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vent of "deinstitutionalization." As I suggest, these categories and others are connected to a global, corporate capitalism.

Books such as this one are often set aside, either gladly or reluctantly, with the ultimate comment: "This is all very nice, but what can we do to change things?" In the final chapter, I offer an answer to this question, given the rising tide confronting us in the new millennium, with most of us not even in boats but afoot, a tide in which only a few have, if that, will be dry and most of us will be soaked. We should prepare for change, more rather than less, quickly rather than slowly. The social policy of the last century is under assault. It is my hope that the following pages will contribute to a better navigation of the current storm raging against social policy.

William Roth. *The Assault on Social Policy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

I Policy

To define "policy" at the outset of an inquiry into its use is to perpetrate an injustice. Readers may come away thinking that they understand policy, can designate it like a specimen in a museum, may even have the illusion that being able to do so somehow constitutes knowledge. In fact, however, establishing the meaning of words is surprisingly difficult. In Western philosophy Plato first undertook the task, and subsequent philosophers have often been concerned with language and meaning. One possible understanding of policy might be that it is a socially constructed, authoritative, systematic set of rules that governs the allocation of resources. We could go on and list competing definitions of policy; we could modify our definition in their light. In the end, though, what would we have achieved? Would we have given readers insight? And what about defining such words as "authoritative," "rules," "governs," and "resources"? These are surely as troublesome as the term "policy." As is often the case, breaking one word into many, particularly if the constituents are more problematic than the initial word, explains nothing.

The plan in this volume is to alternate between presenting an ostensive definition of policy, in which the term is defined by offering examples that together provide a meaningful conception of it, and tracing the logic of its meaning. Thus certain social policies are examined and discussed within context.

Another preliminary clarification is needed. The word "social" is rarely used except as a modifier of the word "policy." Social policy is a subset of policy. Further, the word "society" is also avoided, except when its meaning

is clear and uncontested. The term "society" is often as misleading as the word "America" (as in "What is good for society?" or "What is good for America?"). It is even more mysterious that society and America are spoken of as personal actors, even as benign clones of Orwell's Big Brother. Thus society needs, wants, or asks for more health; America declares a war on drugs; society needs better education; and society enters the revolutionary age of the Internet.

Only persons or organizations may want, or not want, something. As I shall argue explicitly, what "society" wants, needs, or asks for is usually what *haves* want, need, or ask for. Rarely are the needs and rights of *have-nots* discussed in the media, except as human-interest stories. Instead, *have-nots* are seen as objects of charity, as marginal people whom *haves*, in various fashions, wish to keep marginal. In short, society does not speak with one voice nor is it the human body writ large. In fact, the meanings of terms like "society," "America," "policy," "social policy," and "haves" and "have-nots" are contested and political, which will shortly become evident in this chapter and more broadly in this book.

The examples of social policy presented in this book contribute to an ostensive definition of policy. Significantly, and inevitably, they deal with private policy as well as not-for-profit and public policy. Evident throughout is that private policy is overwhelmingly corporate policy. Each example of social policy is presented differently so as to show the multitudinous facets of social policy. Accordingly, different perspectives will include political conflict, historical development, public discussion, the relationship of social policy to the welfare state, and the relation of both to private policy. Since much social policy redeems failures of the economy, pays for public support by taxation, and is now ostensibly moving from the public to the private sector, there is occasion for economic argument in the discussion of social policy (see chapter 2).

Seeking clarity, let us begin with examples of what policy is not. First, policy is not inherently ethical. The policies of Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia are sufficient examples of this. Policy is also not neutral. Almost always, policy benefits some at the expense of others. It is also not God-given or natural, but is constructed by human beings. Only rarely is social policy fashioned as the answer to a social problem. Seldom, too, is a social problem discovered by experts. To expand our definition, let us examine the constituents of policy such as resources. These include material resources like money, goods and services, and time, as well as less tangible elements such

as health, knowledge, beauty, skill, and so forth. Of course, explanations of additional resources such as life, liberty, and happiness would require volumes.

