

# agency under stress

THE SOCIAL SECURITY  
ADMINISTRATION IN  
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

MARTHA DERTHICK

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

# Agency Under Stress The Social Security Administration And American Government

**Michael Barzelay, Colin H. Campbell**



## **Agency Under Stress The Social Security Administration And American Government:**

Agency Under Stress Martha Derthick, 2011-03-01 Prize winning author Martha Derthick draws on the recent experience of the Social Security Administration to examine the quality of policymaker's guidance and the feasibility of their policies. Derthick concludes that many structural features of American government hinder good administration that policymakers lack concern for administration and that they often miscalculate the administrative consequences of their policy choices. To illustrate this argument Agency Under Stress analyzes two much publicized cases of poor performance by one of the biggest and best established of U.S. government agencies the Social Security Administration. The first case is that of the supplemental security income program to support needy blind aged and disabled persons. Given responsibility of administering the program in 1974 the Social Security Administration was unequal to the task many payments were made in error many eligible persons were not paid computer systems were not ready field employees worked millions of hours of overtime and other agency programs suffered. The second case is that of an eligibility review that Congress ordered the Social Security Administration to conduct for disability insurance recipients in the 1980s. The results were similarly traumatic of over 1.2 million cases examined 495,000 had benefits terminated and flooded with appeals the courts ruled overwhelmingly against the agency. Derthick's analysis and conclusions have far reaching implications for how the government can effectively serve its clients.

**Institutions of American Democracy** Joel D. Aberbach, Mark A. Peterson, 2005-10-27 Presents a collection of essays that provide an examination of the Executive branch in American government explaining how the Constitution created the executive branch and discusses how the executive interacts with the other two branches of government at the federal and state level. Social Security Bulletin, 2010. **The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy** Daniel Béland, Christopher Howard, Kimberly J. Morgan, 2015. The American welfare state has long been a source of political contention and academic debate. This Oxford Handbook pulls together much of our current knowledge about the origins, development, functions, and challenges of American social policy. After the Introduction, the first substantive part of the handbook offers an historical overview of U.S. social policy from the colonial era to the present. This is followed by a set of chapters on different theoretical perspectives available for understanding and explaining the development of U.S. social policy. The three following parts of the volume focus on concrete social programs for the elderly, the poor, and near poor, the disabled, and workers and families. Policy areas covered include health care, pensions, food assistance, housing, unemployment benefits, disability benefits, workers' compensation, family support, and programs for soldiers and veterans. The final part of the book focuses on some of the consequences of the U.S. welfare state for poverty, inequality, and citizenship. Many of the chapters comprising this handbook emphasize the disjointed patterns of policy making inherent to U.S. policymaking and the public-private mix of social provision in which the government helps certain groups of citizens directly (e.g., social insurance) or indirectly (e.g., tax expenditures, regulations). The contributing authors are experts from political science, sociology, history, economics, and other

social sciences      *American Government* Cal Jillson, 2025-01-30 How politics in America works today how it got that way and how it s likely to change through reform these are the themes that pervade every chapter of Cal Jillson s highly lauded *American Government Political Development and Institutional Change* Even in the midst of current challenges America s past is present in all aspects of the contemporary political system Jillson uses political development and the dynamics of change as a thematic tool to help students understand how politics works now and how institutions participation and policies have evolved over time to produce the contemporary political environment In addition Jillson helps students think critically about how American democracy might evolve further focusing in every chapter on reform and further change New to the Thirteenth Edition Assesses the results of the Biden administration and the impact on the 2024 campaign of Biden s unexpected replacement by Kamala Harris at the top of the ticket Describes numerous ways in which the American political system has been affected by recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic the demise of *Roe v Wade* inflation and the border Assesses the implications of the January 6 2021 attack on the Capitol the Trump trials and what they mean for our political culture and partisan politics Assesses the implication of fake news and the move to mobile for our politics Explores the evidence for increasing polarization in public opinion voting behavior and the work of Congress and the courts Details the impact that the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war in Israel and Gaza had on U S foreign policy and national security alliances      **American Government** Calvin C. Jillson, 2013 An introductory American government textbook should do more than simply tell students that politics is relevant today that it will affect their lives in meaningful ways Students are best prepared to recognize this basic fact when they understand the bigger picture of how the system works how it got that way and what are the possibilities for change Cal Jillson s *American Government Political Development and Institutional Change* shows students how the nation s past is present in all aspects of contemporary politics using the dynamics of change as a tool to understand how politics works and how institutions systems avenues of participation and policies have evolved over time to produce today s political environment in the United States Going one step further Jillson identifies the critical question of how American democracy might evolve further focusing in every chapter on reform and change into the future

