exclusion orders are applied very rarely (as has also been found elsewhere in the UK, Bates and Hester, 2020), and that this requires further investigation. But wider discussion of domestic abuse related housing policy in Scotland would have been a welcome addition.

References

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Michelle Lyon Drumbl (2019), *Tax Credits for the Working Poor: A Call for Reform*, New York: Cambridge University Press, \$105, pp. 222, hbk.
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Despite growing polarization in Washington, one social program has managed to gain widespread support – the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). What started as a minor footnote to a 1975 tax bill has become one of the largest income transfers to the poor and near poor in the United States. It eliminates the federal income tax obligation and generates a tax refund for millions of households. By targeting low-wage workers, especially those with children, the EITC helps individuals who are widely seen as deserving. President Reagan was a fan of the EITC, as was President Clinton.

This book reminds us that even popular programs have their problems. The author, a specialist in tax law, documents several reasons why the EITC (and, to a lesser degree, the Child Tax Credit) fails to live up to its potential. Based partly on the experiences of New Zealand and Canada, she then recommends specific reforms. Some of her proposals are modest, such as distributing benefits quarterly rather than once a year. Other changes would be more substantial, such as tying benefits to household income but not marital status. One of the more interesting recommendations involves a clean separation between tax breaks for workers and for families with children. The author's larger aim is to make good programs better, meaning more rational and coherent. Figuring out how, politically, to effect these changes is not her goal.

If any book ever illustrated the saying “the devil is in the details” it is this one. The level of detail is both a strength and a weakness. I was truly impressed with chapter 3, where the author identifies the main sources of improper payments in the EITC program. Many of the mistakes are unintended, which is not surprising given the complicated rules governing eligibility and benefits. And some mistakes are deliberate, committed by recipients or third-party tax