

Citizen's Income *newsletter*

2020, issue 1

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ISSN 2633-4283

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Editorials

Citizen's Basic Income: a response to poverty

ATD Fourth World has published the results of its Understanding Poverty in all its Forms research project: an international project that is asking people in poverty what for them are its most important dimensions. A report has now been published on findings for the UK: <https://atd-uk.org/projects-campaigns/understanding-poverty/>. The list of dimensions of poverty experienced as most significant in the UK is as follows:

Systems, structures and policies: Economic, political and social structures can cause poverty.

Policy is operated in a way that disempowers. Systems designed to support people are not working in ways that people want. Systemic cuts in funds for needed services have exacerbated inequality.

Financial insecurity, financial exclusion and debt: Financial insecurity means not being able to satisfy your basic needs. Worrying about money every day causes huge stress and misery.

Damaged health and well-being: Poverty is bad for health and can shorten life. It has a negative impact on physical, emotional, mental and social well-being.

Stigma, blame and judgement: Misrepresentation about poverty in the UK and a lack of understanding lead to negative judgement, stigma and blame, which are deeply destructive of individuals and families. Prejudice and discrimination result in people in poverty feeling they are treated like lesser human beings.¹

Lack of control over choices: Poverty means a lack of control over choices and opportunities. Over time this can lead to increased social isolation and risk, as well as restricting people's social, educational and cultural potential. The lack of good options reduces people's control over their lives and traps people in repetitive cycles of hardship, disappointment and powerlessness. Lack of opportunity and choice increases risk and restricts options. Poverty is dehumanising.

Unrecognised struggles, skills and contributions: The wealth of experience and life skills people in poverty possess is not recognised enough. Too often, public discourse undervalues the contribution that people in poverty make to society and to their communities while facing the daily impact of poverty.

If our social security system were to be based on a Citizen's Basic Income,² then the list could be rewritten:

¹ For a history of the scapegoating of benefits recipients, and a discussion of recent peaks in such othering as 'scrounger' and 'shirker' rhetoric, see James Morrison, *Scroungers: Moral panics and media myths* (London: Zed Books).

² Illustrative Citizen's Basic Income schemes exist that could be introduced by making a small number of changes to our current tax and benefits system and without public expenditure from outside the current income tax and benefits system being

Systems, structures and policies: Economic, political and social structures can enhance wellbeing and standard of living. Policy can empower. Systems designed to support people can work in the way that people understand and want. Policy can reduce inequality.

Financial security, financial inclusion, and avoidance of debt: Financial security is essential for enabling people to meet basic needs. A secure layer of income would reduce stress and misery.

Enhanced health and well-being: Financial security is good for health and can lengthen life. It can enhance physical, emotional, mental and social well-being.

Avoidance of stigma, blame and judgement: Because everybody would receive a Citizen's Basic Income, no stigma would attach to it. There would be nothing to misrepresent. Because both those in wealthy households and those in households still in relative poverty would receive a Citizen's Basic Income, social cohesion would be enhanced. The levels of stigma, blame and judgement in society would be reduced.

Control over choices: Citizen's Basic Incomes would enhance people's choices and opportunities, leading to social inclusion, and to people being more able to meet their social, educational and cultural potential. Because additional earned income would result in more disposable income, people would be released from poverty traps, and because additional employment, training and relationship options would be available, people would have more control over their lives. Virtuous spirals of empowerment and opportunity would be the result. New opportunities and choices would reduce risks and deliver new options. The reduction in poverty would be humanising.

Recognition of struggles, skills and contributions: Citizen's Basic Income would recognise, encourage and value the many different contributions that people make through paid and unpaid work, through employment and self-employment, and through caring work, voluntary community work, cultural production, and so on, and would result in positive social evaluations of these many different kinds of work.

required. (<https://www.euromod.ac.uk/publications/static-microsimulation-research-citizen%E2%80%99s-basic-income-uk-personal-summary-and-further>) The two lists in this editorial reveal the significant difference that such a scheme could make.

The OECD reiterates previous flawed research on Citizen's Basic Income

The OECD's 2019 employment outlook publication, *The Future of Work*, is accompanied by a 'transition agenda'. The chapter 'Left on your own? Social protection when employment markets are in flux' contains a section on Citizen's Basic Income:

Moving towards greater universality through a form of basic income (BI) is an interesting proposal in this debate that has received considerable attention. No country has introduced a BI as a principal pillar of SP [social protection], however, and replacing large parts of existing support systems with a universal payment would be a major change. OECD simulations show that an unconditional payment to everyone at meaningful but fiscally realistic levels would require large tax rises as well as reductions in most current benefits, and would often not be an effective tool for reducing income poverty (OECD, 2017; Browne and Immervoll, 2017). Some disadvantaged groups would lose out when existing benefits are replaced by a BI, illustrating the downsides of SP without any form of targeting at all. In view of the immediate fiscal and distributional consequences of a fully comprehensive BI, reforms towards more universal income support would realistically need to be introduced gradually for specific groups (such as youth) or would need to be restricted in other ways. It would also require a parallel debate on how to finance a more equal sharing of the benefits of economic growth. From a broader economic-policy perspective, a downside of universal support is that, unlike out-of-work or needs-based benefits, it does not act as an automatic stabiliser: since it is paid regardless of income or employment status, spending levels do not go up during a downturn, and they do not fall during an upswing. A number of assumptions need to be questioned.

As we wrote when the OECD paper cited here was published in 2017:

The scheme envisaged would abolish tax allowances and 'most existing types of cash benefits', and would be revenue neutral. ... In its final section the paper does discuss the possibility of implementing a Basic Income scheme that leaves in place means-tested benefits and recalculates them to take into account each household's Basic Incomes and any changes in net earnings, but it then does no further work on

such an option. This is a pity, as to do so would have enabled the researchers to respond to many of their own hesitations about Basic Income. As we have shown, a scheme that retains and recalculates means-tested benefits could largely avoid losses for low-income households and could reduce poverty. What would be really helpful would be to see further research from the OECD on a wider variety of types of Basic Income scheme, including schemes that retain and recalculate means-tested benefits.

We might add that, as we have also shown, it is perfectly feasible to keep Income Tax rate rises to 3 percentage points.

It is a pity that the new OECD document repeats uncritically its previous flawed research project on Citizen's Basic Income, and that no further research on alternative schemes has been carried out.

In relation to the point about automatic stabilisers: It is of course true that means-tested benefits function as automatic stabilisers during economic downturns, and that Citizen's Basic Incomes do not. Unfortunately, the OECD has made a common mistake. It would never be means-tested benefits or Citizen's Basic Incomes on their own that would influence other economic factors: it would be the tax and benefits system as a whole that would do so. Any feasible Citizen's Basic Income scheme would retain and recalculate means-tested benefits, meaning that they would still be available as an economic stabiliser. And for a Citizen's Basic Income funded by changes to the existing tax and benefits system, the loss or reduction of the Income Tax Personal Allowance, and increased Income Tax rates, would mean that the Income Tax part of the system would act as more of a stabiliser. The overall stabilising effect of the system as a whole would therefore be much the same as it would have been before the implementation of the Citizen's Basic Income scheme.

