

KATHRYN EDIN
LAURA LEIN

MAKING ENDS MEET



**How Single
Mothers
Survive Welfare
and
Low-Wage
Work**

**Foreword by
Christopher Jencks**

Making Ends Meet How Single Mothers Survive Welfare And Low Wage Work

Merry Morash



Making Ends Meet How Single Mothers Survive Welfare And Low Wage Work:

Making Ends Meet Kathryn Edin, Laura Lein, 1997-04-17 Welfare mothers are popularly viewed as passively dependent on their checks and averse to work Reformers across the political spectrum advocate moving these women off the welfare rolls and into the labor force as the solution to their problems Making Ends Meet offers dramatic evidence toward a different conclusion In the present labor market unskilled single mothers who hold jobs are frequently worse off than those on welfare and neither welfare nor low wage employment alone will support a family at subsistence levels Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein interviewed nearly four hundred welfare and low income single mothers from cities in Massachusetts Texas Illinois and South Carolina over a six year period They learned the reality of these mothers struggles to provide for their families where their money comes from what they spend it on how they cope with their children s needs and what hardships they suffer Edin and Lein s careful budgetary analyses reveal that even a full range of welfare benefits AFDC payments food stamps Medicaid and housing subsidies typically meet only three fifths of a family s needs and that funds for adequate food clothing and other necessities are often lacking Leaving welfare for work offers little hope for improvement and in many cases threatens even greater hardship Jobs for unskilled and semi skilled women provide meager salaries irregular or uncertain hours frequent layoffs and no promise of advancement Mothers who work not only assume extra child care medical and transportation expenses but are also deprived of many of the housing and educational subsidies available to those on welfare Regardless of whether they are on welfare or employed virtually all these single mothers need to supplement their income with menial off the books work and intermittent contributions from family live in boyfriends their children s fathers and local charities In doing so they pay a heavy price Welfare mothers must work covertly to avoid losing benefits while working mothers are forced to sacrifice even more time with their children Making Ends Meet demonstrates compellingly why the choice between welfare and work is more complex and risky than is commonly recognized by politicians the media or the public Almost all the welfare reliant women interviewed by Edin and Lein made repeated efforts to leave welfare for work only to be forced to return when they lost their jobs a child became ill or they could not cover their bills with their wages Mothers who managed more stable employment usually benefited from a variety of mitigating circumstances such as having a relative willing to watch their children for free regular child support payments or very low housing medical or commuting costs With first hand accounts and detailed financial data Making Ends Meet tells the real story of the challenges hardships and survival strategies of America s poorest families If this country s efforts to improve the self sufficiency of female headed families is to succeed reformers will need to move beyond the myths of welfare dependency and deal with the hard realities of an unrewarding American labor market the lack of affordable health insurance and child care for single mothers who work and the true cost of subsistence living Making Ends Meet is a realistic look at a world that so many would change and so few understand

Single Mothers in Contemporary Japan Aya Ezawa, 2016-05-12 Combining work and family remains a major challenge

for married women in contemporary Japan and it is not uncommon for them to quit working when starting a family. Single mothers, by contrast, almost always work regardless of the age of their children. Despite their eagerness to support themselves and their children through employment, their average income remains low and many live on a household budget close to the poverty line. This book examines how the difficult living conditions facing single mothers in Japan highlight not only the challenges they face in earning a family wage and managing the work-family balance but also reveals the class dimensions of family life in contemporary Japan. The need to make ends meet with few resources means that mothers may find it difficult to uphold the lifestyle they may consider as most appropriate for the upbringing of their children and that they may have to choose between their presence at home in line with the ideal of the middle-class housewife and mother or devoting more time to earning an income that can pay for a good education. Social class in this case is not just a matter of education, occupation, or income but is also expressed by mothers' approaches to their children's upbringing and future opportunities in education and employment. Based on life history interviews with single mothers, this study examines the gendered meanings of social class and social achievement and the role of maternal practices in shaping their children's future life trajectories.

