



INSTITUTE *for*
RESEARCH *on*
POVERTY

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Teaching Poverty with Qualitative Research Material

Sarah Halpern-MeeKin

UW-Madison

Human Development & Family Studies

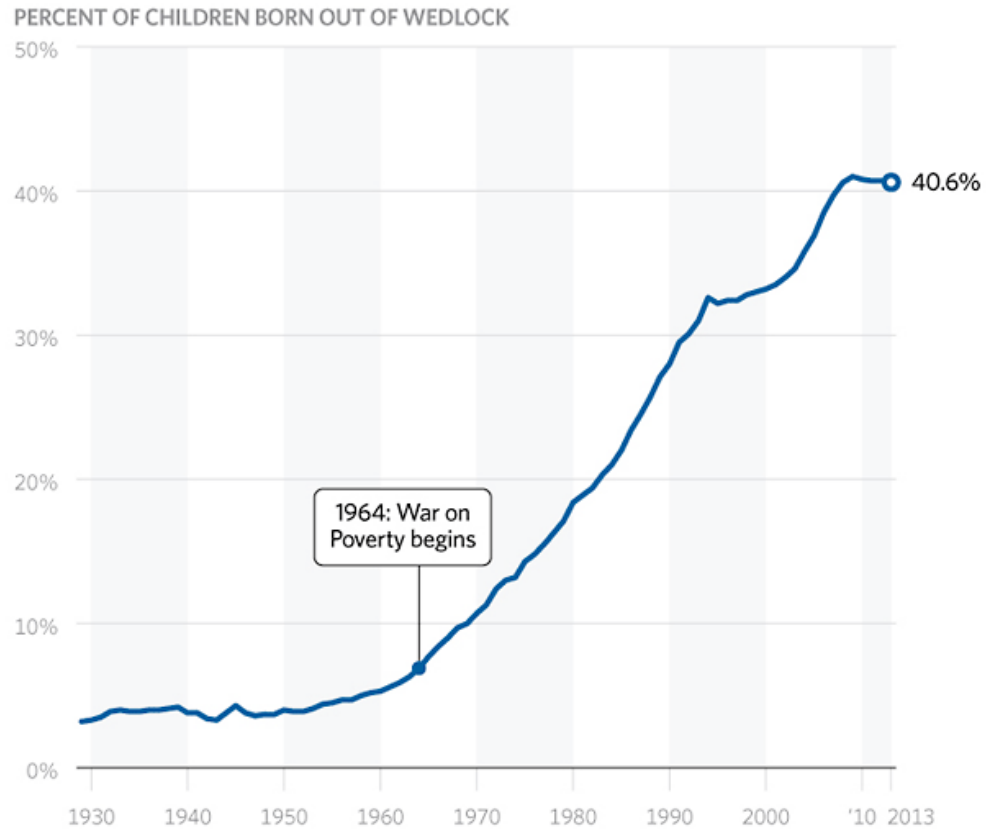
Benefits of a qualitative approach

- 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.