References

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reflections', EUROMOD Working Paper EM13/19, Colchester: Institute to Social and Economic Research, <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/euromod/em13-19>

Citizen's Basic Income and social cohesion

A recent article in *Quillette*, 'Universal Basic Income and the threat of tyranny', by Shai Shapira,³ asks some interesting questions:

When we examine historical trends in politics and economics, we can spot a basic pattern: political rights are strongly correlated with economic participation. ... Societies where the state economy comes from natural resources, or other sources that require only a small, fixed number of people to defend or maintain them, tend to develop autocratic regimes with little concern for the welfare of their citizens. ...

What is the value of a non-working citizen in such a society? What motivation do the people in power have to keep supporting these citizens? ... Will the workers still be happy to finance them? ... Will working people accept a vote by non-working people to increase their universal basic income? ... More resources are not going to be enough to compensate people for working – they will also need a privileged political status.

A number of assumptions need to be questioned. The Alaska Permanent Fund dividend has increased employment levels, and not decreased them, which suggests that a Citizen's Basic Income wholly or partially funded from natural resources revenues would do so as well. If a Citizen's Basic Income scheme were to abolish or reduce existing means-tested benefits, then marginal deduction rates would fall, and there would be increased and not decreased incentives to seek employment and to establish new economic activity, which again suggests that employment levels would rise. And research shows that if people pay Income Tax then they are more likely to vote according to their convictions, so if a Citizen's Basic Income scheme were to be funded by abolishing or reducing the Income Tax Personal Allowance then more people would be paying Income Tax and more people would vote according to their convictions.

We can already see that far from a Citizen's Basic Income reducing lots of individuals' economic engagement with society, it would be likely to increase it in relation to both employment and voting

³ <https://quillette.com/2017/10/09/universal-basic-income-threat-tyranny/>

behaviour. It is true, as the article suggests, that a Citizen's Basic Income might provide people with more choices over their use of time, and it is possible, as the article also suggests, that some of that time might be employed for antisocial purposes. However, one of the reasons that civic and informal caring activity have suffered during the past few decades is that far too many people are working long and often unpredictable hours. A Citizen's Basic Income could enable a lot of households to reorganise their employment patterns, which in many cases could result in fewer employment hours. Civic and caring activity could benefit.

Precisely how unconditional incomes would change economic and social activity will be difficult to predict until a genuine Citizen's Basic Income scheme is implemented, but there is no reason to assume that the outcome will be unremittingly negative.

News

The volume of news in this edition of the Newsletter has required the articles to be shortened. Longer versions will be found on the website:
<https://citizensincome.org/news/>

The **Liverpool Echo** reports on the Liverpool mayor's interest in running a pilot project: 'Liverpool mayor Joe Anderson has given a pledge on Universal Basic Income as work to bring in the radical new policy moves closer. ... Advocates believe it could help to alleviate poverty, though trials of it have had mixed results in countries like Finland. ... Mayoral lead for fairness and equality Jane Corbett said her main concern about UBI was whether the city's most vulnerable would lose access to other financial support if the city took on a UBI trial. ... But Mayor Joe Anderson has said he would not accept any system of Universal Basic Income that cut other support for the city's most vulnerable. (<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/joe-anderson-makes-universal-basic-16651359>)

The **Institute for Policy Research** at the University of Bath has published a new report, *Basic Income, Automation, and Labour Market Change*, by Luke Martinelli: '... future trajectories of labour market change – and the roles of different aspects of technological change (automation, robotisation, digitalisation) therein – are highly uncertain. In this context, it is not clear how the case for a basic income will evolve. ... Public support for basic income may be an important indicator of political feasibility, but it also has limitations. Asking respondents for their

position on abstract welfare preferences is limiting because we do not know the strength of their convictions – if they would be willing to expend political capital or not – or if they are fully aware of the implications and trade-offs involved with their choice. In the case of basic income, of which respondents lack concrete examples, we would expect high level of 'non-attitudes' in survey responses. Awareness of trade-offs – specifically, the likely implications for tax rates and cuts to other welfare provisions – inevitably reduces support (Ipsos Mori, 2017). In any case, considering that over half the population are supportive of basic income in principle, political supply lags behind demand (Chrisp and Martinelli, 2019). It appears that political parties – or those which are serious contenders to take power, at least – take issues of implementation and affordability even more seriously than do the general public in decisions regarding concrete proposals for welfare reform.

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/basic-income-automation-and-labour-market-change/>

The *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice* has published an article by Rita Griffiths titled 'For better or for worse: does the UK means-tested social security system encourage partnership dissolution? ... findings strengthen the case in favour of reforming [Universal Credit] in ways which increase the financial independence of women and men who live together, or would like to. ... in England and Wales, alternative payment arrangements for couples remain at the discretion of a Department for Work and Pensions decision maker and only in proven situations of domestic abuse or serious financial mismanagement. UC thus sends deeply contradictory messages to women and couples who live together. That claiming UC can oblige one member of a couple to be financially dependent on the other, and subject to the consequences of his or her partner's behaviour, flies in the face of UC's stated policy aims of promoting self-reliance and supporting claimants from 'welfare dependence' to independence. If further inroads are to be made in terms of ensuring that means-tested social security benefits facilitate the economic empowerment of all claimants, addressing such fundamental contradictions will be key. (<https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/tpp/jpsj/pre-prints/content-jpsjd1900014r2>)

The think tank **Compass** is hosting a new UBI hub. Two staff members have now been appointed: Michael Pugh as Co-ordinator, and Cleo Goodman as Communications Officer. (<https://www.compassonline.org.uk/about/work-with->

us/coordinator-ubi-hub/) Further details of the hub's work will be published as soon as they are available.

Social Europe has published an article by Agnieszka Piasna about a new EU directive on irregular work. 'Constantly changing and erratic working hours have become a common experience for European workers. In fact, as many as one in three employees in the EU-28 reported having irregular working hours. Most common is a changing number of daily working hours (reported by 39 per cent of employees), not having fixed start and finishing times (33 per cent) and working hours that change on a weekly basis (31 per cent). And all these forms of irregular work have become more widespread in recent years. ... Irregular working hours have infamously materialised as zero-hours contracts—but also as on-demand work without guaranteed working hours, online labour platforms, voucher-based work or 'gig' economy work more broadly. The main concern with irregular working hours is that for workers they mean unstable earnings, insufficient work, little (if any) protection vis-à-vis the employer and an unpredictability which makes the planning of responsibilities outside work, such as caring for dependants, very difficult.' (<https://www.socialeurope.eu/better-working-conditions-more-predictable-work-the-new-eu-directive>)

Three of **Paul Spicker's** recent blog posts are relevant to the Citizen's Basic Income debate. In an article written on the 22nd September (<http://blog.spicker.uk/how-labour-might-rethink-its-social-security-policy/>) he summarises his contribution to a new book, in which he proposes the following reforms to social security benefits: '... Move away from means-testing, with greater reliance on contributory benefits and universal allowances. Rethink how things are done: aim to have benefits with simpler rules, fewer conditions, fewer personal adjustments and longer time scales. Secure benefits for disability to secure their financial status and their dignity. Protect the position of children in disrupted families by directing benefits to the child. Improve provision for the oldest pensioners. ... Protect people better during the interruption of earnings caused by sickness and unemployment. Separate benefits and employability provision; they are doing different things.'