Words like "authority" and "govern" also require elaboration.¹ Authority might mean the legitimate use of power, but then what do we mean by legitimate? Surely a parent's use of power to prevent a child from running into traffic is legitimate. The urgency of the situation and the parent's greater wisdom make it so. But it is a mistake to regard society as a family and to rely on the wisdom of the ruler, the ruling class, political parties, and so on. Further claims of legitimacy have enormous consequences and are properly open to question.

"Power" is a term central to politics and to political science. According to some, power is transitive, whereas others believe it is delegated.² Power exists both inside and outside government. Although many are uncomfortable with power, regarding it as a means of coercion, violence, and force, others are perfectly at ease with it, viewing it as a tool for freedom and autonomy. The word "power" is part of the Greek word for democracy, which, in Greek, means roughly "people's power or rule."³ Almost all modern governments call themselves democracies, even though power may be concentrated, coercive, and violent. Most political scientists regard democracy in its literal sense as an ideal, at best, but more commonly as an illusion. The self-proclaimed founder of policy sciences, Herbert Lasswell, explicitly differentiated between the elite and the masses, reserving political action to the powerful and the influential. Variants of this view pervade modern political science.

Political science includes the ways that policies are made, implemented, and evaluated.⁴ The most immediate revelation from political science is that policy is far more complicated, indeed messy, than is revealed in many texts on the subject. Another contribution from political science is more profound: *policy is the precipitate of politics*. Though not epiphenomenal, policy cannot be understood without understanding politics. And politics cannot be understood without comprehending power.

Power has been variously understood as a resource or a relationship. Viewed as a relationship, it is transitive, meaning that if A has power over B and B has power over C, then A has power over C.⁵ As a resource, power can often be exchanged for other resources or values such as wealth, skill, and knowledge.⁶ Power need not be confined to the political arena. It also exists in corporations, bureaucracies, and families. Indeed, recent formula-

tions of power place it everywhere; manifest power is the coagulation of instances in which power may not be recognizable as such, as in categorizing, knowing, seeing, and labeling. Power is involved not only in categorizing, labeling, and knowing, but even in deciding where power does and does not exist. Although some conceptual danger is attached to thinking of power in such broad terms, it has become useful, perhaps even necessary, in today's world where power is often elusive, obscure, dispersed, and ubiquitous.⁸

Usually power and wealth are connected—wealth frequently buys power, and power often commands wealth. The powerful and the wealthy are linked to each other; indeed, they are frequently the same. Policy is a product of power, and since haves have more power than have-nots, it is not surprising that policy is so often made of, by, and for haves: people and organizations wielding power and wealth.

Politics and the policy that issues from it is usually contested. To the degree that the opponents are haves and have-nots, the contest almost always goes in favor of the more powerful haves. If the contestants are have-nots, formal policy is less likely to evolve, since the policy choices of contests between have-nots seldom have any bearing on the lives of haves. When it does (e.g., when drugs infiltrate suburbia, when crime harms haves, when deficient education makes too many have-nots unproductive), then haves may institute policy.

When those contesting the policy are haves, the policy in question may be war, truce, negotiation, or law. Minus the amendments, our Constitution is largely a compilation of agreements among haves. Of course, haves may occasionally downplay their differences to keep power from have-nots. All this must strike the person of principle as disagreeable, counterintuitive, even subversive. Nonetheless, most of it is there for the reading in those documents of, by, and for haves, including agreements governing commerce, corporations, bureaucracies, and so on, and may be readily glimpsed as well in the business press.

A disturbing aspect of the current use of power is that it is not the only conceivable use of power, although its public relations, when not obscuring the issue, would make us think it is. In fact, other uses of power are surely possible, such as power for democracy—power of, by, and for the people, including the have-nots, power to liberate and to do good.

Although haves may conspire against one another regarding policy, only rarely is the policy of haves over have-nots conspiratorial in nature among haves. Indeed, it is usually openly talked about for logical reasons: haves

keep other haves informed since a free market of ideas is an advantage to them, particularly considering that largely haves buy and sell. It is worth noting that, as a rule, conspiracy theories are more misleading than what they are supposed to uncover. The difficulty lies in extracting the main events from the side shows that dominate the media.