Mothering by Degrees Jillian M. Duquaine-Watson, 2017-05-31. In *Mothering by Degrees* I show how single mothers who pursue college degrees in early 21st-century America must navigate a difficult course as they attempt to reconcile their identities as single mothers, college students, and in many cases, employees. As they combine these multiple and often competing roles and responsibilities, they must also negotiate a balance between cultural ideals of motherhood and their own definitions of what it means to be a good mother, particularly as those ideals and definitions are shaped within context of post-welfare reform America and the post-secondary institutions they attend. By comparing the experiences of nearly 100 single mother college students attending three postsecondary education institutions in the United States, I illustrate how these women navigate the various obstacles they encounter, especially obstacles related to financial concerns, child care, time constraints, and the chilly climate of higher education. In addition, I demonstrate that the women regard postsecondary education not only as a means of escaping poverty but also as an extension of their mothering work, something they do to help ensure the long-term health and well-being of their children. Thus, this project provides a situated comparative account of the experiences of single mothers who are college students in order to foster a better understanding of the complex ideologies and social structures that influence the life choices and education experiences of members of this important but understudied student population. Finally, the project discusses policies and programs that can help provide better support to single mothers and may diminish the challenges they face as they endeavor to complete their education. *Educational Outcomes for the Canadian Workplace* Jane Stobo Gaskell, Kjell Rubenson, 2004-01-01. *Educational Outcomes for the Canadian Workplace* explores how educational programs are changing, which skills matter in the economy, and how policy has responded to the educational and economic pressures of the 1990s. **Evicted** Matthew Desmond, 2017-02-28. NEW YORK

TIMES BESTSELLER WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE ONE OF TIME S TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF THE DECADE ONE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES S 100 BEST BOOKS OF THE 21ST CENTURY One of the most acclaimed books of our time this modern classic has set a new standard for reporting on poverty Barbara Ehrenreich The New York Times Book Review In Evicted Princeton sociologist and MacArthur Genius Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they each struggle to keep a roof over their heads Hailed as wrenching and revelatory The Nation vivid and unsettling New York Review of Books Evicted transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of twenty first century America s most devastating problems Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home without which nothing else is possible A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR President Barack Obama The New York Times Book Review The Boston Globe The Washington Post NPR Entertainment Weekly The New Yorker Bloomberg Esquire BuzzFeed Fortune San Francisco Chronicle Milwaukee Journal Sentinel St Louis Post Dispatch Politico The Week Chicago Public Library BookPage Kirkus Reviews Library Journal Publishers Weekly Booklist Shelf Awareness WINNER OF The National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction The PEN John Kenneth Galbraith Award for Nonfiction The Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction The Hillman Prize for Book Journalism The PEN New England Award The Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize FINALIST FOR THE LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK PRIZE AND THE KIRKUS PRIZE Evicted stands among the very best of the social justice books Ann Patchett author of Bel Canto and Commonwealth Gripping and moving tragic too Jesmyn Ward author of Salvage the Bones Evicted is that rare work that has something genuinely new to say about poverty San Francisco Chronicle *Hollowing Out the Middle* Patrick J. Carr, Maria J. Kefalas, 2009-10-01 Two sociologists reveal how small towns in Middle America are exporting their most precious resource young people and share what can be done to save these dwindling communities In 2001 with funding from the MacArthur Foundation sociologists Patrick J Carr and Maria J Kefalas moved to Iowa to understand the rural brain drain and the exodus of young people from America s countryside They met and followed working class stayers ambitious and college bound achievers seekers who head off to war to see what the world beyond offers and returners who eventually circle back to their hometowns What surprised them most was that adults in the community were playing a pivotal part in the town s decline by pushing the best and brightest young people to leave In a timely new afterword Carr and Kefalas address the question so what can be done to save our communities They profile the efforts of dedicated community leaders actively resisting the hollowing out of Middle America These individuals have creatively engaged small town youth stayers and returners seekers and achievers and have implemented a variety of programs to combat the rural brain drain These stories of civic engagement will certainly inspire and encourage readers struggling to defend their communities **Holding It Together** Jessica Calarco, 2024-06-04 Other countries have social safety nets The U S has women Holding It Together chronicles the causes and dire consequences America runs on women women who are tasked with holding society together at the seams and fixing

