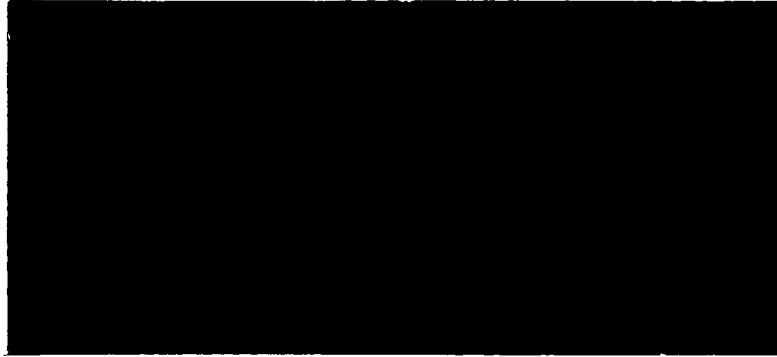




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**"Beyond Contract-versus-Charity,
Toward Participation and Provision:
On the Concept of Social
Citizenship"**

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**Contract versus Charity, Participation and Provision:
A Reconsideration of "Social Citizenship"**

by Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon

"Citizen" and "citizenship" are powerful words. They speak of respect, of rights, of dignity. Consider the meaning and emotion packed into the French "citoyen" of 1789, a word that condemned tyranny and social hierarchy while affirming self-government and status equality; that was a moment when even women succeeded in claiming address as "citoyenne" rather than as "madame" or "mademoiselle." Since then the word appears often as a prefix to another term, always adding dignity to the original, as in "citizen-soldier," "citizen-worker," "citizen-mother." The word has so much dignity it rarely appears in slang. In a few informal phrases it continues to carry approval and respect, as in "a citizen of the world" or a "citizens' committee." We find no pejorative uses. It's a weighty, monumental, humanist word.

It is telling, therefore, that Americans rarely speak of "social citizenship." That expression, if used, would convey the idea that in a welfare state citizenship carries entitlements to social provision. It would bring social provision within the aura of dignity surrounding "citizenship" and "rights". People who enjoy "social citizenship" get "social rights," not "handouts." This means not only that they enjoy guarantees of help in forms that maintain their status as full members of society entitled to "equal respect." It also means that they share a common set of institutions and services designed for all citizens, the use of

which constitutes the practice of social citizenship: for example, public schools, public parks, universal social insurance, public health services. Thus, the expression "social citizenship" evokes themes from three major traditions of political theory: liberal themes of (social) rights and equal respect; communitarian norms of solidarity and shared responsibility; and republican ideals of participation in public life (through use of "public goods" and "public services").

But the expression is almost never heard in public debate in the U. S. today. Here, social provision remains largely outside the aura of dignity surrounding "citizenship." Receipt of "welfare" is usually considered grounds for disrespect, a threat to, rather than a realization of, citizenship. Likewise, "public hospitals" are institutions of last resort, sites not of solidarity but of stigma. Public schools, once considered "cradles of citizenship," are often so inferior to their "private" (commodified) counterparts as to fit the larger pattern of "private wealth, public squalor," and public parks are often too dangerous to enter. In general, the idea of "social citizenship in a welfare state" is out of phase with powerful currents in contemporary American political culture. The connotations of "citizenship" are so positive, powerful, and proud, while those of "welfare" are so negative, weak, and degraded, that "social citizenship" here sounds almost oxymoronic.

As "the unsaid" in contemporary American political culture, "social citizenship" provides a critical lens for viewing some of

the peculiarities of that culture. One of these, we argue below, is a tendency to focus on two, rather extreme, forms of human relationship: discrete contractual exchanges of equivalents, on the one hand, and unreciprocated, unilateral charity, on the other. In contrast, the expression "social citizenship" points to another sort of relationship altogether. Its absence in the U.S. betokens--and strengthens--a cultural suppression of alternatives to the stark binary opposition, contract versus charity.

The U. S. silence with respect to "social citizenship" points to a second cultural difficulty we shall discuss below: a tendency to dissociate "political participation" and "social provision." Americans associate citizenship with "independence" and "participation," which carry connotations of activity. Public provision, in contrast, is cast as "dependence on welfare," a mode of passivity, a mere getting or receiving, as opposed to a doing. Consequently, a conceptual chasm seems to separate "participation" and "provision," and the connections between them are suppressed. In this context, activist, citizenly aspects of even the present organization of public provision are screened out; and possibilities for new, more participatory arrangements are obscured.