On the same day, he wrote an article about Universal Credit (<http://blog.spicker.uk/somewhere-in-a-world-quite-unlike-our-own-universal-credit-is-working-brilliantly/>): '... The very belated Final Business Case claimed that UC will gain £24.5 bn in people choosing to work more, £10.5 bn in distributional improvements, and £9.1 billion in reduced fraud and

error. The National Audit Office has told us that "We cannot be certain that Universal Credit will ever be cheaper to administer than the benefits it replaces"; their 2018 report (<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rolling-out-Universal-Credit.pdf>) said that "the extended timescales and the cost of running Universal Credit compared to the benefits it replaces cause us to conclude that the project is not value for money now, and that its future value for money is unproven." We now know that the figure on fraud and error is wrong, and that Universal Credit has made fraud and error much worse; and "distributional improvements" don't save money, they move it to a different place. So the only possible saving could be by encouraging people into work, and given that only a very small proportion of claimants are continuously unemployed – the majority of claimants are too ill to work, carers, short-term unemployed or already working on low incomes – it isn't going to be anything like £24.5bn. If I had to guess, I would estimate the net gain, by comparison with the previous system, at something closer to zero.'

Subsequently, Paul Spicker wrote a blog post about the take-up of different kinds of benefits. 'The benefits with the best take-up – Child Benefit and State Pension – are simple to access, have few conditions and are delivered for the long term. The benefits with the worst (including e.g. Pension Credit and DLA/PIP) are complex, poorly understood and have several moving parts. While there is scope for greater automaticity, the key problem rests in the design of such benefits.' (<http://blog.spicker.uk/evidence-on-benefit-takeup/>).

The **Institute for Public Policy Research** has published a new report, *Social (in)security: Reforming the UK's social safety net*. 'The concept behind universal credit (UC) – that integrating working-age benefits would lead to a simpler, less bureaucratic system – was once supported by broad political consensus. However, the resulting policy and its implementation has alienated many, with universal credit's misplaced attempt to mimic the workplace through a monthly assessment and payment that bears no relation to the way those on low incomes are paid, and an array of design features that seem designed to punish rather than support. For too many, it is a tightrope over poverty, not a social safety net. ...' (<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/social-insecurity>).

Paul Spicker has published a review of the report. 'What's striking ... is that only one of [Universal Credit's] features – monthly payments, linked to monthly assessments – is integral to the design of the

benefit. All of the others have been tacked on, like decorations on a Xmas tree. But UC has other, built-in flaws – problems that exist because of what the benefit is. They include the attempt to lump disparate benefits together, with the effect that problems in one part can lead to catastrophic suspension of the whole; the dismantling of the support system for Housing Benefits; the unpredictable and fluctuating benefit entitlement, exacerbated by the idea that assessments relate to income now rather than historic income; the very idea of a taper, which means that people cannot know when they become entitled to a benefit and when they cease to be entitled – a recurring problem with Housing Benefit and Tax Credits; the obsession with entry or re-entry to work, when the vast majority of intended claimants will not be part of the labour market; the implications of the ‘work allowance’, set too low to allow for continuous contact, and; the idea that technology, rather than competent administration, can settle complex human problems. The IPPR are right to complain that this is “a tightrope over poverty, not a social safety net”. But they don’t go anything like far enough.’ (<http://blog.spicker.uk/more-on-the-problems-of-universal-credit/>)

Nicolas Duvoux and Adrien Papuchon have written a new working paper for the **International Inequalities Institute** at the London School of Economics, *Subjective Poverty as perceived lasting social insecurity: Lessons from a French survey on poverty, inequality and the welfare state (2015-2018)*. ‘Our results demonstrate that class, family composition and income instability matter as determinants of subjective poverty. The key feature of the group of those who consider themselves as poor is a degraded attitude towards their own future. ... our direct indicator of subjective poverty reveals the close relationship between current instability and inability to project positively in the future, a critical social norm, yet far from being equally accessible to members of all social groups in Western societies. (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Inequalities/Assets/Documents/Working-Papers/III-Working-paper-36-Duvoux-Papuchon.pdf>)

Jonny Ross-Tatam has written an article for the **Royal Society of Arts** about debate about Citizen’s Basic Income in the north of England. ‘Basic Income North, a new network, was recently established to support the growing Basic Income movement in the north of the UK. The aim is to build on the great work that has already been done in promoting the Basic Income conversation across the north, by helping coordinate more events and using our networks to create further connections and

opportunities.

(<https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/rsa-blogs/2019/10/basic-income-north>)

Palgrave Macmillan has published the *Palgrave International Handbook of Basic Income*. The publisher says this about the book: ‘Offers a comprehensive discussion of all the important aspects of the Basic Income debate for academics, policymakers and interested individuals; Compares Pilot Projects and Basic Income experiments across the world, addressing case studies from Canada and the USA, Brazil, Iran, Namibia, India, Switzerland, Finland and The Netherlands; Assesses the differing effects of Basic Income schemes and Basic Income in 5 key areas: employment market effects, social effects, economic effects, ecological effects and gender effect. (<https://www.palgrave.com/gb/book/9783030236137>) . A review will follow.

In March, the **New Economics Foundation** published a report that recommended that a cash payment, a Weekly National Allowance (WNA), should replace the Income Tax Personal Allowance. The WNA was close to being a Citizen’s Basic Income. (<https://citizensincome.org/book-reviews/new-economics-foundation-nothing-personal-replacing-the-personal-tax-allowance-with-a-weekly-national-allowance/>). Alfie Stirling, Sarah Arnold and Lukasz Krebel have now published new research that shows how the WNA would relate to Universal Credit. (<https://neweconomics.org/2019/11/a-radically-different-social-security-system>).

On the 26th November, the **London School of Economics** held an event about Citizen’s Basic Income and Universal Basic Services. Speakers were Louise Haagh, Professor of Politics at the University of York, on Citizen’s Basic Income, and Anna Coote, of the New Economics Foundation, on Universal Basic Services. A podcast is available: <https://citizensincome.org/news/lse-event-about-universal-basic-income-and-universal-basic-services/>

Michael Reiss has issued three educational videos that argue for a Citizen’s Basic Income paid for by charging rent on the value of land. The first video contains a thought experiment that reveals how today’s land ownership structure has evolved; the second pursues the thought experiment to ask how things might have been different; and the third discusses some of the difficulties involved in making the transition from the way things are to the way they might be. The three videos can be accessed via <https://citizensincome.org/news/new-videos-on-land->

rent-as-a-means-of-paying-for-a-citizens-basic-income/

An article by Jane Millar and Peter Whiteford has won the 2019 Best Paper Prize of the **Foundation for International Studies on Social Security (FISS)** sponsored by the Journal of Poverty and Social Justice. The title of the article is 'Timing it right or timing it wrong: how should income-tested benefits deal with changes in circumstances?' 'This article examines the challenges in designing income-tested benefits for people of working age. This is particularly difficult in the context of changing patterns of work and volatility in earnings and income. Matching benefits to needs requires timely assessment and payment. We compare the treatment of timing issues in the working-age welfare systems of the United Kingdom and Australia. The article discusses how these different but similar systems deal with the timing of income receipt and benefit adjustment, problems of overpayment and debt, and draws out some lessons for the design of income-tested provisions.' Paul Spicker has published a comment on the article: '... The benefits that work best, like pensions and Child Benefit, are long-term. ... [means-tested] systems are designed by those who are convinced that the problems can always be resolved by the technology, when we all know they can't. We need to smooth things down, to ask only for information that makes sense to claimants, and to stabilise income. In other words, we need to be less responsive, not more.' (<https://citizensincome.org/news/prize-winning-article-on-income-tested-benefits/>)

Several recent papers from the **Centre for Economic Performance** at the London School of Economics are relevant to the Citizen's Basic Income debate. 'Childhood Circumstances and Young Adult Outcomes: The Role of Mothers' Financial Problems, by Andrew E. Clark, Conchita D'Ambrosio and Marta Barazzetta: 'We ... show that early childhood financial problems are associated with worse adolescent cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes, controlling for both income and a set of standard variables, and in value added models controlling for children's earlier age-5 outcomes. The estimated effect of financial problems is almost always larger in size than that of income.' (<http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1609.pdf>).