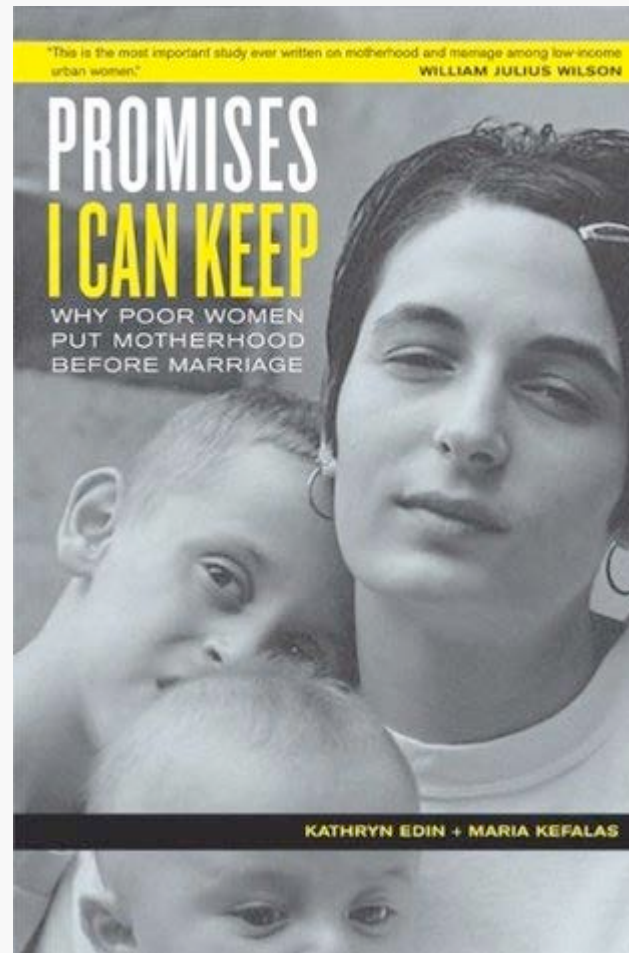
IB 4302  heritage.org



INSTITUTE *for*
RESEARCH *on*
POVERTY

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Recent examples of qualitative work