For these reasons, the expression "social citizenship" provides some leverage for understanding, and perhaps even transforming, American political culture. It is not, however, without difficulties of its own. Not only does it presuppose the increasingly problematic unit of the nation-state--a difficulty

we shall not discuss here--but, as we shall show, standard conceptions of social citizenship are pervaded by androcentrism and ethnocentrism. Thus our discussion proceeds simultaneously on two fronts. We use a concept derived largely from English sociological theory to critique American political culture, while at the same time, we use aspects of American history and culture to reveal some limitations of the English concept.

Our touchstone is T. H. Marshall's brilliant 1949 essay, "Citizenship and Social Class," the source for all discussions of "social citizenship." Marshall was the first to conceptualize and defend social citizenship as the crowning stage in the historical development of modern citizenship. In his conception, it was the last of three stages. The first stage, civil citizenship, he held to have been constructed primarily in the 18th century and to have established the rights necessary for individual freedom: rights to property and personal liberty, and especially the right to justice. The second stage, political citizenship, was built primarily in the 19th century, in his view, and encompassed the right to participate in the exercise of political power, whether by holding office or by voting. The third and final stage, social citizenship, was constructed in the 20th century; in Marshall's view, it not only encompassed rights to a modicum of economic security, but also entailed a more far-reaching right "to a share in the full social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society." (p. 78)

Marshall wrote, of course, at a moment of hopefulness about

social citizenship. The British electorate after World War II "ungratefully" overthrew Churchill and installed a Labour Party committed to building a welfare state. Marshall envisaged a state that would not only smooth the roughest edges off the sharp inequalities of class society, but erode class-based status differences altogether. He wrote of the importance of universal provision in creating equality of status and social solidarity: "Even when benefits are paid in cash, ... class fusion is outwardly expressed in the form of a new common experience. All learn what it means to have an insurance card...or to collect children's allowances or pensions from the post office. But where the benefit takes the form of a service, the qualitative element [of shared experience and common status] enters into the benefit itself, and not only into the process by which it is obtained. The extension of such services can therefore have a profound effect on the qualitative aspects of social differentiation."

(113) Marshall envisioned that universal educational and health services would eventually help dissolve divergent class cultures into a "unified civilization" by progressively decoupling real income from money income. He anticipated that the "minimum standard" established by public provision would in time be raised so high as to approach the maximum, so that the extras the rich could buy would be mere frills. The public service, not the purchased service, would become the norm.

Marshall's utopianism did not derive from a simple Whiggish view of progress. On the contrary, he analyzed contradictions among the three evolving dimensions of citizenship as well as

tensions among the citizens. He noted those excluded from citizenship and understood that citizenship itself had functioned as an architect of social inequality. He also grappled with the question of whether a uniform status of citizenship could be achieved while respecting the inviolability of market mechanisms and private property. He concluded, however, that the further development of social citizenship could renovate social relations toward greater equality.

T. H. Marshall's essay is tonic reading in this period of widespread pessimism about public life, but it should not be appropriated uncritically. When questions about gender and race are put at the center of the inquiry, key elements of Marshall's analysis become problematic. His periodization of the three stages of citizenship, for example, fits the experience of white workingmen only, a minority of the population. His very conceptual distinctions between civil, political, and social citizenship presuppose, rather than problematize, gender and racial hierarchy. Finally, his assumption, continued in later social-democratic thought and practice, that the chief aim of social citizenship is erosion of class inequality and protection from market forces slights other key axes of inequality and other mechanisms and arenas of domination.

In what follows, we divide our discussion into two parts. In the first, we re-examine the relationship between civil citizenship and social citizenship, focusing on the historical construction of the opposition between contract and charity. In the second, we reconsider the relationship between political

citizenship and social citizenship, focussing on the historical construction of the dissociation of participation and provision. In both parts, we try to incorporate the perspectives of those who were originally excluded from citizenship, notably, white women and minority women and men.