'Willing to Pay for Security: A Discrete Choice Experiment to Analyse Labour Supply Preferences', by Nikhil Datta. '... the majority of the population prefer characteristics associated with traditional employee-employer relationships, and this preference holds even when analysing just the sub-sample of

those in atypical work arrangements. ... Rather than suggesting that labour supply preferences have contributed to the increase in atypical work arrangements, I find that the changing nature of work is likely to have significant negative welfare implications for many workers.' (<http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1632.pdf>)

'Individual Consequences of Occupational Decline', by Per-Anders Edin, Tiernan Evans, Georg Graetz, Sofia Hernnäs, and Guy Michaels. '... We find that, compared to similar workers, those facing occupational decline lost about 2-5 percent of mean cumulative earnings from 1986-2013. But workers at the bottom of their occupations' initial earnings distributions suffered considerably larger losses. These earnings losses are partly accounted for by reduced employment, and increased unemployment and retraining.' (<http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1632.pdf>)

'Between Communism and Capitalism: Long-Term Inequality in Poland, 1892-2015', by Pawel Bukowski and Filip Novokmet. '... the strong rise in inequality in the 2000s was driven solely by the increase in top capital incomes, which is likely related to current globalization forces. Yet overall, the unique Polish inequality history speaks about the central role of policies and institutions in shaping inequality in the long run.' (<http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1628.pdf>)

Conferences

Videos from the **2019 BIEN Congress** in Hyderabad, India, are now available: (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvSpOyLCAJVvfHP78BffBRA>).

The **2020 BIEN Congress** will be held in Brisbane, Australia, from the 28th to the 30th September 2020. A call for papers has been issued: <https://www.bien2020.com/>

Main article

General Election manifestos

Two of the 2019 General Election manifestos mentioned Citizen's Basic Income, and the Citizen's Basic Income Trust commented as follows:

The Citizen's Basic Income Trust's review of the Green Party manifesto's section on Universal Basic Income

The Green Party's manifesto for the 2019 General Election proposes a Universal Basic Income (UBI), because it believes that 'financial security is a key building block of a good society. No one currently in receipt of benefits will be worse off under UBI – and many will be much better off' (p. 26). The manifesto states that the adult rate of UBI will be £89 per week, and that 'someone earning the minimum wage and working 37.5 hours a week would see their income increase by 10 to 15% through UBI'. The UBI would be phased in; it would be 'sufficient to cover an adult's basic needs' (p. 26); and it would replace most existing social security benefits. The pensioner rate would be £178 per week. Disabled people would receive a 'supplement to the UBI, as will lone parents and lone pensioners ... Families with an income of under £50,000 per year will receive an additional supplement of £70 per week for each of their first two children and a further £50 per week for each additional child. Families with an income of over £50,000 per year will receive smaller additional supplements per child, with the amount decreasing further the more a family earns' (p. 27). Housing Benefit will continue for those already on it.

The funding would be provided by the Green Party's proposed carbon tax (p. 27) and by removing the Income Tax Personal Allowance (p. 73).

(<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/Elections/Green%20Party%20Manifesto%202019.pdf>)

CBIT's commentary

The Citizen's Basic Income Trust recognises the Green Party's proposal as a significant contribution to the Citizen's Basic Income debate. The plan, once phased in, would fulfil the main aim of the proposal: to provide a secure layer of income on which individuals and families could build. The plan would offer better employment incentives for people currently on means-tested benefits, because the UBI would not be reduced as earnings rose; and the fact that everyone would receive a UBI would contribute to social cohesion.

Manifestos are inevitably condensed summaries of often complex proposals, and there are issues on which further detail would be welcome:

A Universal Basic Income is an income of the same amount for everyone of the same age: so, paying more to pensioners than to working age adults is entirely legitimate, but any other differentiation would not be. If a genuine UBI is to be paid, then the

additions for people with disabilities, for lone parents, and for lone pensioners, will have to be separate benefit systems, separately administered and delivered.

The child supplements are income-tested, and so cannot be called UBIs. It would be preferable to pay entirely unconditional child supplements – for after all, the wealthier families to whom the proposed taper would apply would be paying more tax than they would be receiving in child supplements. If for some reason this route cannot be taken, then the child supplements should become entirely separate benefits, and not attached to the UBI.

The manifesto claims that £89 per week would be sufficient to cover an adult's basic needs (p. 26), but £89 per week is far less than the EU's poverty benchmark of £148 per week for 2019-20.

The manifesto suggests that the system proposed would be simpler than the current system. The UBI will be simple to understand and to administer if the additions become separate benefits, but if they do not then it will not be. And similarly, only if the child supplements are not reduced as household income rises can the proposal be simple to administer. The virtue of a genuine Universal Basic Income is that it needs no active administration. This aim will be met if the various additions are separate benefits and the child supplements are the same for all children.

It is not clear to what extent the proposal has been tested for financial feasibility, nor have we been shown the evidence for the claim that no-one currently in receipt of benefits will be worse off. They might be. They will no longer be receiving an Income Tax Personal Allowance if they are employed, so they will be paying more Income Tax; they will no longer be receiving Working Tax Credits, Child Tax Credits, or Universal Credit; and their fuel bills will be higher because of the new Carbon Tax. It is possible that nobody currently receiving benefits would be worse off: but it is also possible that the scheme as a whole could prove to be regressive. Only microsimulation testing would be able to tell us whether there would be losers in the original lower gross income deciles, and how large any losses might be. Such testing would be complicated because the requirement to add a supplement or new benefit for lone parents and pensioners would be difficult to operationalise (which of course suggests that it would be intrusive and onerous to administer): but the attempt should be made. The absence of even a small Income Tax Personal Allowance means that the first £1 of income received by each person will be subject to income tax,

leading to extra burdens on both taxpayer and the HMRC.

The verdict: It would take only a few changes to turn the Green Party's proposal into a genuine Universal Basic Income; and if microsimulation testing were to show that the amended scheme would not impose significant numbers of significant losses on low income households, then the amended manifesto proposal would be an important addition to the set of feasible illustrative Universal Basic Income schemes.

The Labour Party's manifesto for the 2019 General Election

The Labour Party manifesto for the 2019 General Election contains a single mention of 'Universal Basic Income'. The section of the manifesto on 'work' stated that

Labour will eradicate in-work poverty in our first term by tackling the structural causes of poverty and inequality, such as low pay and high living costs, while raising the floor provided by our social safety net. ... And we will explore other innovative ways of responding to low pay, including a pilot of Universal Basic Income. (pp. 59-60)

The section on 'social security' contained this:

Labour will scrap UC [Universal Credit]. We will immediately stop moving people onto it and design an alternative system that treats people with dignity and respect. Our ambition in designing this system will be to end poverty by guaranteeing a minimum standard of living.

