

Oxford Handbooks Online

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Julia Lynch and Martin Rhodes

The Oxford Handbook of Historical Institutionalism

Edited by Orfeo Fioretos, Tullia G. Falletti, and Adam Sheingate

Print Publication Date: Mar 2016

Subject: Political Science, Comparative Politics, Political Institutions

Online Publication Date: May 2016 DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199662814.013.25

Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines how historical institutionalism has influenced the analysis of welfare state and labor market policies in the rich industrial democracies. Using Lakatos's concept of the "scientific research program" as a heuristic, the authors explore the development and expansion of historical institutionalism as a predominant approach in welfare state research. Focusing on this tradition's strong core of actors (academic path- and boundary-setters), rules (methodology and methods), and norms (ontological and epistemological assumptions), they strive to demarcate the terrain of HI within studies of the welfare state, and to reveal the capacity of HI in this field to underpin a robust but flexible and enduring scholarly research program.

Keywords: welfare state, Lakatos, research program, historical institutionalism, ideational approaches

HISTORICAL institutionalism and the analysis of welfare states (including the ancillary policy domain of the labor market) overlap significantly. More than elsewhere in Political Science and public policy, much single-country, program, and comparative analysis of the welfare state since the 1980s has taken an historical approach (Amenta 2003). Relatedly, some of the major welfare state scholars have also been major historical institutionalism theorists and proponents—most prominently, but not only, Theda Skocpol, Paul Pierson, and Kathleen Thelen. Those scholars and their colleagues have set the agenda for much (though not all) contemporary welfare state analysis. Indeed, the nexus between historical institutionalism and welfare state studies has become something of an "institution" itself, with a strong, path-dependent core of actors (academic path- and boundary-setters), rules (methodology and methods), and norms (ontological and epistemological assumptions). Using a framework derived from the philosophy of science, we analyze this institution as a "scientific research program" to better understand its intellectual history and characteristics.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Together, the actors, rules, and norms of historical institutionalism in welfare state analysis constitute what Imre Lakatos (1970, 132–138) called a distinctive “scientific research program.” As he defined it, a scientific research program consists of a stubbornly defended “hard core” (or “negative heuristic”) of rules, norms, and core hypotheses; a more flexible “protective belt” (or “positive heuristic”) of more modest and specific “auxiliary” hypotheses,¹ that can be modified or discarded in response to empirical discoveries; and an elaborate array of problem-solving mechanisms. We also use Lakatos’s notion of “progressive” versus “degenerative” scientific research programs as a guide to assessing the development of the historical institutionalist–welfare state nexus (hereafter HIWS) over time. In a progressive research program, the productive development of auxiliary hypotheses will increase and strengthen its predictive and analytical (p. 418) power in the face of new evidence and rival theories, allowing an extension to new cases—indicating what Lakatos calls the program’s “heuristic power” (1970, 137). But a degenerative research program will produce only ad hoc auxiliary hypotheses that give way in the face of new evidence, thereby exposing and weakening the theoretical core.

Using Lakatos’s framework as a heuristic facilitates an intellectual history and sociology of the HIWS. In true historical institutionalist fashion, it allows us to process trace the dynamics of developments across time, and to determine the relationships between contributors to different areas of the program. As Elman and Elman (2002, 253) argue, one of the most useful aspects of Lakatos’s methodology is that it “insists on explicit program descriptions ... that clearly delineate the connections and continuities between associated research.” That is precisely our aim. Our framework also helps us explain why some critiques of the program’s core (such as its early neglect of power, agency, and change) are more successfully accommodated than others (the ideational critique in particular).

Our exploration and assessment of the HIWS research program reveal the following characteristics: a robust and well-defended theoretical core, reinforced over time through conceptual elaboration and deepening; a rich “protective belt” of evolving and productive auxiliary hypotheses that have strengthened the program in the face of new evidence and rival theories and hypotheses; and a productive extension of the program to new cases by many authors who, adopting the program’s rules and norms, engage with and enrich its auxiliary hypotheses with empirical investigations. The latter, in turn, contribute to the program’s “positive heuristic” strength.

As with historical institutionalism in general, there are multiple positions and preferences in HIWS regarding core analytical issues. These include the relative emphasis on order and stability versus innovation; on how institutions structure action through regulative, normative, and cognitive constraints versus creative action; and on the importance of material resources versus human cognition in institutional emergence, durability, and change. We suggest that this flexibility derives from the enrichment and adaptability of the program’s auxiliary hypotheses.

Similarly, far from weakening HIWS research, the scope for theoretical and methodological cross-fertilization with other research programs (rational choice, sociological institutionalism, and constructivism) has given it new dimensions. Positive engagement between rival approaches in welfare state analysis, including the addition of novel methodologies to the historical institutionalist repertoire, has been facilitated by some core historical institutionalists (e.g., Hall 2010) as well as those seeking to import institutional analysis into rival schools or seek bridges between them (e.g., Moe 2005; Katznelson and Weingast 2005).

Yet, precisely because of the strength of its core theoretical and methodological rules and norms, there is clear resistance in HIWS to absorbing too much from these rival programs, and we see strong boundary limitations in certain areas. While ideas and cognition have always been part of the historical institutionalist “core,” there is a clear standoff in welfare state analysis (as elsewhere in historical institutionalism) between the institutionalist ontology and epistemology and that of strongly values- or identity-oriented (p. 419) research, especially in its cultural/semiotic form (see Orloff 2005). Early “openings” to ideas and cognition in historical institutionalism have been less well exploited by historical institutionalism (and by core participants in HIWS) than those with in rational choice (Hall and Lamont 2013).

At the same time, the methodological boundary with rational choice has to be carefully negotiated (e.g., Katznelson and Weingast 2005). There are similar barriers, which must be bridged via strategies of triangulation, to linking HIWS research with other forms of comparative political research or with large-N statistical work (Hall 2003; Skocpol 2003). Nevertheless, as we conclude, those links must be made if some of the most important claims of HIWS are to be subjected, as they should be, to the harsh light of empirical analysis using the multiple (and fine-grained) methods now available to researchers.

The Core of the Historical-Institutionalist Welfare State (HIWS) Scientific Research Program and Its Critics

In this section we first set out the rules (methodology and methods), and norms (ontological and epistemological assumptions) of the HIWS research program’s “hard core” and its key builders and defenders. In a second step we look at a series of assaults on that core.

The “Hard Core” of the HIWS Research Program

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

The “hard core” of the HIWS research program has its origins with Hugh Heclo’s *Modern Social Politics in Britain and Sweden* (1976) which first demonstrated the extent to which “policy creates politics” by shaping actors interests and positions over time. Theda Skocpol (and various co-authors) brought this perspective into US welfare state research in the early 1980s, initially via a vigorous debate with neo-Marxist analysts of early American social policy who, in Skocpol’s view, had grossly neglected state institutions and political parties (Skocpol 1980; Skocpol and Ikenberry 1983).