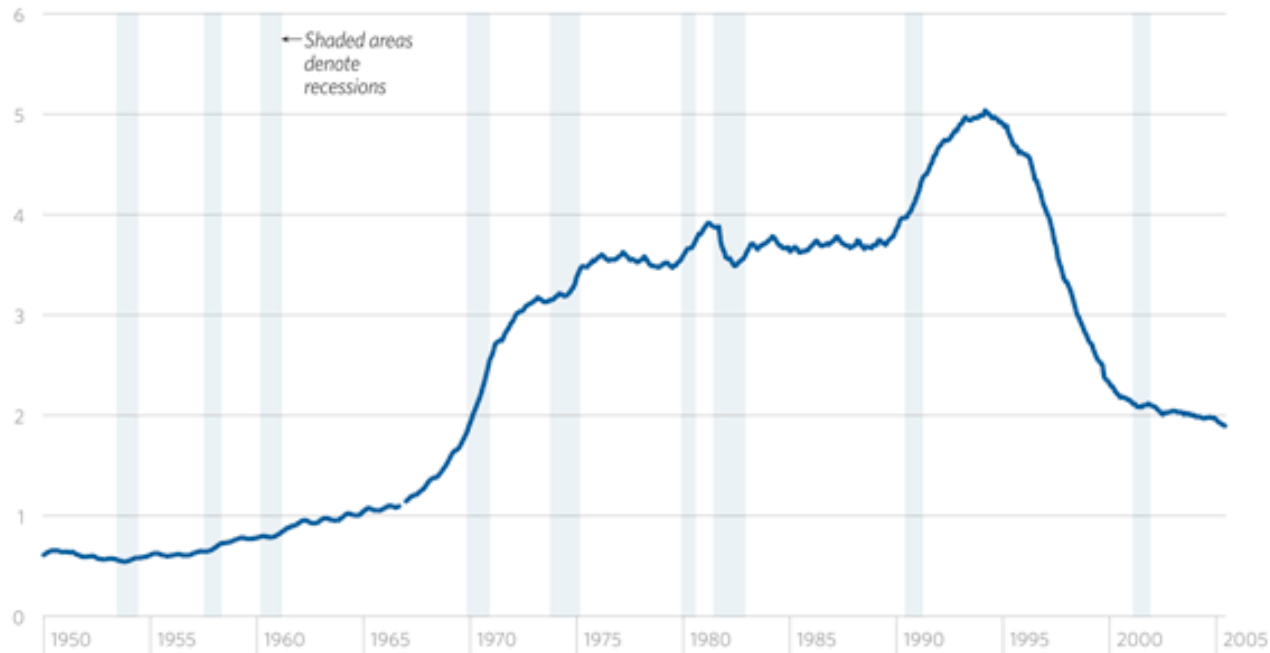


Using qualitative work to understand policy change

CHART 4

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

NUMBER OF FAMILIES RECEIVING AFDC, IN MILLIONS



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

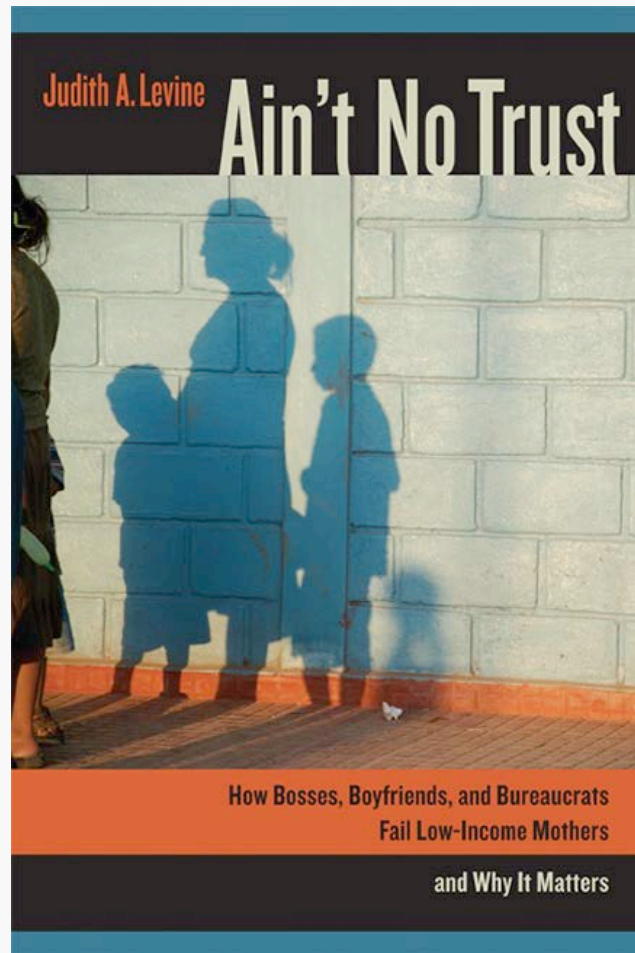
B 2708 heritage.org



INSTITUTE *for*
RESEARCH *on*
POVERTY

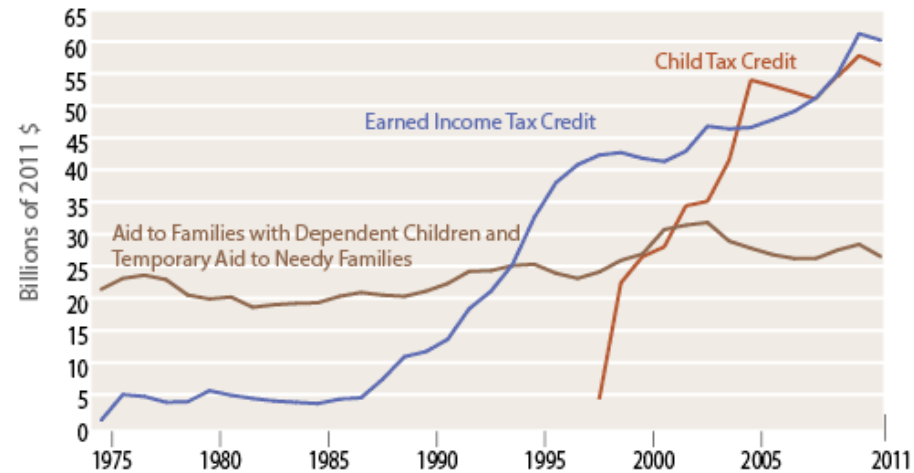
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Recent examples of qualitative work



