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# Family Policy and the American Safety Net (Contemporary Family Perspectives (CFP))

*By Janet Zollinger Giele*



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**Family Policy and the American Safety Net** shows how families adapt to economic and demographic change. Government programs provide a safety net against the new risks of modern life. Family policy includes any public program that helps families perform their four universal obligations of caregiving, income provision, shelter, and transmission of citizenship. In America, this means that child care, health care, Social Security, unemployment insurance, housing, the quality of neighborhood schools, and anti-discrimination and immigration measures are all key elements of a *de facto* family policy. Yet many students and citizens are unaware of the history and importance of these programs. This book argues that family policy is as important as economic and defense policy to the future of the nation, a message that is relevant to students in the social sciences, social policy, and social work as well as to the public at large.



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- Sales Rank: #892692 in Books
- Brand: Brand: SAGE Publications, Inc
- Published on: 2012-07-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .90" h x 6.00" w x 8.90" l, 1.20 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 408 pages

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#### **About the Author**

**Janet Zollinger Giele** (AB, Earlham College; PhD, Harvard University) is Professor Emerita of Sociology, Social Policy, and Women's Studies at Brandeis University. She was the founding director of the Family and Children's Policy Center in the Heller School for Social Policy and Management (1990-1996) and Acting Dean of the Heller School in 1993-94. In the 1960s, she taught at Wellesley College and in the 1970s was a Bunting Fellow at Radcliffe and Principal Consultant to the Ford Foundation Task Force on Women. She has received grants and fellowships from the National Science Foundation, National Institute on Aging, Lilly Endowment, Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. In 2000, she was honored by Radcliffe with the Graduate Society Medal. The author or editor of ten books, her special areas of interest are women's changing roles, methods of life course research, and sociology of the family and family policy. Since 1976 when she joined the faculty of the Heller School, she has directed over thirty doctoral dissertations and is currently writing a guidebook on doctoral research and the earmarks of a good dissertation.

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