As the 1980s wore on, the debates became more intense—for example, the clash between Jill Quadagno and Skocpol and Edwin Amenta over the use of neo-Marxist state theory to explain the passage of the US Social Security Act of 1935 (Quadagno 1984; Skocpol and Amenta 1985)—and the historical institutionalist approach became more analytically sophisticated. In joint work with Amenta, John Ikenberry, Ann Orloff, and Margaret Weir, the notion of states as actors and structures was further developed by (p. 420) Skocpol, and the concept of “policy feedback” first introduced, and applied to both US and comparative social policy studies (Skocpol and Ikenberry 1983; Orloff and Skocpol 1984; Skocpol and Amenta 1986; Weir, Orloff, and Skocpol 1988). Orloff and Skocpol (1984) was a pioneering analysis that compared the origins of the British and US welfare states through a “state-centered frame of reference” while also critiquing reigning explanatory approaches, including logic of industrialism, working-class strength, and cultural/values-based arguments.

The approach was consolidated in three important books that appeared almost simultaneously in the early 1990s: Weir’s *Politics and Jobs* (1992), Skocpol’s *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (1993)—both focusing on the US—and Orloff’s monumental comparative historical study, *The Politics of Pensions* (1993). All three emphasize the centrality of political institutions in mediating social pressures and socioeconomic processes, the role of policy initiatives in “setting boundaries” that restrict the scope of future innovation (Weir 1992, 5), and the relationship between policy feedbacks and coalition formation. Although not strictly part of the same school, and linked to the “working-class strength” approach that they rejected, Skocpol and her colleagues embraced Gøsta Esping-Andersen’s seminal *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990) because of its historical explanation of welfare state emergence and development.

Skocpol’s *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* made the strongest analytical statement demarcating historical institutionalist analysis from competing perspectives. Dismissing a series of explanations for the distinctiveness of US social policy—as the by-product of industrialization, national values, working-class weakness (power resources theory), business hegemony, and the gender perspective—Skocpol presents her “structured polity perspective” as the basis for understanding the “patterns and tempos” of US social policy provision. The analysis focused on four kinds of processes: the establishment and transformation of state and party organizations; the effects of political institutions and procedures on the identities, capacities, and goals of social groups; the “fit”—or lack thereof—between the goals and capacities of politically active groups and the changing

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

points of access and leverage allowed by political institutions; and the ways in which previously established social policies affect subsequent politics. With these works, the basic foundations of HIWS had been put in place.

In the mid-1990s, HIWS was further consolidated by three publications: Skocpol's *Social Policy in the United States* (1995a), Finegold and Skocpol's *State and Party in America's New Deal* (1995), and Paul Pierson's *Dismantling the Welfare State?* (1995). The second and third of these were especially important in advancing the critique of rival approaches (pluralism and elite theories, Marxism and rational choice) and in providing empirical support for two core historical-institutionalists concepts: policy feedback and path dependence.

Skocpol's "Why I am a Historical Institutionalism" (1995b) summarized and explicitly defined the approach's core principles. Skocpol views institutions as formal organizations or informal networks, with shared meanings and stable bundles of resources and patterns of communication and activity. A "realist," neo-positivist position underlies this view: the interpretivist notion of institutions as systems of meaning (p. 421) or normative frameworks is roundly rejected—"It is not enough just to explore how people talk or think" (Skocpol 1995b, 105)—and causal analysis and hypothesis testing strongly endorsed. Moreover, although a dialogue between historical institutionalism and "institutionally embedded rational choice" was to be encouraged (see also Hall and Taylor 1996; Moe 2005; Hall 2010), the methodological individualism and formal deductive modeling of rational choice was beyond the pale. Marxist or *marxisant* approaches were not even mentioned in Skocpol's statement: apparently their time had passed. Some clear boundaries (and for the approach's critics, limitations) had now been set. Similar points were made by Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth (1992), three of whose chapters focused on welfare state issues.

Skocpol and Pierson (2002) further embellished these core precepts, emphasizing the importance in HIWS of tackling big, real-world questions, tracing processes through time, and analyzing institutional configurations and contexts. This work also paid particular attention to certain theories of causation, principally "path dependence" (effectuated via dynamic processes of positive feedback or "increasing returns") and slow-moving causal processes in which structural preconditions are established for particular outcomes (see also Mahoney, Mohamedali, and Nguyen, Chapter 4, this volume). In so doing, it marked as erroneous the search for explanations based on "idiosyncratic or precipitating factors" rather than "deeper causes." This resulted in subsequent accusations of "institutional determinism" and was a source of much dispute over where the focus of welfare state analysis should lie. But Pierson (2003, also 2004) argued for "the need for social scientists to be attentive to the Braudelian focus on the *longue durée*" and not succumb to the temptation to focus on "snapshots of a single moment in time." On this issue see also Thelen (1999).

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Both Pierson and Skocpol developed their historical institutionalism by building on conceptual observations and concepts from other theorists and, occasionally, disciplines (e.g., “increasing returns” is borrowed from economics); but they also took direct lessons from their own research into social policies and welfare states. If Skocpol developed her notion of policy legacies from the evolution of US social policy—policies “flow from prior institutions and politics, making some developments more likely, and hindering the possibilities for others” (Skocpol 1993, 531)—Pierson’s contributions to the “hard core” came from his comparative analysis of British and US welfare reform in the 1980s (1995) and from the broader comparative analysis contained in *New Politics of the Welfare State* (Pierson 2001). If *Dismantling the Welfare State?* sought explanations for the apparent timidity of welfare retrenchment under neoliberal governments in the “stickiness” of institutions, political vetoes, and the electoral coalitions that mobilize in defense of existing entitlements, *New Politics* developed the notion of post-industrial welfare states as “immovable objects” confronting “irresistible forces” under conditions of “permanent fiscal austerity.”

But contrary to an oft-made criticism, this was not a conception of welfare states as “frozen” or completely resistant to reform. Rather, Pierson argued that the core of welfare states would remain largely intact, and that “recalibration” (cost containment, rationalization and updating), rather than a radical retrenchment of welfare programs, (p. 422) would occur. The *longue durée* would end up revealing a degree of institutional and programmatic persistence greater than that posited by a focus on the *courte durée* of policy battles and reforms. This did not prevent an explosion of analysis that focused precisely on the latter and sought to explain why, regardless of institutional resilience, welfare state retrenchment and change occurs (for a useful survey, see Giger 2011, chapter 1).

