

Poverty in America: A Handbook

John Iceland

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Poverty may have always been with us, but it hasn't always been the same. In an in-depth look at trends, patterns, and causes of poverty in the United States, John Iceland combines the latest statistical information, historical data, and social scientific theory to provide a comprehensive picture of poverty in America—a picture that shows how poverty is measured and understood and how this has changed over time, as well as how public policies have grappled with poverty as a political issue and an economic reality.

Why does poverty remain so pervasive? Is it unavoidable? Are people from particular racial or ethnic backgrounds or family types inevitably more likely to be poor? What can we expect over the next few years? What are the limits of policy? These are just a few of the questions this book addresses. In a remarkably concise, readable, and accessible format, Iceland explores what the statistics and the historical record, along with most of the major works on poverty, tell us. At the same time, he advances arguments about the relative nature and structural causes of poverty—arguments that eloquently contest conventional wisdom about the links between individual failure, family breakdown, and poverty in America. At a time when the personal, political, social, and broader economic consequences of poverty are ever clearer and more pressing, the depth and breadth of understanding offered by this handbook should make it an essential resource and reference for all scholars, politicians, policymakers, and people of conscience in America.



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