Indeed, the media has become so significant that it is necessary to understand how elites make use of the media.⁹ Important to this understanding is that the media are overwhelmingly owned by corporations. Like any business, their principle goal is profit, which may come from selling advertising space to other corporations. What appears on television as the evening news is only the tip of a gigantic iceberg that includes production, sales, and organization. The major networks are wholly owned by giant corporations. People engaged in the media are likely to live out most of their lives among haves.

Sex and violence sell not only in the movies but also on television, in magazines, and over the Internet, and thus dominate the news. The more than \$40 million spent by the Office of the Independent Counsel on the Clinton scandals was dwarfed by the costs for and profits from covering the story. This was a story of importance, one routinely ignored by those who profess a distance from and boredom with the coverage of scandals and the differential coverage by various media shows on television, ranging from *Hard Copy* to *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*.¹⁰

During the cold war, there was not only an arms race but a propaganda race. The question was phrased crisply in the media, in education, and in public relations: Why is a country that is able to sell all sorts of goods and services losing the propaganda race with the Soviet Union? Whether we were indeed losing the race was at best questionable and was ultimately found to be untrue with the breakup of the Soviet bloc, which was attributed, in measure, to the permeation of new information technologies into the Soviet Union.

Both the Soviet Union and the United States took propaganda seriously. It not only played a role in the contest between haves in the Eastern and Western blocs but also was a factor in haves winning over the hearts and minds of have-nots in both blocs. Here the United States was ahead, since the use of crude forms of power, such as torture and murder, are less practiced on American citizens; in fact, haves' control over the hearts and minds of the have-nots reached such a high level in this country that violence was usually unnecessary. Of course, cruder forms of power did exist in the United

States in ghettos, prisons, and institutions comparable to the relation between haves and have-nots in some other countries. Although not usually conspiratorial, such exercises of brute force rarely made it into the media, have-nots generally not being the subject of saleable stories but rather marginalized, segregated, and kept apart from haves.¹¹ Although far from being true, equality of opportunity is a professed American goal. Equality of opportunity means upward mobility, which accounts for some of the popularity of the success and deeds of haves.¹²

Propaganda techniques, including public relations, advertising, and marketing, are openly taught at institutions of higher learning and widely practiced by the media, the government, and corporations. In such propaganda, morsels of truth exist—sometimes because of the necessity of communication among elites, sometimes as interesting stories tucked away, say, on page A-8, and sometimes where the media attacks elite interests to enhance profit. Myths of extreme importance are routinely subjects of public relations.

One such myth, which I discuss later, has to do with what is and what is not considered politics. Another, about the naturalness of free markets and private property, has had a reincarnation not only nationally but also globally. According to this myth, the Soviet bloc imploded because of the self-evident inefficiencies of state planning and the lack of privatization. There is some truth to this, but it is not the whole truth. According to the free market and private property myth, the once flourishing Asian tigers, which were taking advantage of U.S. free markets through Oriental wit, martial arts, industrial espionage, even a work ethic characteristic of the golden days of American capitalism (which we were striving to recover), in 1997 and 1998 were, in the midst of their economic crisis, revealing the bankruptcy of their other methods of gaining economic power. In fact, many American economists agree that there are indeed many ways toward achieving development,¹³ a conviction the United States put into effect in its trade relations with China, ignoring such issues as human rights, prison labor, even national security.

The private free market fiction is an important achievement of the American media, the educational system, social discourse, and politics in an environment where corporations wield the power that they do. Examples of this myth include our recently booming Goldlocks economy, justifications for dismantling the welfare state, the entrenchment of newspeak,¹⁴ such as flexible labor markets (meaning workers who are easy to boss around),

special interests (meaning labor unions and environmental groups), jobs (meaning profits), globalization (meaning the ascendancy of transnational corporations over nation-states), welfare reform (meaning welfare repeal), privatization of Social Security (meaning increased corporate profit and destruction of the social safety net), and so on.