Perhaps the strongest recent statement of this core argument comes from Pierson’s “The Welfare State over the Very Long Run” (2011). In this paper, Pierson restates the need to explain not the variation in welfare state programs over time (for there is often very little variation to explain, he argues), but rather their relative stability in a context of sometimes dramatic socioeconomic change. He links this argument with Esping-Andersen’s (1996, 24) notion of a welfare state that cannot respond adequately to “new social risks” because of the weight of existing institutional commitments to old ones.

In highly influential parallel work with Stephan Leibfried and others (Leibfried and Pierson 1995), Pierson extended to European social policy his interests in the role of previous policy commitments and their institutional “lock-in” effects for actors (and governments)—spurring a new generation of historical institutionalism-oriented analysis of EU-level policymaking and its impact on EU members states in the welfare state arena (e.g., Leibfried and Pierson 2000; Rhodes 2010).

In sum, the “hard core” of the HIWS research program includes key areas of analysis (the centrality of state and political party institutions; the effects of those institutions and their procedures on of the actions and goals of interest groups); a series of characteristic

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

methods (process tracing, attention to the *longue durée* and to relations among institutions and between institutions and their contexts); and privileged theories of causation (path dependence, increasing returns, feedback mechanisms, slow-moving causal processes).

In turn, the “hard core” *excludes* certain possibilities. First, it rejects the notion of welfare states as unchangeable institutions, frozen in time. It focuses instead on their institutional resilience and incremental recalibration in the face of dramatic changes in political, social, economic, and demographic contexts. Methodologically, the hard core claims that reforms to the welfare state cannot be understood by examining the *courte durée* of policy battles. It claims causal process analysis as its key methodology, and at an epistemological level is essentially neo-positivist, using historical narrative for hypothesis testing and for the most part eschewing both formal deductive modeling and strongly interpretivist epistemologies and methods.

For critics of what we can fairly call the “Skocpol-Pierson school” of HIWS analysis, such as Ira Katznelson, the approach so defined demanded “too high a price for entry to historical institutionalism’s house”. It insisted, he claimed, that other theories be left behind as irremediably flawed (Katznelson 1998, 196), and succeeded only in replacing “a Marxist materialism with a more static and cross-sectional organizational materialism” (Katznelson 2009, 100). But that was, perhaps, the price to be paid for creating the irrefutable “hard core” of a distinct, underivative, and non-eclectic research program.

(p. 423) Critiques of the HIWS Core

Disagreement with the core precepts of HIWS can be broken down into four categories of criticism: of the scope and definition of the welfare state; of the limited consideration given to power and conflict; of the neglect of actors and “mechanisms”; and of the restricted conception of “change” in the perspective of the *longue durée*. Some of these have amounted to “friendly sparring” with proponents of the hard core’s precepts, in which opponents seek to strengthen rather than undermine the HIWS core. Other critiques are more adamantly opposed to the HIWS core, and come from quite different ontological/epistemological and methodological traditions. We identify six such controversies:

The WS dependent variable “problem.” This criticism has appeared in two quite different forms. The first, found in numerous reviews of work by Skocpol, Orloff, and Weir in the 1980s and 1990s, yearned for the parsimony of a more positivist political or sociological science from which Skocpol et al.’s form of institutionalism clearly departed. Alber (1994, 545), for example, argued that given the complexity of Orloff’s historical argument in *The Politics of Pensions* (1993), “it is difficult to specify the dependent variables precisely and the reader occasionally wonders what exactly the author is attempting to explain.” For Orloff, the “dependent variable” was quite broad—the system of pensions provision—

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

rather than something quantifiable or a single event.² A second form of criticism ten years on argued that the dependent variable in HIWS was now being too narrowly defined, as articulated in several publications by Jacob Hacker (e.g., 2004, 2005), beginning with a *critique raisonnée* of Pierson's (1995) *Dismantling the Welfare State*.

Hacker identified three core problems in Pierson's account. First, like the pluralists, Pierson analyzed observable decisions and paid little attention to agenda setting by powerful actors in the welfare state domain. Second, Pierson ignored "social context," that is, how policy changes in the welfare state interact with the fortunes and lives of citizens, and failed to acknowledge the evolving nature of social risk. Finally, Hacker argued, Pierson had adopted a too-narrow conception of the welfare state, ignoring what Christopher Howard (1999) has labeled "the hidden welfare state," and neglecting to analyze, in particular, two very important overlapping policy realms in US social policy: tax expenditures with social welfare aims, and regulatory and tax policies governing privately-provided social welfare benefits. In making this critique, which could have been applied to much of the HIWS canon, Hacker was arguing that not only was the dependent variable mis-specified, but that the analysis was also methodologically blinkered. The critique was to have a major impact on Pierson's subsequent intellectual development.

Neglect of contestation and conflict. This criticism comes in two main forms. First, "power resources" analysts like Alexander Hicks (1999), Walter Korpi (2001, 2003, 2006), and Evelyne Huber and John Stephens (e.g., 2001) have argued that HIWS is insufficiently attentive to the class and power dynamics underlying welfare state formation and reform (also Culpepper, Chapter 27, this volume). Going back to the work of (p. 424) earlier exponents of HIWS (e.g., Orloff 1993), one sees a much greater attention then to what is now called "power resources" or class conflict than in the newer "new politics" form of HIWS. Korpi (2003, 2006) addressed the issue of employers' class-based power, and criticized the "new politics" approach of Pierson quite centrally for its neglect of class-based analysis in its understanding of the politics of retrenchment. Korpi in fact sidelined historical institutionalism and identifies Rational-Choice Institutionalism (RCI) as his favored partner in linking a power-resources approach with a new institutionalism (2001).

Second, and from sources often within the HIWS tradition, has come the critique that an excessive focus on critical junctures and positive feedback mechanisms can obscure the role of power politics. For example, Immergut (2008, 355) argues that in historical institutionalism "the focus on pinning down history has resulted in the neglect of two basic features of both politics and history: political contestation and actor reflexivity." Orloff (2005) points out that the earliest works in the HIWS tradition conceived of policy feedbacks as having multivalent consequences, including contestation, quite differently from the "lock in" or "increasing returns" notions that a newer version of HIWS inspired by Pierson (2000) had embraced. In seeking to account for changes in labor market institutions and their outputs, Thelen (2004) eschews the contemporary strain of HIWS

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

that pays obeisance to critical junctures and path dependence in favor of a more conflict-oriented analysis of power-distributional and political coalitions.