**Civil Citizenship and Social Citizenship:
On the Opposition between Contract and Charity**

The first "stage" of citizenship in Marshall's analysis--civil citizenship--by no means spelled progress for all affected. Rather, in raising the status of some it simultaneously lowered that of others, since the understandings that informed civil citizenship helped construct modern forms of male dominance and white supremacy, as well as of class exploitation. Nor can the development of civil citizenship be understood in isolation from the question of entitlements to social provision. The new individual property rights frequently undercut older claims for community support. And they also supported a gendered, ideological opposition between contract and charity that still structures social provision today.¹

The earliest English meaning of "citizenship" was residence in a city. Since city dwellers were among the first groups to free themselves from feudal relations of servitude, the term also carried connotations of freedom. Marshall situated the first modern citizenship in early modern England, where by the 18th century servility had been legally abolished. "Citizenship" at

this time meant free status, and the rights attaching to that status were called "civic" or "civil rights." These included the right to own property and to make valid contracts, the right to sue in court, the liberty of one's person and, after the English Revolution, freedom of speech, thought, and religious faith.

The British pioneered a resonant justification of this form of citizenship, the theory of the social contract. In its liberal variant, this theory justified modern constitutional government by tracing the origin of political power to a voluntary, conventional agreement among free, rational "men" in "the state of nature." The result of their "original pact" was government by law and, simultaneously, its other face: the legal constitution of a "civil" sphere within society in which independent individuals could contract freely with one another, secure in their persons and in their property. These individuals thus acquired legal personalities and civil rights; they became "citizens" of "civil society."

The constitution of "civil society," both in contract theory and in contract law, was tantamount to a revolution in social ontology. The subjects of civil society were "individuals," conceived as prior to their relationships. Relationships, in turn, were cast as voluntary, temporary and limited arrangements entered into out of individual self-interest. The prototypical relationship was the contractual agreement, which consisted in an exchange of equivalents. This presupposed the liberty and independence of the contractors, neutral mechanisms to enforce their agreements, and individual property in the items exchanged,

be they commodities, labor power, or opinions. In C. B. Macpherson's memorable phrase, civil society was premised on a "possessive individualism."

"Possessive individualism" was prototypically the basis of economic exchange, but its conceptual reach was far wider. It underlay the whole of modern civil society, itself broader than, albeit modelled on, commerce. The ability to enter freely into agreements or relationships of any kind presupposed freedom from subjection to a master, a condition that was imaged as self-ownership. "Individuals," therefore, were proprietors not only of the tangible goods in their possession but of their "persons" as well. The guarantees of civil citizenship thus included not just economic property rights, including the right to sell one's labor power, but also rights to personal liberty--freedom from arbitrary imprisonment and from unreasonable search and seizure; liberty of movement and bodily integrity; freedom of speech, thought, and religion--and the right to sue in a court of law in order to enforce all one's other rights.

Commonsensical as it is today, the new ontology of civil society represented a revolutionary departure from earlier views of personhood and social relations. Previous legal understandings did not recognize "individuals" as bearing rights that were prior to, and independent of, their place in a status hierarchy. Nor did they construe social relations as freely chosen, limited agreements between parties of equal status. Rather, relationally defined statuses were prior to or contemporary with individuals and constitutive of their

entitlements and obligations. Relationships, moreover, were characteristically quasi-permanent, nonvoluntary, hierarchical arrangements obligating subordinates to obey and superordinates to protect. This earlier ontology recognized masters and subjects but had no place for citizens.

The modern construction of civil citizenship presented a fundamental challenge to traditional subjectship but not a wholesale replacement. On the contrary, not even the most radical early exponents of "civil society" envisioned it as the whole of society. Nor did the most ardent defenders of the civil rights of individuals see all human beings as "individuals." Rather civil society was viewed as but one subsector within society, standing in a complex, symbiotic relation to others. And the majority of people, including women, children, servants, and slaves, were not "individuals" with independent legal personalities.

We can exemplify the apparent paradoxes here by considering two modern forms of subjection, coverture and slavery. That married women through the legal fiction of coverture were subsumed into the legal personalities of their husbands looks at first like a continuation of traditional subjectship, which is how T. H. Marshall apparently saw it. But coverture is better understood as a modern phenomenon that helped constitute civil citizenship. With the construction of civil society, married men who would have earlier been "dependents" within larger patriarchal units became family "heads" and "individuals." Family headship thus became a newly salient and honorific status,

rivalling rank, caste, and property ownership as a source of civil citizenship. By granting independent legal standing to all (white) male heads of families, coverture democratized relations among adult white men, for whom marriage conferred entree into civil society. Contra Marshall's assumption, then, the exclusion of married women from civil citizenship was no mere archaic vestige that would fade as citizenship evolved. Rather, women's subsumption in coverture was the other face and enabling ground of modern civil citizenship. The two mutually defined one another.