it when things fall apart In this tour de force acclaimed Sociologist Jessica Calarco lays bare the devastating consequences of our status quo Holding It Together draws on five years of research in which Calarco surveyed over 4000 parents and conducted more than 400 hours of interviews with women who bear the brunt of our broken system A widowed single mother struggles to patch together meager public benefits while working three jobs an aunt is pushed into caring for her niece and nephew at age fifteen once their family is shattered by the opioid epidemic a daughter becomes the backstop caregiver for her mother her husband and her child because of the perceived flexibility of her job a well to do couple grapples with the moral dilemma of leaning on overworked underpaid childcare providers to achieve their egalitarian ideals Stories of grief and guilt abound Yet they are more than individual tragedies Tracing present day policies back to their roots Calarco reveals a systematic agreement to dismantle our country's social safety net and persuade citizens to accept precarity while women bear the brunt She leads us to see women's labor as the reason we've gone so long without the support systems that our peer nations take for granted and how women's work maintains the illusion that we don't need a net Weaving eye opening original research with revelatory sociological narrative Holding It Together is a bold call to demand the institutional change that each of us deserves and a warning about the perils of living without it

The Dilemmas of Lone Motherhood Randy Albelda, Sue Himmelweit, Jane Humphries, 2013-09-13 In today's society women having entered the workplace in growing numbers worldwide are increasingly expected to earn wages whilst still being primarily responsible for raising children While all parents confront the tensions of this double burden for lone mothers the situation can be especially acute as there is no other adult to share responsibilities and no access to a male wage The revealing essays in this volume address a range of the dilemmas lone mothers routinely face whilst also distinguishing important situational differences and considering other social perspectives It asks How can governments help without undermining their ability to enter the workforce Should the state indefinitely support lone mothers How should we measure the success of a policy What roles do ethnicity race religion class and sexual orientation play The impressive range of contributors to this volume speak from numerous contrasting perspectives Here they study a variety of international settings such as Sri Lanka the US Germany England and Norway and in so doing they allow the reader to draw powerful conclusions by comparing such issues and potential resolutions in varying countries and contexts This book was previously published as a special issue of Feminist Economics

Had I Known Barbara Ehrenreich, 2020-03-24 Winner of the 2021 PEN Diamonstein Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay HAD I KNOWN contains the most provocative incendiary and career making pieces by bestselling author essayist political activist and veteran muckraker Barbara Ehrenreich The New Yorker A self proclaimed myth buster by trade Barbara Ehrenreich has covered an extensive range of topics as a journalist and political activist and is unafraid to dive into intellectual waters that others deem too murky Now Had I Known gathers the articles and excerpts from a long ranging career that most highlight Ehrenreich's brilliance social consciousness and wry wit From Ehrenreich's award winning article Welcome to Cancerland

published shortly after she was diagnosed with breast cancer to her groundbreaking undercover investigative journalism in Nickel and Dimed to her exploration of death and mortality in the New York Times bestseller Natural Causes Barbara Ehrenreich has been writing radical thought provoking and worldview altering pieces for over four decades Her reviews have appeared in the New York Times Book Review the Washington Post the Atlantic Monthly and the Los Angeles Times Book Review among others while her essays op eds and feature articles have appeared in the New York Times Harper s Magazine the New York Times Magazine Time the Wall Street Journal and many more Had I Known pulls from the vast and varied collection of one of our country s most incisive thinkers to create one must have volume **The Way We Never Were**

Stephanie Coontz,1992 Includes bibliographical references and index **Don't Call Us Out of Name** Lisa