Using qualitative work to understand policy change

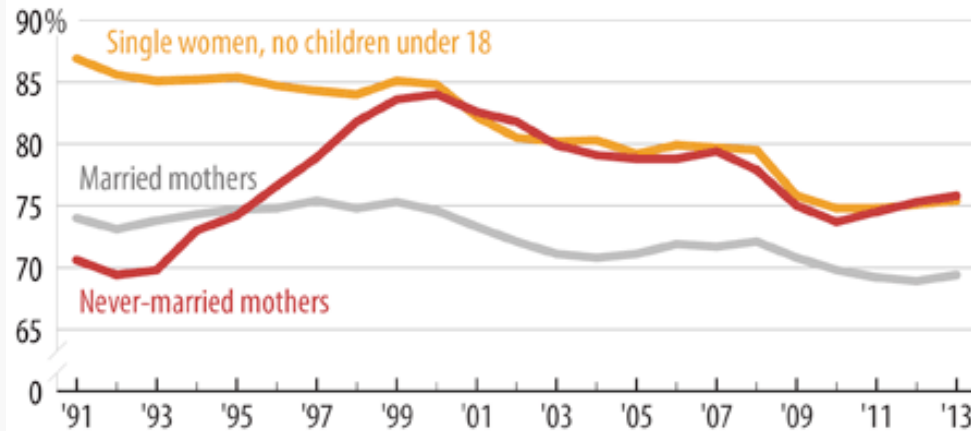
Figure 3. Real Federal Spending on EITC, CTC, and Welfare, 1975-2011



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.

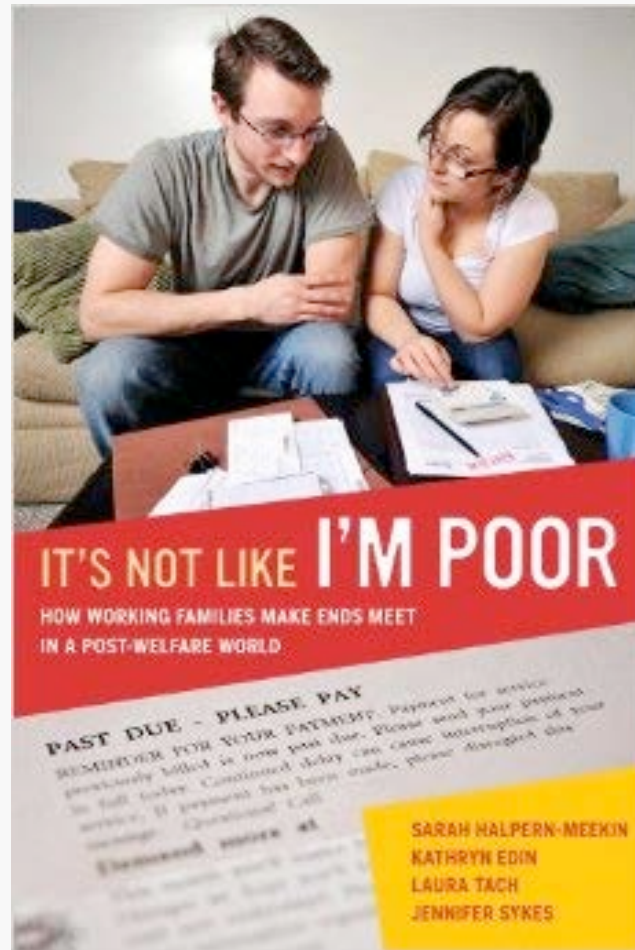
Single Mothers' Work Rates Jumped Following Earned Income Tax Credit Expansion in 1990s