The same is true for the brutal new forms of slavery that emerged in the New World in tandem with the elaboration of civil citizenship. In the United States, for example, the world's most extensive civil rights for white men coexisted with history's most totalitarian, rights-depriving system of chattel slavery for Black men and women. The modern "scientific" concept of "race" justified the subjection of Blacks at the very moment when the discourse of "citizenship" proclaimed liberty the natural birthright of "man." The centerpiece of civil citizenship in the "the white republic" was property right. In the slave states, free white men were "persons," while Black slaves were "property," and civil citizenship guaranteed the property rights of the former in the latter. It is one of the great ironies in the history of civil citizenship that the first American Married Women's Property Act, passed in Mississippi in 1839, was aimed at securing slaveholders' wives rights over slaves. (%Smith 1989%) Meanwhile, the citizenship claims of white male wage workers

rested in part on their ability to earn, itself underpinned by their property in their own persons and in their labor power. But the status of "free labor" found its meaning and honor largely in contrast to the degraded condition of the slave, who labored but did not earn. (%Shklar 1991%) Here, too, then, arrangements treated by Marshall as peripheral exceptions helped construct civil citizenship's meaning.

Civil citizenship made property rights the model for all other rights, thereby encouraging people to translate all sorts of claims into property claims. It is not surprising, then, that those excluded from civil citizenship were usually those who did not own property, including those who were unable to get their resources defined as property, as well as those who were property. Conversely, some civil rights have been less valuable to the propertyless. Rights of heads of households against intruders and the state, for example, did not usually benefit women and slaves; rather these rights often deprived them of outside protection from abuse by their masters.²

Notwithstanding the rhetoric of liberal contract theory, then, civil rights were not at first rights of "individuals." Instead, they were paradigmatically rights of white male property owners and family heads, rooted in part in their responsibility for "dependents." "Having dependents," in fact, became in some jurisdictions a qualification for full civil citizenship. The legal subsumption of wives in coverture, and the legal classification of slaves as property, therefore, were no simple matters of exclusion. They actually helped instead to define

civil citizenship, for it was by protecting, subsuming, and even owning others that white male property owners and family heads became citizens.

Marshall is not quite right, then, in viewing the construction of civil citizenship as simply an elevation in the status of those men whom it freed from the bonds of dependency. It also represented a comparative demotion in status for those women, men, and children who did not then acquire independent legal personalities. Previously, to lack civil "independence" had been the normal majority condition; it was not particularly stigmatized or demeaning. But when white married men, small freeholders, and family heads achieved independent legal status, subsumption into the legal personality of another became increasingly anomalous--and stigmatizing. By the mid-nineteenth century, both coverture and slavery had come to seem abhorrent to many people. Some white women and black slaves responded by appropriating the rhetoric of social contract theory and claiming to be "individuals." But contrary to Marshall's view, they were not simply demanding admission to a pre-existing status. Rather, as we shall see, they were challenging the entire social order structuring claims to social resources that enabled white male "independence."

The construction of modern civil citizenship also transformed the basis of entitlements to social resources and thus had implications for "social welfare." In traditional, precapitalist societies, many claims to social resources were grounded in some variation of a "moral economy" that curbed

individual self-interest. There was less absolute private property, for example, as ownership was usually a matter of divided, overlapping entitlements to various kinds of use. As a result, most property was not entirely liquid, its disposition being constrained by tradition. Moral-economic understandings also constrained the conditions surrounding paid labor, removing it too from "free" market exchange. The remuneration, the content of the labor, who performed it and when--all were hedged in by a tradition that constrained all parties to the transaction.