Insufficient attention to actors and mechanisms of change. Relatedly, numerous works critique the tendency in HIWS research for submerging the role of actors within structural arguments. This leaves little scope for institutional contradictions that actors can exploit (e.g., Clemens and Cook 1999; Ebbinghaus 2005), or for creativity in innovating, recrafting or recombining institutions (e.g., Campbell 2004; Crouch 2005, 2007). If Crouch disagrees with some of the core conceptual and methodological precepts of HIWS, Cerami (2006, 2008) seeks to “rescue historical institutionalism” from “institutional determinism” in his work on the emergence and adaptation of post-communist Central and East European welfare states, identifying several “mechanism-based models of institutional change” (ideational, communicative, and coordinative) in addition to the “recombinant transformation” and “institutional bricolage” concepts found in Campbell and Crouch.

Difficulty explaining change. Perhaps the most common criticism of historical institutionalism work in general is an alleged bias toward stability and difficulty in explaining change. Peters, Pierre, and King (2005) present a broad summary of this critique. In HIWS, the major contributions responding to this critique have come from Hacker and Thelen independently and from the contributions to both Mahoney and Thelen (2009) and Streeck and Thelen (2005).

An unclear and limited role for ideas, values, and attitudes. This critique has come from many directions—including from mainstream political scientists, historical sociologists, and more radical constructivists. Seymour Martin Lipset (1996, 340) argued that Skocpol’s account of US social policy history was deficient due to its neglect “of the (p. 425) larger value context within which American politics takes place.” Daniel Béland (2007) argued similarly but more completely that historical institutionalism needs a systematic analysis of ideational processes for a full understanding of institutional change. Movement toward that position was already apparent in the extended use of Hall’s (1993) policy paradigm concept in Béland and Hacker (2004). Robert Lieberman (2002) provides another important contribution theorizing the connection between ideas and institutions, focusing on what he calls “friction” among mismatched institutional and ideational patterns’ in explaining important episodes of institutional change.

Additional critiques regarding ideas and culture that are essentially compatible with the HIWS core, but somewhat more radical, have come from other scholars. Thus Larsen (2008), for example, seeks to escape what he calls the “dead end” of the institutional line of reasoning regarding public opinion (which he argues is mechanistic and lacks micro-foundations), and explores the links between the macro-institutional level of welfare state regimes and micro-level of public attitudes (for a similar critique see Giger 2011). An important critique of the lack of attention to culture and the social construction of identities and goals comes from an historical sociology perspective, as in Orloff’s depiction of the HIWS mainstream’s “weakly utilitarian understanding of actors,” which

she would like to see “discarded for a more fully culturally situated conception of selves” (2005, 214)—including a more complete engagement with feminist scholars on issues of gender (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff 2005).

There is undoubtedly room for some accommodation of the ideational and cultural critiques within HIWS (see below). However, the HIWS core research program is not infinitely malleable. Works by Herrigel (2005), Rothstein (1998), and Schmidt (2003, 2008), for example, move into a social constructivist terrain that allows much more space for norms in the definition of institutions than would the HIWS core (also Blyth, Helgadóttir, and Kring, Chapter 8, this volume). Schmidt (2008) argues for the importance of a fourth institutionalism—“discursive institutionalism”—alongside the traditional three institutions (historical, rational-choice, and sociological) as set out in Hall and Taylor (1996), an attempted innovation that has gained little traction in HIWS, except in the work of Cerami (2008) mentioned above.

Methodological Problems. Historical institutionalism generally, and especially theory based on path dependence, has been subject to the critique that it routinely generates hypotheses that are not easily testable or falsifiable—or if they are testable, then HIWS’s macro-institutional focus is incapable, on its own, of doing so due to the frequent absence of micro-foundations or readily-identified causal connections (e.g., Giger 2011). Many critics (e.g., Alber 1994) argue that HIWS is not even interested in testing hypotheses and is essentially an (historically) interpretative approach—a label which many historical institutionalists would be happy to accept. Even Ellen Immergut, the author of a key historical institutionalist analysis of comparative health systems (1992) worries that “it is difficult to see how ... historical narratives can ever be proved wrong” (Immergut 1998). Drezner (2010) asks “Is Historical Institutionalism Bunk?” for similar reasons, while Peters, Pierre, and King (2005) argue that if historical institutionalism (p. 426) often generates compelling historical narratives, it has trouble generating real explanations for political and policy change. Although scholars such as Hall (2003) and Brady and Collier (2010) have mounted a spirited methodological defense of historical institutionalism, some of its fiercest critics (e.g., Schwartz 2005; Drezner 2010) complain that historical institutionalism is under-theorized and suffers from serious problems in establishing causality and elaborating plausible causal mechanisms.

The “Protective Belt”: Auxiliary Hypotheses and “Progressive Adaptation”

Flexible Responses to Rival Hypotheses

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

The HIWS research program has been remarkably successful in responding to many of these critiques. Contributions by Hacker, Pierson, and Thelen, in particular, have both critiqued and then adapted and enriched the program. They have built into the approach a greater attention to and theorization of different modes of institutional change, as well as to the agency, power, and conflict dynamics that lie behind them. Especially noteworthy are Hacker's *The Divided Welfare State* (2002), Thelen's *How Institutions Evolve* (2004), Streeck and Thelen's *Beyond Continuity* (2005), and the work of Hacker and Pierson on business power and welfare state formation (e.g., 2002, 2004). Thelen, and especially Pierson, are interesting in that their intellectual trajectories mark them as original members of the HIWS core, but also active participants in the adaptation of the research program's protective belt.

To the "dependent variable problem," Hacker (2002) in particular responded by shining a light on private as well as public provision and on the "hidden welfare state" consisting of government regulation and taxation of private benefits. In subsequent work (*The Great Risk Shift*, 2006), Hacker moved to further expand the definition of the welfare state to include responsibility for the distribution of risk in society. Relatedly, Hacker's (2002) focus on non-decisions as key drivers of welfare state change in the US—in the form of "policy drift" caused by not updating policies to keep up with changing social realities—also helped to reveal the asymmetric power held by opponents of expanding social provision. More recently, Pierson has joined forces with Hacker in applying this argument to US industrial relations, taxation, financial deregulation, and corporate governance in their study of "winner-take-all" politics (Hacker and Pierson 2010).