Dodson,1999-09-25 A radically new vision of women and girls living below the poverty line Lisa Dodson makes a frontal assault on conventional attitudes and stereotypes of women in poor America and the seriously misguided welfare reform policies of the end of the century I hear Odessa a thirty two year old woman speak at a forum on welfare reform I ask her about the phrase she used Don t call me out of name for it seemed to speak for a whole nation of people Odessa tells me that women who have no money and no one to stand up for them get put into a bad position and they get misnamed Most often they get called welfare mothers or recipients words she will no longer acknowledge With millions alongside her Odessa has emerged by her own strength and some opportunity and now she insists upon naming herself While Lisa Dodson was working in a Charlestown factory twenty years ago the stories of the women she worked with daily captivated her she listened to them speak about harsh lives and their deep commitment to family and community It was the beginning of Dodson s desire to learn the truth and write it down For over eight years Dodson has been documenting the lives of girls and women hundreds of white African American Latino Haitian Irish and other women in personal interviews focus groups surveys and Life History Studies This book is a crossing a class crossing taking readers into fellowship with people who are seldom invited to speak but who have powerful stories to tell and who force us to abandon common myths that have been fed to us by the media about school dropouts teen pregnancy and welfare cheats Don t Call Us Out of Name delves deeply into the realities of their lives often with surprising and uplifting stories of commonplace courage unimaginable strength and resourcefulness Lisa Dodson does not simply give us the truth about women living in poverty but offers realistic hope for meaningful policy reform based on the experience and analysis of the women we have seen so far only in stereotype and whose voices we have not truly heard These women emerge as critical contributors to the creation of sound humane public policy At the Heart of Work and Family Anita Ilta Garey,Karen V. Hansen,2011 At the Heart of Work and Family presents original research on work and family by scholars who engage and build on the conceptual framework developed by well known sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild These concepts such as the second shift the economy of gratitude emotion work feeling rules gender strategies and the time bind are basic to sociology and have shaped both popular discussions and academic study The common thread

in these essays covering the gender division of housework childcare networks families in the global economy and children of consumers is the incorporation of emotion feelings and meaning into the study of working families These examinations like Hochschild s own work connect micro level interaction to larger social and economic forces and illustrate the continued relevance of linking economic relations to emotional ones for understanding contemporary work family life Misery Traps Sharon Washington,2020-11-02 I believe that the Family Safety Net Act could be to raising kids in America what the Civil Rights Movement is to minorities The legislation will mandate that every fit parent have equal access to their kids automatic joint custody co parenting is insufficient with the best interests of the child at the heart of the legislation regardless of the status of the relationship of the parents with primary custody initially granted to the mother No more fathers begging to see their kids It s time The key is fit The adults must have the capacity to parent free of drug abuse emotional abuse and physical abuse and to establish a home that is free of such maltreatment It is time In addition since America is about enterprise working to support self and family and fulfilling dreams within the legal framework of this country the parents and our educational institutions must model that behavior so every student steps into adulthood with a plan to support themselves for the only way we will triumph over this nebulous future is to launch with the genuine love and support of as many friends and family we can muster together and to have the confidence from preparation to work and or pursue dreams I am for kids

In a Box Merry Morash,2024-02-27 In a Box draws on the experiences of over one hundred Michigan women on probation or parole to analyze how the criminal justice system and neoliberal social policies hampered the state s efforts at gender responsive reforms in community supervision Closely narrating the stories of a diverse sample of six of these women Merry Morash shows how countervailing influences kept reform oriented probation and parole agents and women they supervise in a box by limiting and even blocking positive effects of supervision approaches that break away from the punitive frameworks that characterize many past and present correctional efforts Inspired by the interviewees reflections on their own experiences the book concludes with recommendations for truly effective reforms within and outside the justice system