We will start developing this system immediately. But ... major policy change can't be delivered overnight, especially when people's lives depend on it. So we will also implement an emergency package of reforms to mitigate some of the worst features of UC while we develop our replacement system. (p. 73)

(<https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Real-Change-Labour-Manifesto-2019.pdf>)

The Trust's article drew readers' attention to the following:

- A review of a report on the Scottish pilot project feasibility study (<https://citizensincome.org/news/a-new-report-on-the-scottish-pilot-project-feasibility-study/>);
- an article on the challenges facing a UK pilot project ([https://citizensincome.org/research-](https://citizensincome.org/research-analysis/would-a-citizens-basic-income-pilot-project-in-the-uk-be-possible/)

[analysis/would-a-citizens-basic-income-pilot-project-in-the-uk-be-possible/](https://citizensincome.org/research-analysis/would-a-citizens-basic-income-pilot-project-in-the-uk-be-possible/));

- microsimulation research on a financially feasible pilot project for the UK (<https://citizensincome.org/research-analysis/updated-microsimulation-research-results-and-responses-to-questions/#2>)

The following note was published with the articles about both the Labour Party and the Green Party manifestos: The Citizen's Basic Income Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered charity number 1171533. Its object is 'to advance public education about the economic and social advantages and feasibilities of a Citizen's Basic Income: that is, an unconditional, automatic and nonwithdrawable income paid to every individual as a right of citizenship'. The Trust is not aligned to any political parties, and it neither endorses nor declines to endorse any particular Citizen's Basic Income proposals published by political parties. Its publication of information about Citizen's Basic Income proposals published in political party manifestos is in fulfilment of its educational charitable object. Anne Miller, Chair; Dr. Malcolm Torry, Director

In relation to the General Election, the **Centre for Welfare Reform** published a statement of support for Citizen's Basic Income:

Community groups working to advance social justice and promote the testing of Universal Basic Income (UBI) have welcomed the growing number of political parties now expressing support for the idea: ... Whatever the results of the general election we, the undersigned, will continue to work together to build a wider community understanding of the potential benefits of basic income. We encourage everyone to find out more and to get involved in this movement for justice and freedom. ...

(<https://www.centreforwelfareform.org/news/community-grto-pilot-ubi/00481.html>)

Reviews

Louise Haagh, *The Case for Universal Basic Income*, Polity Press, 2019, x + 217 pp, 1 5095 2296 5, pbk, £9.99

Louise Haagh has been a prolific writer about Universal Basic Income (UBI) in the past few years, and has conducted important research (on the punitive and divisive nature of present tax-benefit

regimes) which informs her publications. In 'The Case for Universal Basic Income' she draws these studies together, to produce a powerful and comprehensive analysis of the current situation.

She starts with an account of the way in which post-war welfare states have been undermined by low pay and precarious employment, enforced by coercive authorities. To counter this, UBI is needed as the centrepiece of a drive for 'democratic reconstruction', building 'individual capabilities ... and co-operative capabilities' (p.3). This will allow other forms of institution-building, on a foundation of democratic equality, based on equal interests in existential security.

So the originality of her case for UBI is that, in overcoming the perils of a fractured labour market in terms of individual security, it also enables the 'democratisation of the economy as a whole' (p.15). Here she transcends the case for basic security made by Guy Standing (2017), and that for freedom to choose diverse life styles by Philippe Van Parijs and Yannick Vanderborght (2017), to argue a case for human development and social equality, and 'a more robust stance on governing the economy developmentally', giving 'a more independence-respecting' security for all (p.17).

This implies that Basic Income 'is not a form of justice in itself', but is defended in terms of a 'human development ethics rather than distributive ethics' (p.37). In this respect, UBI is different from capital grants, which do not necessarily confer security or alter the dynamic of the whole economy (p.38).

Her humanist perspective on democracy emphasises individuals' dependence on social conditions over time and in relation to others, giving the concepts of autonomy and choice developmental and social components. In this way, UBI contributes to potential for development regulation and planning (pp. 41-2), as parts of measures to support outcomes such as good health and occupational careers.

These arguments are strongly underpinned by her research on the punitive use of sanctions against claimants of means-tested social assistance and tax credits who are deemed to have failed to take opportunities for employment or increased earnings. The use of these has rapidly risen in many Western states since the financial crash of 2008; in the USA, Italy and Ireland they can lead to permanent disqualification. They have been applied especially savagely in the UK, where there is some evidence that they may have contributed to claimants' deaths, as well as homelessness (pp. 25-7).

All these aspects of the case for UBI are developed throughout the book. In her conclusion chapter, she warns against positioning UBI as 'a singular answer to the insecurities inherent in globalisation'; it is more appropriately 'a contribution to establishing human development justice' (p.148).

This book is a very valuable, carefully-argued contribution to the newly-invigorated debate about UBI, and should be read by everyone interested in the subject.

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References:

- Standing, G. (2017), 'Basic Income', Harmondsworth: Penguin.
 Van Parijs, P. and Vanderborght, Y. (2017), 'Basic Income', Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Burkhard Wehner, *Universal Basic Income and the Reshaping of Democracy: Towards a Citizen's Stipend in a new political order*, Springer, 2019, vi + 61 pp, pbk, 3 030 05827 2, £44.99

This sixty-one page essay on Citizen's Basic Income sets out from the presupposition that 'the questions whether, when, where, and how a universal basic income could eventually be put into political practice have played a minor role in this discussion' (p. 1). Readers of the Citizen's Basic Income Trust's own output on the feasibility and implementation of Citizen's Basic Income, and of the vast amount of research literature on the same topics reviewed on its website, will know that this is not true of the UK. As all of the references in this book, apart from one reference to John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, are to Wehner's own publications, and those publications are nearly as short on references as this one, it is somewhat difficult to know what he has read. But it would appear from the sentence quoted above, and from much else in this book, that his knowledge of the now voluminous literature on Citizen's Basic Income is somewhat limited, and certainly does not extend to the significant amount of research material produced in the UK. Statements such as '... most defenders of basic income do not tend to be very specific regarding how it would be financed' (p. 4) and 'the present debate has failed to make clear the winners and losers under an unconditional basic income regime ...' (p. 4) make it even clearer that his knowledge of the Citizen's Basic Income debate globally is minimal, and that his knowledge of the

UK's debate is nonexistent. A visit to a BIEN annual congress would help.

We can agree with much of what Wehner says about the political difficulties of implementing a Citizen's Basic Income scheme, and with his sense that some of those advocating for a Citizen's Basic Income are somewhat unrealistic about the kinds of Citizen's Basic Income scheme that might be possible in the current social and economic context. But whether his own suggestion that governments should legislate for a Citizen's Basic Income for a generation yet unborn, rather than for this one, is any more realistic, the reader will have to judge. (Although interestingly a realistic proposal for a Citizen's Basic Income for a single year young adult cohort that they then keep as they grow older, with the same age cohort the next year receiving a Citizen's Basic Income and keeping it, and so on, is not a million miles from Wehner's suggestion, and is an option on which detailed research has already been done (<https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/euromod/em12-17>)).

Wehner's arguments for the desirability of Citizen's Basic Income, his responses to objections to it, and his comments on pilot studies, are often well expressed, but all of them can be found elsewhere. Again there are no references, and there should have been. The proposals in chapter 8 for 'Basic Income states', parallel to existing states and with different borders, rather departs from Wehner's own insistence on feasibility.