Hacker and Pierson's work on the role of employers in the emergence of the US welfare state (2002), and their related vigorous debate with Peter Swenson on the nature of business power (Hacker and Pierson 2004; Swenson 2004a, 2004b), effectively "brings power back in" to HIWS, explicitly criticizing the early HIWS neglect of class and especially business power in the work of Skocpol and Ikenberry (1983), Orloff and Skocpol (p. 427) (1984), Weir, Orloff, and Skocpol (1988), and Skocpol (1993). In that and related later work (Hacker and Pierson 2006, 2010), Pierson has been influenced not just by Hacker's notion of "policy drift" (i.e., the incapacity of welfare state institutions and programs to adapt to changing socioeconomic conditions) but also by the "power resources" analysis of Huber and Stephens (2001) and Korpi (2001, 2003, 2006). The result has been a shift of attention to the broader political economy rather than the formal welfare state as the relevant analytical terrain. Pierson now sees his work with Hacker as "a hybrid of institutional and power resource elements, and the focus is on the evolution of the mixed economy rather than the welfare state narrowly defined."³ Although she criticizes the ongoing principal focus on political economy, Orloff sees this "filling out" of the HIWS agenda in the newer work of Pierson and others as exploiting the analytical potential of her earlier HIWS work with Weir and Skocpol.⁴

Kathleen Thelen arguably made a similar shift at around the same time. In *How Institutions Evolve* (2004), she used her analysis of incremental changes within the German training regime to illuminate how shifting coalitions within institutions work to

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

determine the ends to which these institutions are put—and who benefits. Thelen’s documentation of how training systems created in the nineteenth century against the opposition of organized labor were converted into a key resource for unions also highlights the importance of agents working within institutions to make incremental changes with important consequences. Streeck and Thelen (2005), in turn, fleshed out and systematized Hacker’s and Thelen’s observations of the importance of incremental change for HIWS. Chapters in that edited collection by Streeck and Thelen, Hacker, Levy, Palier, and Trampusch, in particular, illustrated clearly a series of mechanisms—drift, conversion, layering, displacement, and exhaustion—by which the decisions of political actors, working within and upon institutions, could produce change in the absence of critical junctures or large exogenous shocks. In so doing, they laid the foundations for a more change-oriented, “agentic” version of the HIWS approach, as the role of political actors becomes woven into the fabric of institutions. Thelen (2014) extends her comparative work on persistence and change in labor market institutions by emphasizing the importance of focusing on their political-coalitional bases.

Taken together, these works have expanded the scope of HIWS and emphasized that the outputs of institutions can and do change, even when the institutions themselves are apparently static; and that institutions are not rigid shells but the product of active manipulation and adaptation performed by political actors with real agency. The “auxiliary hypotheses” and theories developed in these works and others have not sought to develop a new theoretical core to rival that of the HIWS. They have in fact enhanced rather than undermined the core of the HIWS approach and hence “protected” it from the potentially eroding effects of rival arguments and hypotheses. At the same time, this literature is much more attentive than work in the HIWS core to actors, preferences, behavior and strategies, and as a result it is sometimes referred to as “second-generation” or “second wave” institutionalism (see Hall, Chapter 2, this volume). The development of this second generation of analysis is evidence of the program’s capacity for flexible responses to rival hypotheses.

(p. 428) But reflecting on the extent to which the HIWS core has embraced rival hypotheses, as in its greater attention to agency, power, and change in the work of Pierson, Thelen, and others referred to above, it is also clear that ideas and culture remain marginal to the mainstream of this tradition. We would argue that this is related to the “sociology” of the research program and the epistemological priorities of its “protective belt.” When major figures *within* historical institutionalism and HIWS innovate, providing an intellectual stamp of authority, it is more likely that others will follow. Thus, Vivien Schmidt’s plea from *outside* the historical institutionalism/HIWS research program, and from a quite different epistemological perspective, for a distinct “discursive institutionalism,” has not impacted the HIWS core and has provoked little reaction from its “protective belt.” We suspect that Peter Hall’s more active recent embrace of the notion of institutions as being “cultural artifacts” as well as “matrices of sanctions and incentives” (Hall and Lamont 2013) will not only spur but also *legitimize* a

shift toward a deeper engagement with cultural sociology, and promote a greater attention to culture and social relations in future HIWS research.

Building Out the Program: New Evidence, New Cases, and New Arguments

At the same time, a number of important new contributions have built on the precepts of the core by extending the analysis to new cases, and have allowed the HIWS research program to adapt progressively to the demands of analyzing complex institutional settings. Four studies of the welfare state provide examples of the “progressive adaptation” of the research program and demonstrate its vitality: Morgan’s *Working Mothers and the Welfare State* (2006); Fleckenstein’s *Institutions, Ideas and Learning in Welfare State Change* (2011); Lynch’s *Age in the Welfare State* (2006); and Häusermann’s *The Politics of Welfare State Reform in Continental Europe* (2010).

Morgan (2006) is in part a standard HIWS narrative that explains cross-national variation—in this instance, variation in policies geared toward working mothers—by showing how early policy decisions become incarnate in institutional forms that then shape subsequent policy directions. But if Morgan shows that the religious *organization* of society in the nineteenth century has institutional consequences that affect future work-family policy arrangements, it is an *idea*—the social conservative “male-breadwinner” ideology—whose persistence over time among key actors has the real motive force in her argument.

Lynch (2006) also sets up her study in the classic HIWS vein, explaining contemporary cross-national variation in the relative emphasis in social policies on the elderly versus working-aged adults and children today by process-tracing a century’s worth of political and institutional developments. Lynch’s explanation for the long-term evolution of the different age-orientation of welfare regimes hinges, though, on the largely unintended consequences of the mismatch between political actors’ purposive behavior and the wider demographic and economic environments that surround welfare state (p. 429) policies. Lynch’s analysis is thus compatible with second-generation institutionalism’s more agent-centered view, but also hints at some of its limitations. Thus, while Hacker (in Streeck and Thelen 2005) defines policy drift as a choice that political actors make, Lynch’s analysis of policy drift focuses more on *longue durée* changes in the surrounding environment of which policymakers may be only vaguely aware, but that can constrain future choices, and have a profound influence on policy outputs.

Silja Häusermann (2010) focuses on the interplay of social structure, welfare state and party institutions, and actors’ preferences and strategies to analyze hard-to-achieve pension reform in Western Europe. In some regards this analysis is more structuralist than institutionalist, since it takes public individuals’ preferences as given by their position in the social structure. On the other hand, Häusermann, unlike many authors writing on “new social risks,” also shows that different welfare state setups generate

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

different sets of interests in society. And in a neat twist, the politics of accommodating those interests are constrained by the longer-term development of the welfare state, which provides nationally-specific opportunities for reform.

Most recently, Fleckenstein (2011) takes up the ideational critique, seeking to integrate an institutional approach to policy learning into new institutionalism as a mechanism for knowledge-based institutional change. Like much second-generation HIWS research, Fleckenstein pays attention to the incoherence of institutional settings and the diversity of policy legacies, but gives more causal significance to ideas and ascribes even more discretion to agency in his study of German labor market reform policy than is the case in more recent HIWS research. Yet Fleckenstein remains firmly within the HIWS tradition. We provide an example of a more “constructivist” departure from it at the end of the next section.