In this context, claims on social resources were based on a variety of relationships, and many entitlements to support derived from kinship. The traditional extended family encompassed a set of relationships in which a wide range of kinfolk, and at times neighbors and villagers, had some economic responsibilities for each other. No single relationship defined anyone's whole entitlement to support, as particular relations overlapped one another to form longer chains of dependency and wider webs of responsibility. These arrangements were patriarchal, to be sure, but as such they differed markedly from coverture. Women figured as centrally, though without as much power, as men in the full range of kin-based relationships. Thus, far from depending exclusively on husbands, wives usually had a variety of different bases on which to claim needed resources.

The rise of civil citizenship eroded these arrangements, in part by creating a new form of property right that trumped customary obligations and entitlements. When land became a commodity, rural populations lost their customary rights of

tenancy and use. Later, "reforms" of traditional poor relief weakened customary entitlements to community support, facilitating the creation of a "free" market in labor--free, that is, from the moral-economic strictures of the "just wage." For the majority, consequently, the property right enshrined by civil citizenship spelled dispossession.

It was just such new forms of property right and labor contract that T. H. Marshall had in mind when he claimed that the rise of civil citizenship at first set back social citizenship, impacting negatively on the welfare of many. But he failed to notice the gender and family meanings of civil citizenship, which were equally full of portent for welfare. The construction of (white) men's citizenly entitlement as household heads simultaneously created women's unique "dependence" on husbands. Thus, civil citizenship helped create the norm of the family wage and undercut earlier, kin-based claims on social resources.³

These arrangements signalled the contraction of kinship to one "sphere" of society, a counterpoint to, and support for, "civil society." Whereas all social relations had earlier been formed from or modelled on kinship, kinship now became merely one social arena among others, and its cultural meaning altered. Now the "kinship sphere" became the realm of "the domestic," a "private sphere" of familial intimacy and affect. (Nicholson 1986) The result was the appearance of a sharp new disjuncture between two radically different kinds of claims to social provision, associated with two different "spheres" of society. In civil society, provision seemed to be organized via contract;

resources were exchanged for exact equivalents in discrete, monetarized transactions between self-interested independent individuals. In the domestic sphere of the intimate family, in contrast, resources appeared to flow with sentiment wholly outside the circuit of exchange.

Increasingly the disjuncture between the two "spheres" came to be understood ideologically. Contractual exchange, the principle of civil society, became hegemonic and was increasingly viewed as the basic form of human interaction. Many noncommercial transactions were understood in these terms, as contract functioned as a metaphor for the presupposition of rational choice, in which the motive was self-advantage. For example, the same motive that supposedly defined the behavior of consumers and sellers was invoked as defining political relations. And the contract metaphor reconstructed the meaning of paid labor as "wage labor," a supposedly free and equal contractual exchange of labor power for wages.

As contract seemed to hold sway over a progressively larger share of human relations, the range of alternatives seemed to narrow. Noncontractual forms of reciprocity were increasingly assimilated to contractual exchange, and unilateral helping seemed the only alternative. Thus, the hegemony of contract created the modern conception of "charity" as its complementary other. Whereas contract connoted bilateral exchange, self-interest, rationality, and masculinity, charity took on contrasting connotations of unilateral gift-giving, altruism, sentiment, and femininity. The contrast, moreover, assumed the

guise of a conceptually stable binary opposition that exhausted all conceivable possibilities.

The binary opposition between contract and charity was ideological in at least two respects. First, in the modern conception of charity, the giver got moral credit while the taker was increasingly stigmatized. That distribution of value was inherently unstable, however, since the stigmatization of recipients naturally spawned doubts about the merits of giving. From at least the nineteenth century, such doubts fueled repeated waves of "reform" that sought to counter the "degenerative" effects of "indiscriminate giving" both on recipients and on society as a whole. Thus contract repeatedly menaced charity, and what had appeared to be a stable dichotomy was always in danger of dissolving.

Second, because the contract-versus-charity dichotomy seemed to deny the possibility of noncontractual reciprocity, it occluded the existence of a whole range of popular practices that defied the official categorization. Kinship and neighborly obligations continued strong, despite the ideology of the independent nuclear family; and informal mutual aid persisted in a variety of guises and forms. Yet these practices took on a more shadowy quality as they lost public legitimacy and recognition. In time, the lack of a language to validate their existence contributed to their decline and decay.