The book feels a bit like a rather long master's degree dissertation: but unfortunately if it were one, then it would fail for being without a literature review and almost entirely devoid of references. Someone who knew nothing of the existing Citizen's Basic Income literature might benefit from reading it: but they would be better advised to turn instead to Standing's *Basic Income* or to one of the many other introductory texts on the subject, particularly as the price of this short book is so high. Anyone with any acquaintance at all with the existing Citizen's Basic Income literature would have no need to read the book. It is difficult to see why Springer published it.

The publisher's website describes Wehner as 'an independent scholar and theorist in economics and political science. He has developed alternative theories and political concepts of democracy, social and monetary policy, and the labor market. He also writes fiction on related subjects.' Quite so. He should become rather less independent, should engage with the global Citizen's Basic Income scholarship community, should acquaint himself with

the literature, and should then ask where he can make a useful contribution.

Lynne Pettinger, *What's Wrong with Work?* Policy Press, 2019, x + 230 pp, 1 4473 4008 9, pbk, £12.99

Work is 'what gets done to make life possible' (p. 5), and it is the diversity of this work that Pettinger's book is all about.

In the first chapter, the author understands the context of work in relation to 'environmental catastrophe, seemingly unstoppable technological change, ... and unstable, unpredictable everyday life', and also in relation to what she calls 'capitalocentrism' (p. 8), by which she means explanations that only take account of economic realities. For the author, the economy is not a given, but is something that we create, and a disordered capitalism is only part of it.

Chapter 2 shows how today's 'work as production' has evolved, with capitalism evolving in tandem with colonialization; and chapter 5 shows how neoliberal ideology has driven today's flexibilisation and precarity. Chapter 3 relativises the 'four industrial revolutions' narrative by recognising the 'deleted labour and hidden work' - caring work, rubbish collection, the slow science that is submerged by narratives centred on individual geniuses, and so on - that constitutes large parts of the world's economies. Pettinger makes the hidden work visible, shows that 'gig' work is far from new, and also shows how private sector involvement in public services changes the character of public sector governance work and so can be counterproductive in the longer term. Chapter 4 understands work as social and cultural encounters that change human and non-human material realities, and questions the notion of dignity as autonomy on the basis that work is always relational.

Chapter 6 explores informal work, and how the many different kinds of work are intimately connected with each other: and here in particular we find a recognition of the diversity of different kinds of work that Pettinger lists at the beginning of her book: 'paid work ... the informal economy ... care work, provisioning work, informal exchange of home-produced goods ... voluntary work and domestic work ... forced work and slavery, prison labour and welfare-to-work ... co-creation attached to leisure and lifestyle activities ... gig work and forced self-employment ...' (p. 5).

In chapter 7, Pettinger explores the fact that work creates new realities, both for the worker and for much else: and, in particular, that work creates new

kinds of work, as when work on new technology destroys, changes, and creates work.

Chapter 8 explores some of the ethical complexities related to the green economy (- for instance, in relation to the extraction of the minerals needed to make solar panels); and the final chapter descends into a somewhat chaotic list of some of the current problems and complexities of paid employment.

There is far more in this book than can be expressed in a short review: just as there is far more to work than any simple definition can encapsulate. The book is full of detailed evidence and of examples from everyday life: but clear definition is sometimes lacking - for instance, the word 'economy' is used somewhat flexibly throughout the book, and it might have been helpful to have provided a clear definition at the beginning of the book, and to have included the word in the index. Pettinger sometimes struggles to organise her material into coherent chapters: but that is largely a symptom of the complexity of the topic, and how, as Pettinger shows, work is highly diverse, and the many different kinds of work are complicatedly interconnected.

The lesson to take away from this book is that any narrative simplifies and excludes, so we need to seek out the less told elements of both the history and the present situation if we are to ask and answer relevant questions. If this mostly comprehensive book has left an element of the story untold, then it is the part of the story about incomes: earned incomes, social security benefits, taxation, and so on. These financial realities are intimately related to the many different kinds of work that Pettinger discusses, and to the many elements of daily life that she explores. It is particularly difficult to understand paid work and the effect of its increasing flexibilisation and precarity on workers and their families without an understanding of how earned incomes are becoming flexible and precarious and how tax and benefits systems are failing to cope with that. It is also difficult to understand voluntary work and care work without studying the ways in which earned and benefits incomes are distributed within and between households. Perhaps a second book from this highly capable researcher and author might be able to tackle this major remaining issue.

James Midgley, Rebecca Surender and Laura Alfors (eds), *Handbook of Social Policy and Development*, Edward Elgar, 2019, xiii + 486 pp, hbk, 1 78536 842 4, £155

The eBook version is priced from £36 from Google Play, ebooks.com and other eBook vendors, while in print the book can be ordered from the Edward Elgar Publishing website

The recent development of social security systems of various kinds in countries that previously had either no such provisions or very rudimentary ones has generated interest in the characteristics and outcomes of such systems: hence both the writing and the importance of this handbook, which combines the methods and resources of social policy and development studies to offer an overview of the current state of welfare states in developing countries.

The first part of the book is theoretical and historical. In chapter 1, Midgley charts the development of both social policy and development studies as academic disciplines, and reviews the history of the academic study of social welfare in developing countries. In chapter 2, Surender finds that economic development and social development are now regarded as complementary, and she charts both the divergences and convergences between developing and more developed countries in relation to social policy, and the divergences within the global south.

The second part of the book studies key issues and debates. Chapter 3 finds that the discipline of social policy can help us to understand the practical outcomes of social movements; chapter 4 finds that cash transfers have benefited women, but that more needs to be done to improve gender relations; chapter 5 compares global social policy and its institutions with national social policy and its institutions, and finds that national development benefits from global legislation and policy being incorporated into national law and policy; chapter 6 compares the UN Social Development Goals with the previous Millennium Development Goals and finds that universalism is a constant theme; and in chapter 7, Hartley Dean discusses the emergence of the human rights and social rights traditions, finds that engagement between rights-based approaches, mainly developed in the global north, and a social development model found mainly in the global south, has resulted in the social policy discipline paying attention to human rights as well as to social rights, and argues that social policy needs to engage with a variety of understandings of the role of human rights.

Chapters 8 and 9 tackle urban and rural development respectively; chapter 10 argues that environmental sustainability and social development can be complementary aims; chapter 11 discusses security and development, particularly in relation to Syrian women refugees; and chapter 12 discusses the role of regional bodies in development and social policy. Chapter 13 asks that both development studies and social policy should engage with the increasingly precarious character of the employment market; and chapter 14 asks how social protection mechanisms should evolve in a context of changing employment markets.

The third part of the book focuses on particular policy areas. Chapter 15 finds that healthcare policy is taking universalism seriously, but needs to do more; chapter 16 calls for greater equity in educational provision; and chapter 17 suggests that states should encourage home ownership. Chapter 18 reviews social insurance benefits, and particularly pensions, and resists the privatization of social insurance; chapter 19 studies diverse means-tested social assistance policies; and chapter 20 concentrates on conditional cash transfers. Chapter 21 studies social work; chapter 22 financial inclusion; chapter 23 community development; and chapter 24 the role of non-governmental organisations.