**Dismantling the Welfare State?** Paul Pierson, 1995-09-29 This book offers a careful examination of the politics of social policy in an era of austerity and conservative governance Focusing on the administrations of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher Pierson provides a compelling explanation for the welfare state s durability and for the few occasions where each government was able to achieve significant cutbacks The programmes of the modern welfare state the policy legacies of previous governments generally proved resistant to reform Hemmed in by the political supports that have developed around mature social programmes conservative opponents of the welfare state were successful only when they were able to divide the supporters of social programmes compensate those negatively affected or hide what they were doing from potential critics The book will appeal to those interested in the politics of neo conservatism as well as those concerned about the

development of the modern welfare state It will attract readers in the fields of comparative politics public policy and political economy

**Robert Ball and the Politics of Social Security** Edward D. Berkowitz, 2003 Berkowitz tells the inside story of Social Security politics including controversies during the 1970s Congressional rescue of the program in 1983 and the ongoing debates about structure and solvency that have enveloped the program since the 1990s He looks at how the Social Security Administration gained and nearly lost a reputation for administrative competence how Medicare was put into operation and why campaigns to create national health insurance have failed Jacket

**The Philosophy of Taxation and Public Finance** Robert W. McGee, 2011-06-27 Most public finance books are texts which are aimed at undergraduate or graduate students They are overly technical in nature and appeal only to a narrow range of bureaucrats and academics Books on taxation are written for tax practitioners and usually emphasize either what the law is or how to maneuver through the labyrinth of tax law to minimize taxes for clients Philosophy books on taxation or public finance simply do not exist The Philosophy of Taxation and Public Finance is different It is written in nontechnical language and is aimed to appeal to a wide range of readers including practitioners academics and students in the fields of taxation public finance economics law philosophy and political science as well as general readers who are interested in learning why they are being taxed the way they are The author addresses the major issues and topics in taxation and public finance and injects them with philosophical insights He discusses questions such as What arguments have been used to justify taxation When is tax evasion unethical Are some taxes better than others What are the proper functions of government How much is enough Is the ability to pay concept valid When can punitive taxes be justified

HIV and the Blood Supply Institute of Medicine, Committee to Study HIV Transmission Through Blood and Blood Products, 1995-10-05 During the early years of the AIDS epidemic thousands of Americans became infected with HIV through the nation's blood supply Because little reliable information existed at the time AIDS first began showing up in hemophiliacs and in others who had received transfusions experts disagreed about whether blood and blood products could transmit the disease During this period of great uncertainty decision making regarding the blood supply became increasingly difficult and fraught with risk This volume provides a balanced inquiry into the blood safety controversy which involves private sexual practices personal tragedy for the victims of HIV AIDS and public confidence in America's blood services system The book focuses on critical decisions as information about the danger to the blood supply emerged The committee draws conclusions about what was done and recommends what should be done to produce better outcomes in the face of future threats to blood safety The committee frames its analysis around four critical areas Product treatment Could effective methods for inactivating HIV in blood have been introduced sooner Donor screening and referral including a review of screening to exclude high risk individuals Regulations and recall of contaminated blood analyzing decisions by federal agencies and the private sector Risk communication examining whether infections could have been averted by better communication of the risks

**Seeking the Center** Martin A. Levin, Marc K. Landy, Martin

Shapiro,2001-08-03 During the past decade Democrats and Republicans each have received about fifty percent of the votes and controlled about half of the government but this has not resulted in policy deadlock Despite highly partisan political posturing the policy regime has been largely moderate Incremental yet substantial policy innovations such as welfare reform deficit reduction the North American Free Trade Agreement and the deregulation of telecommunications banking and agriculture have been accompanied by such continuities as Social Security and Medicare the maintenance of earlier immigration reforms and the persistence of many rights based policies including federal affirmative action In Seeking the Center twenty one contributors analyze policy outcomes in light of the frequent alternation in power among evenly divided parties They show how the triumph of policy moderation and the defeat of more ambitious efforts such as health care reform can be explained by mutually supporting economic intellectual and political forces Demonstrating that the determinants of public policy become clear by probing specific issues rather than in abstract theorizing they restore the politics of policymaking to the forefront of the political science agenda A successor to Martin A Levin and Marc K Landy s influential The New Politics of Public Policy Johns Hopkins University Press 1995 this book will be vital reading for advanced undergraduate and graduate students in political science and public policy as well as a resource for scholars in both fields