These works, along with other progressive adaptations, add to the “hard core” of HIWS by (1) testing the original propositions on a new range of policy and country cases; (2) constructing stronger links between welfare state policy development and underlying systems of political contestation; (3) giving more weight and systematic attention to ideational factors (e.g., religion, knowledge, and policy learning); and (4) being more attentive to both the unintended consequences of policy actions and to the interaction between welfare state institutions and the larger context. None of these innovations has constituted a challenge to the core of the HIWS paradigm as such; but they extend and modify the research program so that it can be applied fruitfully to a range of cases in ways that had not been fully considered in the HIWS “core.”

Challenges—Methodological and Theoretical

In this final section we look at welfare state studies and criticism that are less easily accommodated by the HIWS research program and are therefore, strictly speaking, outside it.

(p. 430) The first of these are not necessarily inimical to the research program, but find the HIWS focus on macro-institutional variables and methodological bias toward historical process tracing too limited for addressing the numerous questions it raises. They therefore complement or substitute HIWS with rival theoretical angles and methodological approaches.

Nathalie Giger’s *The Risk of Social Policy?* (2011) investigates the Piersonian argument about the risks for governments of engaging in policies of retrenchment, but uses theoretical modeling, regression analysis of social attitudes and voting behavior, and the simulation of different counterfactual scenarios to do so. Her key motivation is the absence in the HIWS literature of any serious empirical analysis of the core claim that welfare state retrenchment is politically unpopular and electorally treacherous. She fills

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

that gap by focusing on the voter's perspective and by engaging with the literature on issue voting. Her findings weaken some of the key assumptions in the "New Politics" argument: social policy reform is rarely risky for governments, and much less painful to incumbents than alienating the electorate in other policy areas, while social policy attitudes rarely alter government composition or transfer directly into policies. Giger's study reveals the limits to a purely macro-institutional approach when seeking to understand the relationship between micro-variables (voters and their electoral behavior) and macro-outcomes.

Barbara Vis uses prospect theory (a psychological approach) and fuzzy-set QCA in the *Politics of Risk-Taking* (2010) to interrogate the same Piersonian claim that welfare state reform politics is "risky," leading to reform evasion or blame avoidance. Vis shows that under certain circumstances governments that want to stay in, or return to power do indeed engage in risky behavior and embrace unpopular policy reforms. Understanding why, Vis argues, requires methodological innovation that complements rather than replaces the HI approach. Her findings nuance considerably our understanding of the conditions under which governments tackle unpopular and not unpopular reform. Thus, only when governments face losses in the form of a deteriorating socioeconomic and/or deteriorating political situation are they willing to run the electoral risk of launching unpopular reform; and only when a government's political position is solid and the socioeconomic situation improving is it likely to engage in popular reform.

Both Giger and Vis use investigative tools from outside of historical institutionalism to "test" some of the core propositions of the HIWS research program. In doing so, they enrich the historical institutionalism approach, first by "triangulating" it with methods less frequently used in comparative historical analyses, and (consequently) also by making it scientifically more robust. Avdagic, Rhodes, and Visser seek to do something similar in *Social Pacts in Europe* (2011), which triangulates process tracing, a rational-choice based heuristic bargaining model, and fuzzy-set QCA to investigate when and how social actors contract to engage in negotiated reforms of social and labor market policies. These techniques allow for insights that a macro-institutional approach on its own cannot provide. Like Vis, the authors can explain the broad contours of cross-national variation in social pacting by using fuzzy-set QCA; they can illuminate real-world (p. 431) negotiations between actors through a "bounded rationality" model of bargaining; and they draw on functionalist, utilitarian, normative, and power-distributional perspectives to focus and structure their use of historical narrative.

Finally, it is worth considering how far historical institutionalism can be stretched before it becomes something else. As noted above, although ideas and cognition have always been part of the historical institutionalist "core," there is a clear standoff in HIWS between the institutionalist ontology and epistemology and that of strongly values- or identity-oriented research. Skocpol (1995b) explicitly rejected the notion of institutions as systems of meaning or normative frameworks. But Van Oorschot, Opielka, and Pfau-Effinger use precisely that notion in *Culture and the Welfare State* (2008): Pfau-Effinger

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

(185–186) defines culture as “a system of collective constructions of meaning by which human beings define reality.” Yet they also attempt, at certain points, to reconcile culture, so defined, with more standard institutionalist analysis.

Thus, Van Oorschot, Opielka and Pfau Effinger seek to identify a dimension of “values and beliefs” underpinning Esping-Andersen’s (1990) “worlds of welfare capitalism,” while sidelining the class-conflict that is central to his “power resources” approach. Pfau Effinger, in an analysis of family policies in Germany and Austria, attempts to add a cultural dimension to Pierson’s use of “increasing returns,” arguing that policy change can only be explained by including “the role of cultural factors outside the specific institutions of the welfare state” (2008, 185). More generally in the book, shared values, norms, perceptions, and beliefs assume the character of meta-phenomena that sometimes have causal effect, as in Pfau-Effinger’s argument where “cultural change” produces “path breaks” in welfare state development, cutting through the “stickiness” of institutional mechanisms. Here we are clearly moving beyond the outer boundaries of the HIWS research program (which after all has strong rationalist foundations) into the orbit of a rival constructivist tradition.

Conclusions

We began this chapter by likening historical institutionalism to an “institution” itself, with a path-dependent core of actors, rules, and norms. We then used Imre Lakatos’s conception of a “scientific research program” to help us classify the literature that has constructed the HIWS research project over time (its core as well as its protective belt), and to assess its capacity to sustain itself over time. Referencing Lakatos’s notion of “progressive” versus “degenerative” scientific research programs, we conclude that the HIWS program is “progressive” in that it has promoted, and continues to promote, the development of auxiliary research and hypotheses that have strengthened its analytical power in the face of new evidence and rival theories.

The “core” of the program and its principles are strongly defended, but it is important to recognize that there has been a remarkable fluidity of exchanges and evolution of the conversation over time. Pierson and Thelen, in particular, have refined and enriched (p. 432) the program’s core, the first by accommodating and rearticulating the “power critique” within the HIWS tradition, and the second by making institutional change a central preoccupation of historical institutionalism research. Their work, and that of others in the HIWS core, continues to inspire a remarkable proliferation of welfare state studies in the “protective belt,” with no evidence of a mass-migration of scholars to rival research programs. “Triangulation”—the use by a new generation of scholars of research methods less favored in the core of HIWS, which have been critical, we argue, for giving greater scientific validity to historical institutionalism propositions and hypotheses—might in principle lead to that outcome. But because borrowings from rational choice or psychological theory have been used largely to investigate institutionalist hypotheses rather than to negate the precepts of institutionalism as such, the core of the program remains protected, and quite distinctive from those of its rivals—including alternative approaches that place causal emphasis on actors’ rational choices or on culture and ideas.