Chapter 10 describes 'Basic Income' as for 'the marginalized share of population', and suggests that it 'may well lead to seriously dividing our societies into a two-class system: those that participate in the production processes and those that do not' (p. 196). The opposite would be the case. First of all, Basic Income is for everyone, not just for the marginalised: and secondly, for that reason, and because it would not be withdrawn as other income rose, it would encourage engagement in productive processes and certainly not discourage it. Chapter 19 suggests that means-tested benefits 'are similar to proposals for a universal basic income which guarantee a minimum income for all' (p. 363): again a misunderstanding. Universal Basic Income is not means-tested, and does not guarantee a minimum income, as means-tested benefits do. Rather, it provides the same income to everyone of the same age: a totally different concept. The same mistakes are repeated at some length later in the chapter. Neither the Namibian nor the Indian Basic Income pilot projects are mentioned. If ever there is a second edition of the handbook then the authors of chapters 10 and 19 might wish to extend their literature reviews and revisit what they say about Basic Income.

On p. 80, 'unconditional' on line 10 should read 'conditional': a significant difference.

A conclusion drawn by the editors, and explained in the introduction, is that the variance between global north and global south countries is becoming smaller, which means that conceptual frameworks developed in the north for studying welfare states are increasingly relevant to the global south, and global south and global north countries have much to learn from each other. This conclusion is borne out by the chapters of the book.

How social security and other social policy is evolving in developing countries is a vital field of study, so this is an important book. And it really is a 'handbook': comprehensive, accessible, well-researched, and accurate (on the whole). It will be an important reference work for anyone involved in development, development studies, and social policy, with that term understood as both a field of activity and a field of study.

Stein Kuhnle, Per Selle and Sven E.O. Hort (eds), *Globalizing Welfare: An evolving Asian-European dialogue*, Edward Elgar, 2019, xii + 350 pp, hbk, 1 78897 583 4, £105

'The welfare state is essentially a European invention' (p. 1). Well, yes and no. Early versions can be found in ancient Israel, in India and Rome two millennia ago, in seventh century BCE Islamic law, and so on. The modern European welfare state is of course a European invention: and what this book convincingly shows is that the modern European welfare state is diverse; that it has now globalized; that there is now considerable global diversity; and that similar debates relating to ageing populations, welfare state sustainability, and so on, are now global as well. The aim of this well-researched book is to contribute to a dialogue between European and Asian welfare states. It does this by surveying welfare state developments in (South) Korea, China, Hong Kong, Japan, the Nordic countries, and Germany, and then adding chapters on more general themes.

Following an introductory chapter, chapter 2 studies South Korea's slow transition towards a more universal welfare state (- see below on contributors' diverse uses of the word 'universal'). Unfortunately, because the chapter concentrates on central government activity to the exclusion of more local initiatives, it misses the important Seongnam unconditional youth dividend for a single age cohort, and the current proposal to extend this initiative to the

whole province of Gyeonggi.⁴ Chapters 3 and 4 study the development of the Chinese welfare state, compare it with that of the Nordic states, and find that China exhibits 'moderate universalism'. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the more neo-liberal trajectories of Hong Kong and Japan; and chapter 7 studies welfare states in Denmark, Japan and China in relation to the role of women, and finds that in all of them women remain the main caregivers in the domestic sphere.

In the second part of the book, chapter 9 locates the stability of the Nordic welfare state in the idea of the state as a society; and chapter 10 finds that globalisation is not necessarily a threat to the Nordic welfare state, but that the integration of refugees into the workforce has been challenging. Chapter 11 discusses Nordic welfare states' attempts to institutionalise gender equality in a context of a freedom of choice agenda and diverse and shifting social forces related to the family. Chapter 12 studies childcare provision in Denmark, and chapter 13 finds shifting emphases on universalism, reciprocity and targeting in relation to pensions in Nordic states. Chapters 14 and 15 discuss the role of the voluntary sector in Germany and Norway respectively: and it might have been helpful to have constructed a separate section in the book so that these two chapters and the current chapter 8, a study of the increasingly commercial orientation of non-profit organisations in Japan, might have been grouped together.

The third part of the book tackles more general welfare state themes, and here the book ranges more widely than the Nordic states and East Asia. Chapter 16 discusses the ways in which welfare states have and have not addressed broader gender inequalities; and chapter 17 takes Belarus as a case study of an 'authoritarian-populist' welfare state - although how the authors can conclude that the social insurance and local social assistance systems of Belarus constitute a 'distorted universal basic income laboratory' (p. 296) is somewhat difficult to fathom. Chapter 18 explores the paradox that egalitarian policies are good for everyone, but are resisted across society, and suggests that social policy framed as 'social investment' might alleviate the problem; and chapter 19 asks about the relationships between inequalities, welfare policies, and right-wing populism.

It might have been helpful if such terms as 'populism' and 'universal/universalism', which appear frequently in the book, had been clearly defined by the editors, and if those definitions had

been referenced and adhered to by the contributors. The former sometimes means right-wing populism, and sometimes simply popular, and the latter sometimes means unconditional provision for every resident, and sometimes a scheme that in principle covers every resident but does not necessarily benefit everyone, or everyone in the same way.

The editors conclude that common challenges include ageing populations, migration, labour market changes, changes in the role of the family, changing relationships between government, market, and third sector organisations, growing inequality, political and social instability, and the rise of a populism that wishes to exclude a variety of social groups from welfare state provisions: all trends driven by globalisation.

The book is an important contribution to an important debate.

Kelly Bogue, *The Divisive State of Social Policy: The 'bedroom tax', austerity and housing insecurity*, Policy Press, 2019, viii + 195 pp, hbk, 1 4473 5056 9, £75

This book is an example of precisely the kind of subject for which qualitative research is so important. The only way to find out the effects of policy change is to ask the people who are most affected by it. The book is based on the research that the author undertook for her Ph.D. thesis on the effects of the 'bedroom tax': the reduction of Housing Benefit when families are living in accommodation with more bedrooms than they are deemed to need.

The first chapter begins with the financial crisis of 2007 and the UK government's response: austerity. The author lists changes to Housing Benefit, and to social security benefits generally, and then concentrates on the 'bedroom tax'. Many of those affected are older people whose children have left home. The problem is that in many areas there are no smaller properties for them to move into. The result has been poverty, debt, and stress.

Chapter 2 is historical, charting the beginnings and growth of the social housing sector; government financial support for housing costs; the implementation of 'right to buy'; and the subsequent neglect and stigmatisation of social housing. The chapter concludes with a description of the community in which Bogue conducted her interviews, and on the research methods that she employed. The following chapters present detailed case studies on the impact of the bedroom tax, but also reveal how other policy changes since 2010 have

⁴ Gunmin Yi, 'Korean Experiments', pp. 418-21 in the *Palgrave International Handbook of Basic Income*, edited by Malcolm Torry (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

also affected the lives of social housing tenants. Chapter 3 shows how the bedroom tax has undermined families' ability to cope on limited budgets, and that children are often seriously affected by the policy. Chapter 4 records the experiences of households that have attempted to downsize in order to avoid the new 'tax', and suggests that the bedroom tax is part of a policy shift from a state that protects the population's welfare to one that aims to construct a mobile and low wage workforce. Many of those most affected by the bedroom tax would never be able to earn a wage; coping with change has been made more difficult by reductions in local authority staffing levels and by the benefits system's 'digital by default'; and responsibility has effectively been shifted from the state to the household. The internalisation of a lack of security in one's home has become yet another characteristic of an already marginalised social class. Chapter 5 offers evidence of the shame and anger that people feel when they feel forced to leave their homes, particularly when ethnic minority families move into the homes that long-term residents have been forced to leave; and chapter 6 explores place attachment, and the fear that displacement can generate. A particularly important discussion can be found in chapter 5 about parallel divisions within the working class, between those who own their own homes and those in increasingly stigmatised social housing, and between the 'strivers' and the 'shirkers'. It is of course an interesting question as to whether this reinforced division is purposeful, and whether it is an electoral strategy.

