Teaching Poverty with Qualitative Research Material

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Benefits of a qualitative approach

• Allows voices of the population of interest to come through and to guide research conclusions
• Allows students to emotionally engage with the population of interest
• Gives the class examples of real people to draw on and discuss in concrete terms (discussion feels less abstract)
Using qualitative work to understand family change

CHART 2
Growth of Unwed Childbearing in the United States, 1929–2013

Sources: U.S. Government, U.S. Census Bureau, and National Center for Health Statistics.
Recent examples of qualitative work
Using qualitative work to understand policy change

CHART 4

National AFDC/TANF Caseload and Economic Conditions, January 1950–June 2005

Recent examples of qualitative work
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Figure 3. Real Federal Spending on EITC, CTC, and Welfare, 1975-2011

Single Mothers’ Work Rates Jumped Following Earned Income Tax Credit Expansion in 1990s

Source: CBPP analysis of Current Population Survey

Source: Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2014, for AFDC/TANF; Internal Revenue Service Statistics of Income, various years for EITC and CTC; Bureau of Labor Statistics for CPI Deflator.
Recent examples of qualitative work
Using qualitative work to understand working-class men
Recent examples of qualitative work
Using qualitative work to understand children’s outcomes
Recent examples of qualitative work


• Paycheck to Paycheck: The Life and Times of Katrina Gilbert (HBO documentary)