In fact, neither private property nor the free market is natural.¹⁵ Both are social and political constructs relying on law, regulation, custom, even the threat of force. A market economy requires the legal structure of contracts, laws enforced against theft and bribery, other modifications to the market, and an effective system of taxation. This has become exquisitely clear as markets and private property overwhelm the former Soviet bloc. Indeed, the U.S. Constitution is substantially a set of regulations that govern markets. That the market requires laws and power for its operation and sustenance is clear. That these laws are natural, like, for example, the laws in Newtonian physics, has been claimed by some (e.g., the Austrian school of economists).¹⁶

Consider the family. Babies are not made to toil to earn their milk. Mothers give it to them even at the expense of a night's sleep. This is no market exchange. Should the father be a male chauvinist who uses his power over his wife to command obedience, this is also no market exchange. In fact, few relationships within the family are market exchanges. Rather, they involve love, altruism, obedience, and power. We know surprisingly little about human nature, but human nature may well account for more of what goes on in the family than markets, which may even be at odds with human nature. Karl Polanyi makes such an observation in his masterpiece, *The Great Transformation*.¹⁷ Describing the transition from mercantilism to market capitalism, he dwells on the extreme social, personal, political, and legal changes that extend to the reconstruction of land, labor, and capital as commodities, which they had not been before. Market capitalism is a construction, not some natural law.

Although corporations may interact with one another and with consumers through markets, their internal workings may be bureaucratic, authoritarian, hierarchical, and nonmarket. Consider a stereotypical hunter-gatherer tribe. Here food is gathered and distributed to others, perhaps more according to their needs than to what they have to offer in exchange in a nonexistent market. Or consider this tribe at war with a neighboring tribe. Goods, booty, even lives may be taken by violence ungoverned by the rules necessary

for a market. (Of course, wars exist today in flagrant violation of the rules governing markets.)

The conception of the market as a natural entity is a myth, but one that is of central concern to the media, propaganda, public relations, advertising, and corporations. Violation of market rules by have-nots are stigmatized as welfare, theft, and rudeness. When markets are violated by corporations, however, a different language is used: jobs are *protected*; legislation creates a *favorable* business environment; businesses form strategic *alliances* and have patent *agreements*. In general, it is only haves, the corporations, and stronger nations who are allowed to engage in extra-market transactions without stigmatization and marginalization including, but not restricted to, incarceration.

Markets are not inherently evil. Under suitable restrictions and democratic control, they provide for the economically efficient allocation of goods and resources, capital and labor, savings and investment. Although the choice between brands is often a parody of freedom, the supermarket is certainly preferable to rations. Market transactions between people of roughly comparable power enhance the well-being of participants. Indeed, far more could be said in praise of markets.¹⁸ In the end, though, markets are good insofar as they serve people, although one sometimes hears that people are good insofar as they serve markets.

In large measure, politics and the social policy issuing from it are devoted to the care and feeding of markets. Given the centrality of markets to our lives and to the interests of corporations, this is to be expected. And, given power differences, it is also expected that politics and policy favor haves. Often there is no public argument. Even when there is, politics and policy are likely to follow the interests of haves, whose interests in social policy are likely to differ from those of have-nots.

The modern welfare state is incomprehensible without industrialism and market economies. In significant measure, the modern welfare state is best understood as making good on the market failures all economists recognize, such as externalities (e.g., unemployment insurance), imperfect competition (e.g., regulation), information costs (e.g., the Food and Drug Administration), and public goods (e.g., roads). (Of course, the examples given in parentheses are only pieces of an elaborate mosaic.) The modern welfare state also takes care of those situations where unfettered markets are simply too painful for too many people. Thus programs exist for disabled people, the poor, old people, children, and the unemployed. The distinction, central to

a modern welfare state, between worthy poor and unworthy poor must be made in a uniform and bureaucratic manner.