**Disability Rights and the American Social Safety Net** Jennifer L. Erkulwater,2018-07-05 The recent history of the American welfare state has been viewed with dismay by those on the left because of the steady contraction of benefits under both Republican and Democratic administrations In contrast Jennifer L Erkulwater describes the remarkable success of advocacy for the disabled at a time when the federal government was seemingly impervious to liberal policy innovations Since the War on Poverty the American public s support for social welfare policies has gradually eroded as conservative politicians have gained power and demographic changes and uncertain economic growth have enhanced pressures for fiscal retrenchment Yet the past thirty years have also seen a dramatic expansion of disability benefits This book is the first to examine how entitlements for the disabled have fared in the wake of the disability rights movement This movement initially fought to end the institutionalization of the severely disabled and moved on to claim that antidiscrimination laws would allow the disabled to work and become less dependent on welfare It also had a profound impact on entitlements Erkulwater demonstrates that the Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs enacted between 1972 and 2000 succeeded because policy elites switched from welfare based approaches to the civil rights rhetoric used by the disability rights movement The work of liberal advocates who sought to end the segregation of the disabled in custodial institutions and integrate them into their home communities contributed to the growth of programs providing financial assistance to disabled citizens and to the recent controversies surrounding the future direction of disability policy Civil Rights in the United States Hugh Davis Graham,2010-11-01 **Preparing for the Future** Michael Barzelay,Colin H.

Campbell,2003-07-31 While the Clinton Administration and federal agencies were busy making government cost less and

work better in the near term the United States Air Force was regularly visualizing the competencies needed to assure the organization's long term effectiveness. As a result of steady efforts to prepare for the future conducted under successive secretaries and chiefs of staff the Air Force has developed a distinctive approach to strategic planning. This approach is fundamentally concerned with ensuring that the organization's future capabilities support effective performance of future tasks. Such tasks are shaped by ever changing policy objectives and circumstances of implementation. After eight years the Air Force has not only successfully refined its distinctive approach to strategic planning but has also leveraged change in programmatic decisions, human resource management and operational technologies. This study provides an inside look at how the Air Force came to formulate and declare its strategic intent for developing the organization's capabilities over a timeline of more than twenty years. Air Force strategic intent is not a plan but a shared commitment to strengthening specific core competencies and critical future capabilities. Michael Barzelay and Colin Campbell reveal how one of the nation's most significant public organizations has reassessed its own strategic intent. Drawing lessons from the Air Force experience this book provides a significant contribution to public management research on innovation and executive leadership. One key lesson is that preparing for the future is a responsibility that organizations can discharge effectively if they combine insights with practical knowledge of executive leadership and the dynamics of policy change. Preparing for the Future provides a fresh argument about innovation and leadership in public management while breaking new ground in the analysis of managerial practices such as strategic v

**The Oxford Handbook of American Bureaucracy** Robert F. Durant, 2012-08-02 One of the major dilemmas facing the administrative state in the United States today is discerning how best to harness for public purposes the dynamism of markets, the passion and commitment of nonprofit and volunteer organizations and the public interest oriented expertise of the career civil service. Researchers across a variety of disciplines, fields and subfields have independently investigated aspects of the formidable challenges, choices and opportunities this dilemma poses for governance, democratic constitutionalism and theory building. This literature is vast, affords multiple and conflicting perspectives, is methodologically diverse and is fragmented. The Oxford Handbook of American Bureaucracy affords readers an uncommon overview and integration of this eclectic body of knowledge as adduced by many of its most respected researchers. Each of the chapters identifies major issues and trends, critically takes stock of the state of knowledge and ponders where future research is most promising. Unprecedented in scope, methodological diversity, scholarly viewpoint and substantive integration, this volume is invaluable for assessing where the study of American bureaucracy stands at the end of the first decade of the 21st century and where leading scholars think it should go in the future. The Oxford Handbooks of American Politics are a set of reference books offering authoritative and engaging critical overviews of the state of scholarship on American politics. Each volume focuses on a particular aspect of the field. The project is under the General Editorship of George C. Edwards III and distinguished specialists in their respective fields edit each volume. The Handbooks

aim not just to report on the discipline but also to shape it as scholars critically assess the scholarship on a topic and propose directions in which it needs to move The series is an indispensable reference for anyone working in American politics General Editor for The Oxford Handbooks of American Politics George C Edwards III      **The Two Majorities** Byron E.