References

Adams, Julia, Elizabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff, eds. 2005. *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology*. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press.

Alber, Jens. 1994. Review of Ann Shola Orloff, “The Politics of Pensions: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, Canada and the United States 1880–1940.” *American Journal of Sociology* 100 (2): 545–547.

Amenta, Edwin. 2003. “What We Know About the Development of Social Policy: Comparative and Historical Research in Comparative and Historical Perspective.” In

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 91–130.

Avdagic, Sabina, Martin Rhodes, and Jelle Visser. 2011. *Social Pacts in Europe: Emergence, Evolution and Institutionalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Béland, Daniel. 2007. "Ideas and Institutional Change in Social Security: Conversion, Layering, and Policy Drift." *Social Science Quarterly* 88 (1): 20–38.

Béland, Daniel and Jacob Hacker. 2004. "Ideas, Private Institutions and American Welfare State 'Exceptionalism': The Case of Health and Old-Age Insurance, 1915–1965." *International Journal of Social Welfare* 13 (1): 42–54. (p. 433)

Brady, Henry and David Collier. 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standard*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Campbell, John. 2004. *Institutional Change and Globalization*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cerami, Alfio. 2006. *Social Policy in Central and Eastern Europe: The Emergence of a New European Welfare Regime*. Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Cerami, Alfio. 2008. "Mechanisms of Institutional Change in Central and Eastern Europe: Welfare State Restructuring." In *Post-Communist Welfare Pathways: Theorizing Social Policy Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. A. Cerami and P. Vanhuyse. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 35–52.

Clemens, Elizabeth and James Cook. 1999. "Politics and Institutionalism: Explaining Durability and Change." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1): 441–466.

Crouch, Colin. 2005. *Capitalist Diversity and Change: Recombinant Governance and Institutional Entrepreneurs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crouch, Colin. 2007. "How to 'Do' Post-Determinist Institutional Analysis." *Socio-Economic Review* 5 (3): 527–567.

Drezner, Daniel. 2010. "Is Historical Institutionalism Bunk?" *Review of International Political Economy* 17 (4): 791–804.

Ebbinghaus, Bernhard. 2005. "Can Path Dependence Explain Institutional Change? Two Approaches Applied to Welfare State Reform." Max-Planck Cologne Discussion Paper 05/2.

Elman, Colin and Miriam Fendius Elman. 2002. "How Not to Be Lakatos Intolerant: Appraising Progress in IR Research." *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2): 231–262.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1996. "After the Golden Age? Welfare State Dilemmas in a Global Economy." In *Welfare States in Transition: National Adaptations in Global Economies*, ed. Gøsta Esping-Andersen. London: Sage, 1-31.

Finegold, Kenneth and Theda Skocpol. 1995. *State and Party in America's New Deal*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Fleckenstein, Timo. 2011. *Institutions, Ideas and Learning in Welfare State Change: Labour Market Reforms in Germany*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Giger, Nathalie. 2011. *The Risk of Social Policy? The Electoral Consequences of Welfare State Retrenchment and Social Policy Performance on OECD Countries*. London and New York: Routledge.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2002. *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2004. "Privatizing Risk without Privatizing the Welfare State: The Hidden Politics of Social Policy Retrenchment in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 98 (2): 243-260.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2005. "Policy Drift: The Hidden Politics of US Welfare State Retrenchment." In *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, ed. Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 40-81.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2006. *The Great Risk Shift: The Assault on American Jobs, Families, Health Care, and Retirement and How You Can Fight Back*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hacker, Jacob S. and Paul Pierson. 2002. "Business Power and Social Policy: Employers and the Formation of the American Welfare State." *Politics and Society* 30 (2): 277-325.

Hacker, Jacob S. and Paul Pierson. 2004. "Varieties of Capitalist Interests and Capitalist Power: A Response to Swenson." *Studies in American Political Development* 18 (2): 186-195. (p. 434)

Hacker, Jacob S. and Paul Pierson. 2006. *Off Center: The Republican Revolution and the Erosion of American Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hacker, Jacob S. and Paul Pierson. 2010. *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer—and Abandoned the Middle Class*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hall, Peter. 1993. "Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain." *Comparative Politics* 25 (3): 275-296.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Hall, Peter. 2003. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 373-404.

Hall, Peter. 2010. "Historical Institutionalism in Rationalist and Sociological Perspective." In *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*, ed. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen. New York: Cambridge University Press, 204-224.

Hall, Peter and Michèle Lamont. 2013. "Why Social Relations Matter for Politics and Successful Societies." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 49-71.

Hall, Peter and Rosemary Taylor. 1996. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies* 44 (5): 936-957.

Häusermann, Silja. 2010. *The Politics of Welfare State Reform in Continental Europe: Modernization in Hard Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heclo, Hugh. 1976. *Modern Social Politics in Britain and Sweden: From Relief to Income Maintenance*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press.

Herrigel, Gary. 2005. "Institutionalists at the Limits of Institutionalism: A Constructivist Critique of Wolfgang Streeck and Kozo Yamamura." *Socio-Economic Review* 3 (3): 559-567.

Hicks, Alexander. 1999. *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Howard, Christopher. 1999. *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Huber, Evelyne and John Stephens. 2001. *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State: Parties and Policies in Global Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Immergut, Ellen. 1992. *Health Politics: Interest and Institutions in Western Europe*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Immergut, Ellen. 1998. "The Theoretical Core of the New Institutionalism." *Politics and Society* 26 (1): 5-34.

Immergut, Ellen. 2008. "Historical Institutionalism in West European Politics." *West European Politics* 31 (1-2): 354-369.

Katznelson, Ira. 1998. "The Doleful Dance of Politics and Policy: Can Historical Institutionalism Make a Difference?" *American Political Science Review* 92 (1): 191-197.

Katznelson, Ira. 2009. "Strong Theory, Complex History: Structure and Configuration in Comparative Politics Revisited." In *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and*

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Structure, ed. Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman. 2nd Edition. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 96–116.

Katznelson, Ira and Barry Weingast. 2005. *Preferences and Situations: Points of Intersection Between Historical and Rational Choice Institutionalism*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation,

Korpi, Walter. 2001. "Contentious Institutions: An Augmented Rational-Action Analysis of the Origins and Path Dependency of Welfare State Institutions in Western Countries." *Rationality and Society* 13 (2): 235–283.

Korpi, Walter. 2003. "Welfare State Regress in Western Europe." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 589–609. (p. 435)

Korpi, Walter. 2006. "Power Resources and Employer-Centered Approaches." *World Politics* 58 (2): 167–206.

Lakatos, Imre. 1970. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 91–196.