A further logic for the existence of the modern welfare state in modern market economies was made possible by the British economist John Maynard Keynes, who fashioned a role for government in markets in ways transcending those Polanyi described. Before Keynes, it was thought that market economies could be at equilibrium only at high levels of production and employment. Keynes showed the contrary to be so, and advocated government intervention even in times of equilibrium at low levels of production and employment, such as in the Great Depression.¹⁹ This new role of government led to an increased role of government in all sorts of programs, many extending beyond the necessity of the Keynesian mandate.²⁰

In short, Keynes saved market capitalism by removing barriers between the government and the economy. During World War II, government intervention took the form of vast military expenditures that continued into the cold war and into today's economy. No longer were benefits for the poor seen as pernicious charity eroding the work ethic. Even if such effects existed, they could be rationalized in the name of the greater economic well-being.

Although inevitably connected to other policies, the social policies discussed in this volume largely issue from the politics and policies surrounding the labor market. The modern welfare state complements the modern market economy by making up for market failure, particularly in the labor market. Further, it takes care of people when and where the market cannot and makes up for excessive pain caused by the market. The word "excessive" is not in the eyes of the beholder, nor is it typically in the eyes of have-nots; rather, it is usually in the eyes of haves who make policy. Those welfare benefits (e.g., Social Security, unemployment insurance, Headstart, the WIC [Women and Infant Care] program, welfare as we knew it), bestowed in the face of excessive pain, can be withdrawn when that pain diminishes or when the term "excessive" is reinterpreted by haves. As haves may point out, such benefits are not rights but privileges.²¹ But, contrary to that opinion, have-nots may still interpret them as rights, may even claim that such benefits are necessary.²²

The policy and language of haves disguise many of the problems of have-nots. For example, consider homelessness. Whereas statistics consistently indicate a high incidence of homelessness among women and young children, the media (i.e., haves) continue to depict the "typical homeless person"

as male, insane, and drug addicted. Since policy and politics are so predicated on power, the word "empowerment" merits particular scrutiny. It is a word that has become fashionable in the language of helping. However, haves rarely exhibit an interest in empowering have-nots except on those occasions when haves equip have-nots in a contest against other have-nots, as typically happens in wars. Here, have-nots are empowered to conquer enemy have-nots. Of course, in such cases, empowerment occurs in a strict military hierarchy, where mutiny is a despicable offense. Have-nots are also empowered by the apparatus of modern production. Have-nots may operate expensive machines in the pursuit of making profits for haves. Typically the armed forces and industrial corporations are characterized by powerful mechanisms of control and are recognized as nondemocratic. Both corporations and the armed forces may verge on authoritarianism or even totalitarianism, an outcome to be expected from empowering have-nots in hierarchical, disciplined structures, where empowered have-nots are controlled by haves.

Outside the context of such antidemocratic organizations, empowerment is an illusion. As Frederick Douglass observed, power is never given freely by the powerful but is won only as a result of the struggle of the powerless. For example, in human services, empowerment is sometimes conceived as making have-nots aware of their choices, such awareness supposedly constituting empowerment. The range of choices, however, is far narrower than it is for haves. In truth, "empowerment" ensures that have-nots will abide by the policies of haves and distorts power into the knowledge of a limited number of choices. There is little reason for haves to empower have-nots, but they have much to gain by giving have-nots a sense of power that, in reality, the latter do not have.

Lapses in democracy are held just for the ultimate good of the state. However, this does not change the power over firms, the armed forces, or other organizations in which have-nots are empowered. Further, there is a danger that lessons learned on the job, in the army, and so on may come to permeate a person's life, or society as a whole, in public civic culture. As for the increasingly corporate nature of society, workers regularly criticize corporate abuse of power, although their criticism is most often directed at their individual bosses, obviously the most visible incarnations of domination. Within such clearly antidemocratic organizations, newsmagazines become popular, whereby war is defense and privatization represents large corporations.