Shafer, William J.M. Claggett, 1995-07-25 Why do Democratic political candidates avoid the one issue on which the general public is most in agreement with them Why do Republicans consistently raise the one issue their advisors urge them to avoid Why do voters so often exhibit patterns of policy preference vastly different from what analysts and strategists predict And why do these same voters consistently cast ballots that ensure the continuation of divided government In The Two Majorities Byron Shafer and William Claggett offer groundbreaking political analysis that resolves many of the seeming contradictions in the contemporary American political scene Drawing on an unusually large sample of all Americans taken by the Gallup organization Shafer and Claggett argue that the recent turbulence in American politics is in some ways superficial Below the surface they contend the political preferences of the American people remain remarkably stable Shafer and Claggett find that American public opinion is organized around two clusters of issues both of which are favored by a majority of voters social welfare social insurance and civil rights which constitute an economic welfare factor associated with Democrats and cultural values civil liberties and foreign relations a cultural national factor associated with Republicans Provocatively the authors argue that each party's best strategy for success is not to try to take popular positions on the whole range of issues but to focus attention on the party's most successful cluster of issues      Universal Coverage Rick Mayes, 2004 Examines why the U S is the only industrialized nation without universal health insurance coverage      The Imprint of Congress David R. Mayhew, 2017-05-23 What kind of job has America's routinely disparaged legislative body actually done In The Imprint of Congress the distinguished congressional scholar David R Mayhew gives us an insightful historical analysis of the U S Congress's performance from the late eighteenth century to today exploring what its lasting imprint has been on American politics and society Mayhew suggests that Congress has balanced the presidency in a surprising variety of ways and in doing so it has contributed to the legitimacy of a governing system faced by an often fractious public      **Disabled Rights**

Jacqueline Vaughn Switzer, 2003-02-13 Freedom and Justice for all is a phrase that can have a hollow ring for many members of the disability community in the United States Jacqueline Vaughn Switzer gives us a comprehensive introduction to and overview of U S disability policy in all facets of society including education the workplace and social integration Disabled Rights provides an interdisciplinary approach to the history and politics of the disability rights movement and assesses the creation and implementation successes and failures of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act ADA by federal state and local governments Disabled Rights explains how people with disabilities have been treated from a social legal and political perspective in the United States With an objective and straightforward approach Switzer identifies the programs and laws that have been enacted in the past fifty years and how they have affected the lives of people with disabilities She raises



questions about Congressional intent in passing the ADA the evolution and fragmentation of the disability rights movement and the current status of disabled people in the U S Illustrating the shift of disability issues from a medical focus to civil rights the author clearly defines the contemporary role of persons with disabilities in American culture and comprehensively outlines the public and private programs designed to integrate disabled persons into society She covers the law s provisions as they apply to private organizations and businesses and concludes with the most up to date coverage of recent Supreme Court decisions especially since the 2000 2002 terms that have profoundly influenced the implementation of the ADA and other disability policies For activists as well as scholars students and practitioners in public policy and public administration Switzer has written a compassionate yet powerful book that demands attention from everyone interested in the battle for disability rights and equality in the United States

*The Centrelink Experiment* John Halligan, Jules Wills, 2008-12-01

Centrelink was established in 1997 as part of the Howard government s bold experiment in re framing social policy and re shaping service delivery Centrelink was the embodiment of a key tenet of the Howard vision for public service a specialised service delivery provider agency separated from the policy functions of the purchaser Carved out of a monolithic Department of Social Security Centrelink was established along business lines operating 320 service centres and delivering payments to 10 million Australians Although enjoying monopoly provider status the organisation was required to deliver services to many different clients on behalf of its purchasing departments up to 25 in total under the terms of quasi contractual service agreements It was meant to demonstrate a greater level of both transparency and accountability for the administration of payments amounting to over 60 billion of Commonwealth expenditure For many years there was a real buzz around the Centrelink experiment and staff and clients were generally enthusiastic about the transformation However after around eight years the experiment was reined in and Centrelink was placed under closer ministerial direction and under a new managing department The experiment continues but its trajectory reflects the different pressures impacting on such dedicated services delivery agencies John Halligan Professor of Government at the University of Canberra is a foremost Australian expert on public sector governance and has published extensively on the evolution form and behaviour of the public sectors in Australia and overseas This volume is the culmination of an exhaustive empirical study of the origins and experience of the Centrelink Experiment I commend this book to researchers policy practitioners and students with an interest in policy innovation change management and the realpolitik of public sector reform

## The Enigmatic Realm of **Agency Under Stress The Social Security Administration And American Government**: Unleashing the Language is Inner Magic

In a fast-paced digital era where connections and knowledge intertwine, the enigmatic realm of language reveals its inherent magic. Its capacity to stir emotions, ignite contemplation, and catalyze profound transformations is nothing short of extraordinary. Within the captivating pages of **Agency Under Stress The Social Security Administration And American Government** a literary masterpiece penned with a renowned author, readers attempt a transformative journey, unlocking the secrets and untapped potential embedded within each word. In this evaluation, we shall explore the book's core themes, assess its distinct writing style, and delve into its lasting affect the hearts and minds of people who partake in its reading experience.

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### **Agency Under Stress The Social Security Administration And American Government Introduction**

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