Chapters 5 and 6 taken together reveal a social reality: If in a longstanding community people are forced by the bedroom tax to move home, then the entire community can feel as if it is being undermined by forces that it cannot control. Finally, chapter 7 reflects on the increasing precarity of housing, and the toxic mixture of fear and anger that that produces. This, along with the resentment caused by the increasing precarity of incomes and employment, is an important driver of the divisive state of politics in the UK.

Bogue's manages to be both objective in relation to the evidence gathered, the methods employed, and the conclusions drawn, and passionate in the cause of secure good quality housing. At the end she asks whether the UK is returning to the pre-public housing situation evidenced in the second chapter. If so, this will be a symptom of a more general regression, as the increasing severity of work and disability tests, and increasingly precarious incomes and employment, take us back to a pre-Beveridge welfare state. As Bogue says at the end of the

acknowledgements at the beginning of the book: 'I remain hopeful of a better future'.

Peter Sloman, *Transfer State: The idea of a guaranteed income and the politics of redistribution in modern Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019, xiv + 302 pp, 0 19 881326 2, hbk, £65

Peter Sloman's aim in this thoroughly researched book is to 'illuminate a neglected dimension of British social thought, and help explain the enduring appeal of ... providing an income floor for citizens through cash transfers' (p. v). What then evolves might best be described as a twisted rope that extends from 1918 to 2019, with strands that we might call 'government policy on income transfers', 'unconditional income proposals', and 'other income transfer proposals'. To read the book is to watch the three strands of the rope wind together through a period of substantial social, economic and political change.

Readers should begin with the text box on page 9 so that they know how Sloman is using the terms 'Universal Basic Income', 'Negative Income Tax', 'Tax Credit', and 'Participation Income' (the definitions of which cohere with normal usage). We shall return to the concept of a 'guaranteed income', also mentioned in the text box later in this review.

The introductory chapter discusses the recent explosion of interest in Basic Income, and then introduces the main subject of the book: 'how the idea of a guaranteed minimum income has shaped the politics of the welfare state in Britain over the past century' (p. 5). Snapshots of the history of guaranteed income ideas in the UK then intertwine with elements of the global Basic Income history, always in the context of the social and economic history of the time: a constant and most welcome characteristic of the entire book. Sloman identifies the shift from social insurance to means-tested payments during the 1970s as constituting the UK as a 'transfer state', and as a significant reshaping of the relationships between the state, citizens, and society.

Chapter 2 charts changing attitudes to the redistribution of income since the eighteenth century; chapter 3 describes a number of proposals for Basic Income and similar mechanisms made between 1918 and 1939, and in particular Juliet Rhys-Williams' proposal for something that would have been a Basic Income if it had not been subject to a work test; chapter 4 most usefully explores the rather less well known discussions of Negative Income Tax proposals

in various contexts in the UK between 1955 and 1970; and chapter 5 discusses the Heath government's Tax Credit proposals (- real Tax Credits, and so rather like Negative Income Tax: not to be confused with the means-tested benefits that the New Labour government called 'Tax Credits'). Sloman ends the chapter with 'the Thatcher government ... expanding means-tested benefits for the working poor as a way of flanking and legitimizing free-market policies' (p. 143): the story of which is recounted in chapter 6.

Chapter 7 offers an account of how the New Labour government's 'Tax Credits' 'redistributed by stealth'; and chapter 8, 'A Crisis of the Transfer State?', charts the decline in both living standards and tax revenues since the financial crisis, the increasing Income Tax Personal Allowance, and the establishment of the so-called 'National Living Wage'. Chapter 9 is a history of the UK's Basic Income debate since the 1980s, again, and most usefully, in its social and economic context. Sloman charts a wave pattern within this relatively short period, with a period of increasing interest, followed by a period of relative marginalisation, and now a period of renewed interest, during which 'security of income' has become a dominant theme in the debate. Sloman evaluates illustrative Basic Income schemes and discusses problems with pilot projects. The concluding chapter explores ways in which Universal Credit might be reformed, and the cultural and political barriers to the implementation of a Basic Income.

The sentence that perhaps best characterises the approach of this most useful book is this: 'Bringing the ideational and public policy stories together ... focuses our attention both on the intellectual context in which policy is made and on the transmission and reception of ideas in political debate' (p. 21).

There are some terminological issues of which the reader might wish to be aware. The first relates to the word 'guarantee'. The text box on page 9 defines 'guaranteed income' as 'a level of income guaranteed to every individual or household, which may be universal or means-tested'. This is ambiguous. The first phrase looks as if it means 'a level of income below which the individual or household will not be allowed to fall', whereas the second phrase suggests that an income is to be granted by the state, and that that income might be means-tested.⁵ In most places

⁵ 'Universal' in the second phrase is also somewhat ambiguous. Does it mean that the income granted is unconditional: that is, the same amount for every individual – a Basic Income; or does it mean that the income is in principle for everyone, but not necessarily at the same level: which again might suggest means-

in the book – for instance, in relation to the 'income guarantee' for pensioners discussed on pages 104-109 - 'guarantee' terminology implies a level of disposable income below which a household or individual is not allowed to fall: so the first definition in the text box on page 9 should probably have read 'guaranteed income: a level of income guaranteed to every individual or household, which might be achieved by the payment of unconditional or means-tested benefits'. Elsewhere in the book the reader will find that such terms as 'guaranteed income', 'income guarantee', 'minimum income guarantee' and 'guaranteed minimum income' can be taken to mean either a level of disposable income below which the individual or household is not allowed to fall, or the payment of an unconditional or means-tested benefit. The reader should assume the former definition.

Unfortunately, the real problem is not that the word 'guarantee' creates ambiguity in the context of this book: it is rather that the use of the word in the book reflects similar ambiguous usage throughout the current debate on the reform of social security benefits. It might be helpful if the word 'guarantee' were to be banished from all future discussion of the reform of social security benefits.

A somewhat less serious issue relates to Sloman's use of the word 'transfers'. He normally means both means-tested and unconditional benefits (in connection with which the story of Family Allowance and Child Benefit might have been told in a more connected fashion): but social insurance benefits are also transfers. (Yes, there is a National Insurance Fund into which National Insurance Contributions are paid, and out of which are paid National Insurance Benefits and the costs of the National Health Service: but every year it has to be massively topped up by other taxation revenues.) And an interesting question: Do income tax allowances function as 'state transfers'?

But while such terminological issues are problematic, they do not detract from the quality and the usefulness of Sloman's book, which has benefited from substantial amounts of original research. All authors stand on the shoulders of giants. Sloman recognises the giants on whose shoulders his work stands. Any future history of the social security system in the UK, and any future history of reform proposals, will have to stand on Sloman's shoulders.

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testing? The context suggests that we should take 'universal' to mean 'unconditional'.