This is a natural consequence, one to be expected, from relations that are asymmetric in power. It characterizes politics, which ineluctably involves power. And policy is the harvest of politics. Understanding power is necessary in order to understand politics and policy. Power, of course, is present in innumerable places such as complex organizations and bureaucracies, even in the family structure. Power is often intrinsic to seemingly "objective" operations like categorizing, labeling, and quantifying. Reinterpreted by Michel Foucault, Sir Francis Bacon's dictum that knowledge is power has acquired new meaning.²³

A decisive change in power has been its transformation by numerous technologies and disciplines into a force once thought impossible. Although power may be deployed in seemingly invisible ways, such power often intensifies and becomes highly visible.²⁴ While our main concern here is how power is applied to people, the growing application and refinement of power over the nonhuman environment cannot be overlooked. Today we have the power to protect ourselves from unreasonable heat and cold, to grow food in what once were deserts, to extend life, and, in general, to "control" our environment. Sometimes the exercise of power, however, has noxious side effects like pollution, environmental degradation, and the greenhouse effect.

An overwhelmingly important mechanism of power is the media's command of power. Occasionally technologies hide power, and sometimes they use power to achieve malignant ends but make it appear that their aims are benign. Our level of technology increasingly affects the media, public relations, and advertising, and becomes ever more expensive, more sophisticated, and more profitable.²⁵

If policy issues from politics, and politics depends on power, then power is becoming ever more integral to corporations—not only in their internal structure but in their relations to people outside the corporation. The power of haves over have-nots is growing. Yet the preponderance of have-nots over haves sometimes enables them to exercise power—for example, during the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, and certain trade union activities.

Only rarely do the media, public education, even polite conversation mention power and, even then, usually in ways not directly connected to domestic politics. For example, the United States is a superpower; the names of the Dallas Cowboys, Denver Broncos, and other athletic teams connote power. Criminals may be portrayed as violent, and violence is an extreme manifestation of power, although the power of the criminal is usually exer-

cised spasmodically, without political effect, indeed usually against have-nots. A media powerful enough to construct physical beauty, family values, the desirability of buying more and more stuff, and so on does not often portray or discuss power's connection to have's.

Another fallacy regarding politics is that it exists within a well-demarked and limited range of political participation. The caricature of political participation is that it occurs during elections and is confined to voting for either a Republican or a Democrat. Indeed, the virtues of a society where people can choose between two candidates are converted into a civic duty. That fewer than half the voters vote is held a disgrace to our country, and one that is much discussed. Not voting means not doing one's part. However, to the extent that there is no difference between the candidates, not voting may be rational. In media portrayals of nonvoters, similar to the depiction of have-nots, those who do not vote are viewed as crazy, lazy, uninformed, indifferent, undereducated, unparticipative, even criminal. Those who are better educated are exposed to an expanded notion of political participation: the need to communicate with, influence, and lobby one's elected representatives. Because elected representatives indeed pay attention to such activities, again the advantage falls to have's, as they control more money and have more direct contact with, access to, and influence on elected representatives.

We are told in high school that anyone can become an elected representative, even, and especially, president; of course, growing up in a log cabin and being truthful about cutting down cherry trees can only be advantages. This, of course, is a parody of the lessons we learn about equal opportunity for all. Only one person may be elected president. The number of political offices, of course, pale in comparison with the number of people in our country. This resembles the myth that professional athletics can more than rarely rescue one from poverty. In both cases, the extent to which money and other advantages come into play is ignored, privileges available to have's. In elections where individuals can make a difference, like voting for members of the local school board, few vote; for the most part, no one even expects it. Political scientists recognize that in a two-party system both candidates, confident of their base of support, usually move closer together on the issues during the campaign,²⁶ often making the vote of less consequence.

Another element of the political myth is the assumption that those in public office are the only fabricators of policy. This is blatantly untrue in a society where corporations and private policy dominate. Moreover, simply

because an individual was once a have-not does not mean we should expect that person, on reaching high office, to represent the interests of have-nots. To be elected to high office in our political system requires the assistance and support of have's. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his efforts to help have-nots, has been called a traitor to his class. But rarely have Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton been accused of such treachery, although both are equally plausible traitors to their have-not origins. Of course, there was a difference between presidential candidates George W. Bush and Al Gore. For example, Bush promised more conservative judicial appointments and a tax cut favoring the wealthy. Gore was more supportive of environmental concerns and, at times, made overtures to African-Americans and to trade unions. While real and significant, these differences were less significant than their agreements on trade, the importance of education, the significance of world engagement, and military superiority. And, to be sure, even the New Democrats are to the left of Compassionate Conservatives, but these differences pale in comparison with those between Hoover and Roosevelt, Dewey and Truman, Eisenhower and Stevenson, Goldwater and Johnson . . . in short, Republicans and Democrats as they had traditionally been. Further, the differences between Bush and Gore, and even traditional Republicans and Democrats, are dwarfed by their similarities.