Forensic Social Work Tina Maschi,Dr. Carolyn Bradley,Kelly Ward,2009-07-20 Print CourseSmart *Political Economy and Contemporary Capitalism* Ron P. Baiman,Heather Boushey,Dawn Saunders,2015-02-12 This volume covers the theoretical method macroeconomics microeconomics international trade and finance development and policy of economic theory It incorporates various alternative approaches as well as a broad spectrum of policy issues **Families in America** Susan L. Brown,2017-08-01 In this accessible engaging and up to date course book Susan L Brown employs ethnographic vignettes and demographic data to introduce students to twenty first century perspectives on contemporary families Appropriate as a primary or secondary text in classes on family and marriage this book probes momentous shifts in the definition of family such as the legalization of same sex marriage and policy debates on welfare reform and work family issues Brown also explores the rise in nonmarital childbearing and single mother families and the decline of traditional

marriage by delving into the historical roots of family change current trends of family formation and dissolution and the implications of family change for the well being of adults and children With a lens toward socioeconomic inequality and racial ethnic variation in family patterns Families in America illustrates how family diversity is now the norm The Sociology in the Twenty First Century series introduces students to a range of sociological issues of broad interest in the United States today with each volume addressing topics such as family race immigration gender education and social inequality These books intended for classroom use will highlight findings from current rigorous research and demographic data while including stories about people s experiences to illustrate major themes in an accessible manner Learn more about the Sociology in the Twenty First Century Series [Women, Work, and Poverty](#) Heidi I. Hartmann, 2012-12-06 Find out how welfare reform has affected women living at the poverty level Women Work and Poverty presents the latest information on women living at or below the poverty level and the changes that need to be made in public policy to allow them to rise above their economic hardships Using a wide range of research methods including in depth interviews focus groups small scale surveys and analysis of personnel records the book explores different aspects of women s poverty since the passage of the 1986 welfare reform bill Anthropologists economists political scientists sociologists and social workers examine marriage divorce children and child care employment and work schedules disabilities mental health and education and look at income support programs such as welfare and unemployment insurance Women Work and Poverty illuminates the changes in the causes of women s poverty following welfare reform in the United States using up to date research that s both qualitative and quantitative Taking racial and ethnic diversity into account the book s contributors examine new findings on the feminization of poverty the role of children and the lack of child care as an obstacle to employment labor market policies that can reduce poverty and improve gender wage equality sex and race segregation in the labor market and the low quality of jobs available to low income women Women Work and Poverty examines marriage motherhood and work pay equity and living wage reforms community resources welfare status and child care acquiring higher education advancing women of color income security repaying debt after divorce gender differences in spendable income women s job loss Women Work and Poverty is an invaluable aid for academics working in social work social policy women s studies economics sociology and political science and for policy researchers anti poverty activists and women s leaders **The Price of Poverty** Daniel Dohan, 2003-12 Masterful scholarship detailed insightful and original Dohan investigates the role that immigration plays in understanding Latino poverty in the United States He also provides a nuanced and detailed analysis of neighborhood factors that help us better understand Latino poverty and how Latino residents navigate the world of low skill work resources and life in the barrio Abel Valenzuela Jr co editor of Prismatic Metropolis Inequality in Los Angeles A very timely study At a time when the Latino population is rapidly growing in the U S Dohan provides us with one of the best and most poignant studies of the Mexican American Barrio Based on rich data collected in two poor Mexican American neighborhoods this thoughtful and

interesting book will draw a lot of attention both inside and outside of academia William Julius Wilson author of When Work Disappears With Dohan s book we finally receive an in depth understanding of the nuances of life inside the urban often poor and working class Mexican American communities Urban ethnographic scholarship on the poor dominated too long by the African American experience for its questions concerns and voices now finally has a corrective and a complementary text Sudhir Venkatesh author of American Project The Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto **The Social Economy of Single Motherhood** Margaret Nelson,2014-06-03 Margaret Nelson investigates the lives of single working class mothers in this compelling and timely book Through personal interviews she uncovers the different challenges that mothers and their children face in small town America a place greatly changed over the past fifty years as factory work has dried up and national chains like Walmart have moved in

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