Larsen, Christian Albrekt. 2008. "The Institutional Logic of Welfare Attitudes." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (2): 145–169.

Lieberman, Robert. 2002. "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change." *American Political Science Review* 96 (4): 697–712.

Leibfried, Stephan and Paul Pierson, eds. 1995. *European Social Policy: Between Fragmentation and Integration*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Leibfried, Stephan and Paul Pierson. 2000. "Social Policy: Left to the Courts and Markets?" In *Policy-Making in the European Union*, ed. Helen Wallace and William Wallace. 4th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 267–292.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1996. "Comment on Skocpol's 'The Politics of American Social Policy, Past and Future.'" In *Individual and Social Responsibility: Child Care, Education, Medical Care, and Long-Term Care in America*, ed. Victor R. Fuchs. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 336–340.

Lynch, Julia. 2006. *Age in the Welfare State: The Origins of Social Spending on Pensioners, Workers and Children*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mahoney, James and Kathleen Thelen. 2009. *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Moe, Terry M. 2005. "Power and Political Institutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 3 (2): 215–233.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Morgan, Kimberly. 2006. *Working Mothers and the Welfare State: Religion and the Politics of Work-Family Policies in Western Europe and the United States*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Orloff, Ann Shola. 1993. *The Politics of Pensions: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, Canada and the United States 1880-1940*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Orloff, Ann Shola. 2005. "Social Provision and Regulation: Theories of States, Social Policies and Modernity." In *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology*, ed. Julia Adams, Elizabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 190-224.

Orloff, Ann Shola and Theda Skocpol. 1984. "Why Not Equal Protection? Explaining the Politics of Public Social Spending in Britain, 1900-1911, and the United States, 1880s-1920." *American Sociological Review* 49 (6): 726-750.

Peters, Guy B., Jon Pierre, and Desmond King. 2005. "The Politics of Path Dependency in Historical Institutionalism." *The Journal of Politics* 67 (4): 1275-1300.

Pierson, Paul. 1995. *Dismantling the Welfare State? Reagan, Thatcher and the Politics of Retrenchment*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press

Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence and the Study of Politics." *American Political Science Review* 94 (2): 251-267.

Pierson, Paul, ed. 2001. *New Politics of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pierson, Paul. 2003. "Big, Slow-Moving, and ... Invisible: Macro-Social Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. Dietrich Rueschemeyer and James Mahoney. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 177-207. (p. 436)

Pierson, Paul. 2004. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analysis*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Pierson, Paul. 2011. "The Welfare State over the Very Long Run." University of Bremen, Centre for Social Policy Research ZeS-Arbeitspapier, No. 02/2011. Available at <<http://hdl.handle.net/10419/46215>> (accessed September 1, 2015).

Quadagno, Jill S. 1984. "Welfare Capitalism and the Social Security Act of 1935." *American Sociological Review* 49 (5): 632-647.

Rhodes, Martin. 2010. "Employment Policy: Between Efficacy and Experimentation." In *Policy-Making in the European Union*, eds. Helen Wallace, Mark A. Pollack, and Alasdair R. Young. 6th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 283-306.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Rothstein, Bo. 1998. *Just Institutions Matter: The Moral and Political Logic of the Universal Welfare State*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, Vivien. 2003. "How, Where and When does Discourse Matter in Small States' Welfare State Adjustment." *New Political Economy* 8 (1): 127-146.

Schmidt, Vivien. 2008. "Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 303-326.

Schwartz, Herman. 2005. "Down the Wrong Path: Path Dependence, Increasing Returns, and Historical Institutionalism." Available at <<http://people.virginia.edu/~hms2f/Path.pdf>> (accessed September 15, 2013).

Skocpol, Theda. 1980. "Political Response to Capitalist Crisis: Neo-Marxist Theories of the State and the Case of the New Deal." *Politics and Society* 10 (2): 155-201.

Skocpol, Theda. 1993. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Skocpol, Theda. 1995a. *Social Policy in the United States: Future Possibilities in Historical Perspective*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Skocpol, Theda. 1995b. "Why I am a Historical Institutionalism." *Polity* 28 (1): 103-106.

Skocpol, Theda. 2003. "Doubly Engaged Social Science: The Promise of Comparative Historical Analysis." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 407-427.

Skocpol, Theda and Edwin Amenta. 1985. "Did Capitalists Shape Social Security?" *American Sociological Review* 50 (4): 572-575.

Skocpol, Theda and Edwin Amenta. 1986. "States and Social Policies." *Annual Review of Sociology* 12: 131-157.

Skocpol, Theda and John Ikenberry. 1983. "The Political Formation of the American Welfare State in Historical and Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Social Research* 6: 87-147.

Skocpol, Theda and Paul Pierson. 2002. "Historical Institutionalism in Political Science." In *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, ed. I. Katznelson and H. V. Milner. New York: Norton, 693-721.

Steinmo, Sven, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth. 1992. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Streeck, Wolfgang and Kathleen Thelen, eds. 2005. *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Swenson, Peter A. 2004a. "Varieties of Capitalist Interests: Power, Institutions, and the Regulatory Welfare State in the United States and Sweden." *Studies in American Political Development* 18 (1): 196–200.

Swenson, Peter A. 2004b. "Yes, and Comparative Analysis Too: Rejoinder to Hacker and Pierson." *Studies in American Political Development* 18 (2): 1–29. (p. 437)

Thelen, Kathleen. 1999. "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 369–404.

Thelen, Kathleen. 2004. *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thelen, Kathleen. 2014. *Varieties of Liberalization and the New Politics of Social Solidarity*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Van Oorschot, Wim, Michael Opielka, and Birgit Pfau Effinger. 2008. *Culture and the Welfare State: Values and Social Policy in Comparative Perspective*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Vis, Barbara. 2010. *Politics of Risk-Taking: Welfare State Reform in Advanced Democracies*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Weir, Margaret. 1992. *Politics and Jobs: The Boundaries of Employment Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Weir, Margaret, Ann Shola Orloff, and Theda Skocpol, eds. 1988. *The Politics of Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Notes:

(1.) The term "negative heuristic" indicates the "irrefutable" nature of the program's core principles that its protagonists adhere to. "Positive heuristic" refers to the "refutable variants" of the program and its capacity for modification and adaptation to new evidence and challenges (Lakatos 1970, 134–135).

(2.) We are indebted to Ann Orloff for this observation.

(3.) Personal communication between Pierson and the authors.

(4.) Personal communication between Orloff and the authors.

Julia Lynch

Julia Lynch is Associate Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

Historical Institutionalism and the Welfare State

Martin Rhodes

Martin Rhodes is Associate Dean and Professor of Comparative Political Economy, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, Denver, CO.