Often we become aware of important issues only if we spend an inordinate amount of time seeking information and studying matters, time few of us have. If important issues affect our everyday lives, perhaps we make a greater effort. Ultimately, however, the prevailing myth that political scientists call political participation is flagrantly headed to benefit those who are more fortunate. Few are educated in the realities of power. To many, power is an abstraction, viewed as a product to be sold, the legitimization of greed, and the accumulation of worldly goods.

Not only are we told that our political tools are truncated and channeled, but ultimately we are informed that significant change is beyond reasonable expectation. But politics is not restricted to the myths we are taught or to the image portrayed by the media. Opportunities for political action are plentiful. Indeed, as evidenced by the women's movement, even the personal is political. Opportunities for significant political action surround us. For example, if our children are not receiving an appropriate education, we can organize with other parents, teachers, and so on, and work together to improve the school. Such activity has greater political impact than one vote in a presidential election. By becoming involved in our children's schooling,

we may find ourselves confronting broader political issues refracted through the school, such as inappropriate funding, inadequate teaching, or racism. Organizing with other people may give us more than a sense of power; it may well give us power itself. Similar opportunities are present in other areas of our life, such as our work and our neighborhood. All such action is political. Thus we must question the assumption that our political participation is confined to electoral politics. By doing so, we come to see that our conception of politics has been safely packaged by our education, the media, and our political culture. A narrow concept of political action among have-nots is to the benefit of haves, for it is they who appreciate that political participation extends well beyond the voting booth; indeed, it is the kind of politics they practice and is connected to social policy.

One's fundamental conception of politics is a critical divide that separates haves from have-nots and that helps make the former the more influential group. Add to that haves' greater power and money, as well as their control of the media, public relations, and bureaucracies, and clearly the imbalance in power falls decisively in favor of haves. The temptation to believe we can do nothing, to become skeptics or cynics, or, even worse, to use our power against other have-nots may be alluring. Though an easy out, this temptation is just another myth. Because we may know love, friendship, justice, and freedom in our personal lives while not finding them in our social lives does not mean we should readily assume that such virtues are infantile and uncivilized—in short, that they must be changed given the demands of the real world. In a decent world, such virtues should be possible. Have-nots should seek power by reasserting the traditional meaning of politics.

The fact is that haves need have-nots; primarily they need their work. There simply are not enough haves to take over the duties of have-nots. Thus we have labor strikes, or the threat of strikes, whereby have-nots band together with the help of trade unions and other organizations in an attempt to force haves into making concessions, such as many of those found in the modern welfare state. Such concessions help to give have-nots a glimpse of power and wealth, and often are occasions around which have-nots can organize in meaningful ways.

Whether we believe that in the long run democracy, justice, and decency will prevail or that they are doomed does not discount that have-nots can participate in politics and in the formation of policy. What is needed for an intelligent politics of have-nots are work, dedicated thinking, action, and rationality. Hence, in the chapters that follow, social policy is examined in

its various guises in both the public sector and the private sector, where it has come to be increasingly, and significantly, located. After exploring examples of social policy, as well as the origins and effects of power and politics, it is my hope that an expanded definition of policy shall emerge. Although the welfare state as we have come to know it is diminishing, reasonable and decent politics and social policy are not dead. But neither are they inevitable. Indeed, social policy is under assault. The control of so much social policy by corporations and the corporocracy is an assault on have-nots by haves. Unfortunately, social policy can no longer be relied on to be beneficial for have-nots. And thus it is my hope that what follows will help the less powerful advance constructive and democratic changes in social policy.