Percent of women between ages 20 and 49 with any work during the year

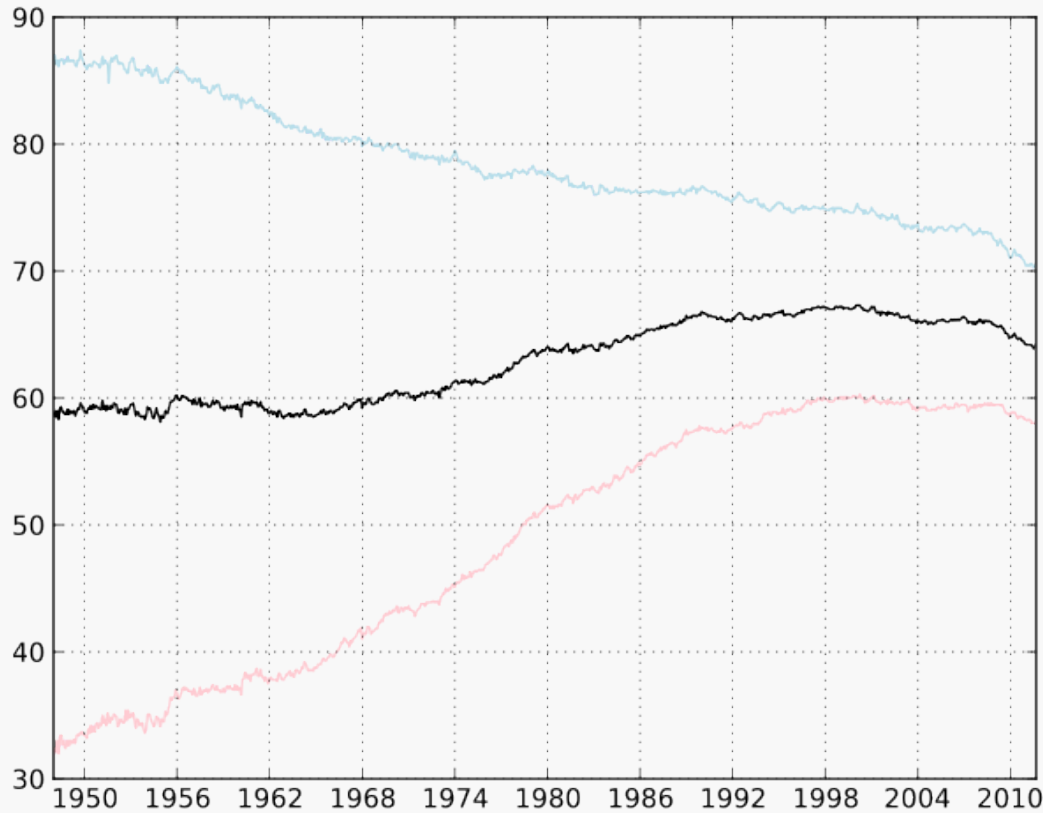


Source: CBPP analysis of Current Population Survey

Recent examples of qualitative work

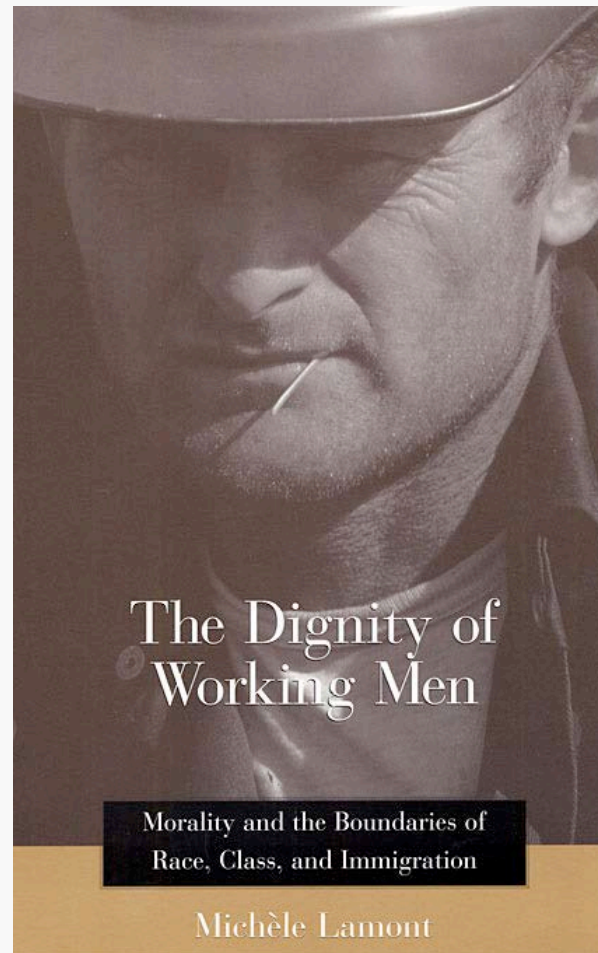


Using qualitative work to understand working-class men

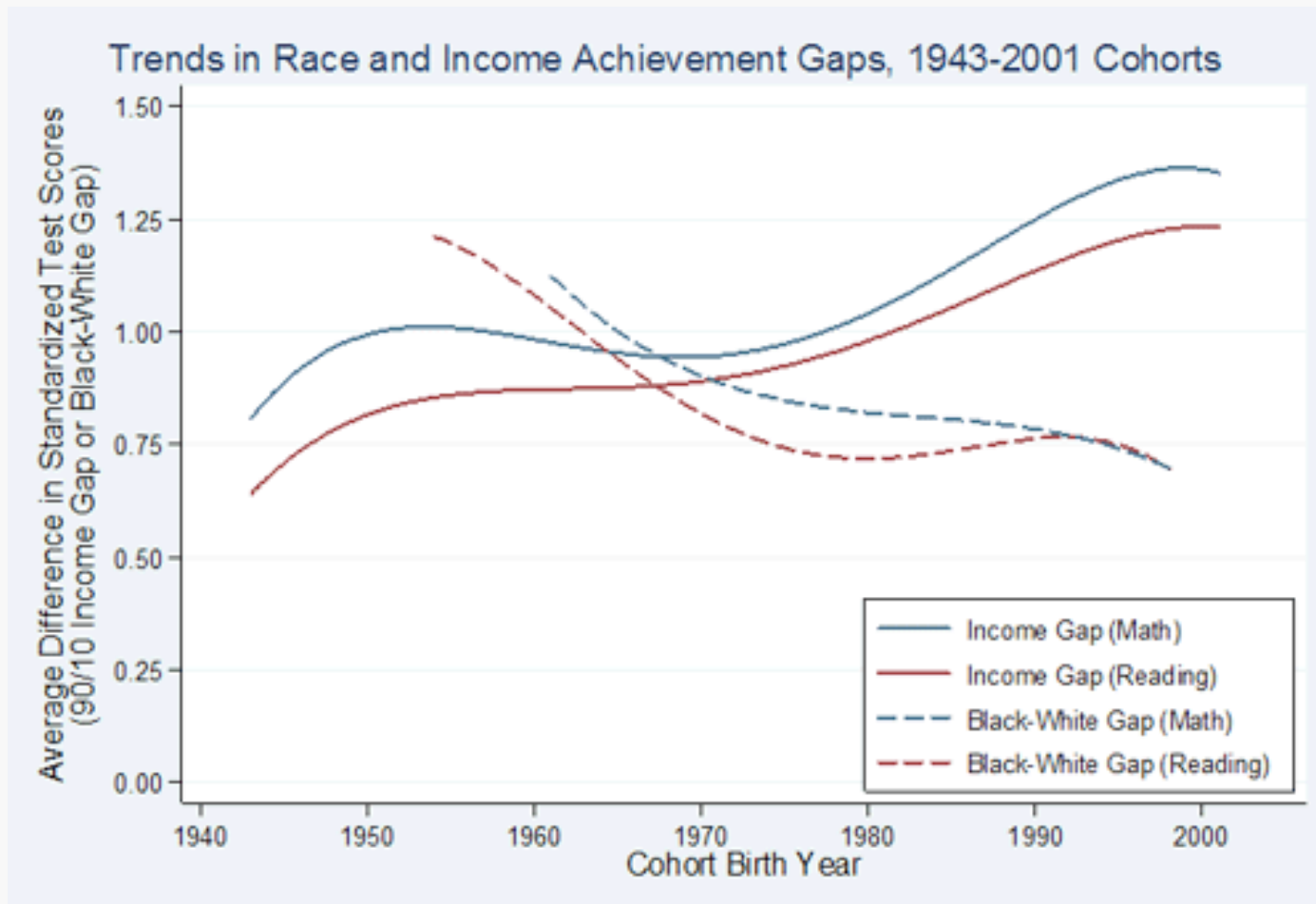


BLS – US Dept. of Labor

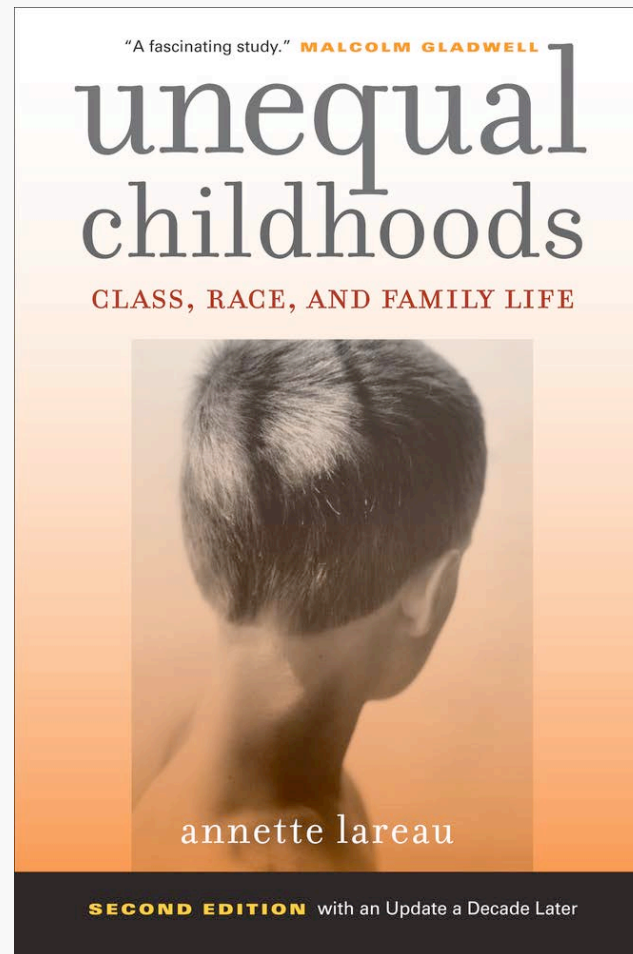
Recent examples of qualitative work



Using qualitative work to understand children's outcomes



Recent examples of qualitative work



Additional resources

- Hamer, J. (2011). *Abandoned in the heartland: Work, family, and living in East St. Louis*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jiménez, T. (2010). *Replenished ethnicity: Mexican Americans, immigration, and identity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Marrow, H.B. (2011). *New Destination Dreaming: Immigration, race, and legal status in the rural American south*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Newman, K., & Massengill, R.P. (2006). The texture of hardship: Qualitative sociology poverty 1995-2005. *Annual Review of Sociology* 32, 423-446.
- Silva, J.M. (2013). *Coming up short: Working-class adulthood in an age of uncertainty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sykes, J. (2011). Negotiating stigma: Understanding mothers' responses to accusations of child neglect. *Children and Youth Services Review* 33, 448-456.
- Tach, L.M. (2009). More than bricks and mortar: Neighborhood frames, social processes, and the mixed-income redevelopment of a public housing project. *City & Community* 8, 269-299.
- Tach, L., Edin, K., Harvey, H., & Bryan, B. (2014). The family-go-round: Family complexity and father involvement from a father's perspective. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 654, 169-184.
- Tach, L.M., & Greene, S.S. (2014). "Robbing Peter to pay Paul": Economic and cultural explanations for how lower-income families manage debt. *Social Problems* 61, 1-21.
- Paycheck to Paycheck: The Life and Times of Katrina Gilbert (HBO documentary)