Thus, the contract-versus-charity dichotomy increasingly remade reality in its image, crowding out other types of relations. It impressed its stamp strongly on state provision of

welfare, which developed along dichotomous lines. In the United States, for example, government programs tended to bifurcate into two streams. Those with the most legitimacy took on some of the trappings of civil exchange, guaranteeing secure entitlements to some citizens by mimicking private contracts. Other programs, in contrast, were cast as proffering unreciprocated aid to the "innocent" and "deserving" poor, with the state assuming the role of charitable benevolence. These two streams, moreover, were strongly gendered. The contract stream had its first U.S. prototype in "workman's compensation" (industrial accident insurance), while the charity stream was exemplified by "widows' pensions."

The gender-coded contract-versus-charity dichotomy persists today in most countries in the opposition between "social insurance" programs and "public assistance" programs. The first were designed by reformers to appear "contributory," seemingly embodying the principle of exchange; thus recipients, originally intended to be male and relatively privileged members of the working class, are defined as "entitled."⁴ "Public assistance," in contrast, continued the "noncontributory" charity tradition, so that its recipients appear to get something for nothing and to remain outside contractual norms.

That, at least, is the official appearance, but the reality is considerably more complicated. Numerous social insurance advocates of the early 20th century knowingly used the term "contributory" as a rhetorical selling device for the new programs, fully aware that all welfare programs are contributory,

differing only as to where and how the contributions are collected, through taxes, wage deductions, etc. Moreover, despite their official image as contractual, U.S. Social Security "insurance" programs depart significantly from actuarial principles, and benefits do not actually reflect financial contributions. Furthermore, while the legitimacy of Social Security retirement pensions derives in part from the view that they compensate previous service, one might with equal plausibility claim that seemingly "noncontributory" programs like Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC, the successor to mother's pensions) compensate the childrearing "service" of single mothers.⁵ In any case, the contract-versus-charity dichotomy is less a true picture of the two tiers of American state provision than an ideology of their differential legitimacy, one premised on the privileging of waged labor and on the derogation of women's unpaid care work.⁶

Not only did the construction of civil citizenship affect the design of welfare programs, but, conversely, the stratified, gendered construction of social welfare has affected the conditions of civil citizenship. Receipt of public assistance often meant curtailment of civil rights. For example, AFDC claimants in the U. S. have been denied the right to interstate travel (abridged by state residency requirements); the right to due process (abridged by administrative procedures for determining eligibility and terminating benefits); the right to protection from unreasonable search and seizure (abridged by unannounced home visits); the right to privacy (abridged by

"morals testing"); and the right to equal protection (abridged by all of the above). By contrast, receipt of "social insurance" entailed no comparable loss of civil rights.

Significantly, in the 1960s and 70s, legal arguments aimed at securing recipients' civil rights sought to establish that welfare benefits are not a "gratuity" or "promise of charity" but a form of "property." These arguments were designed to conform to the reigning interpretation of the due process clause of the U. S. Constitution, which holds that its protections apply only to deprivations of property.⁷ In this interpretation and the surrounding arguments, the contract-versus-charity dichotomy is clear. Only by reclassifying public assistance as property and recasting recipients as independent contractors could their civil citizenship be maintained. Yet as some welfare rights activists noted at the time, these terms could not express a vision of full social citizenship. The arguments from welfare as property yielded some procedural safeguards, but they did not establish a substantive right to economic security in the form of an adequate grant. Although public assistance recipients won rights to due process, they won no right to be lifted out of poverty, let alone any right "to a share in the full social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society."⁸

In the contract-versus-charity dichotomy, contract is the more powerful pole. It is understandable, therefore, that reformers seeking to win social rights tried to move "welfare" from the charity to the property side of the line. They bent the

property idiom to new purposes, but they ran up against the limits of a strategy that sought to model social provision after civil citizenship. That strategy was necessarily fraught with tensions, since civil citizenship is premised on either/or oppositions between gift and exchange, dependence and independence, while social citizenship points beyond these oppositions to solidarity and interdependence.

More in line with the deep logic of these ideological oppositions is the recent attempt by U.S. neoconservatives to assimilate "welfare" to "contract." Their strategy is announced in Lawrence Mead's influential 1986 book, *Beyond Entitlement: The Social Obligations of Citizenship*, which argues that citizenship is a two-sided status conferring not only rights but responsibilities. Mead proposes to correct liberals' putative one-sided emphasis on welfare rights by introducing contracts in which welfare claimants must "agree" to accept work, training, and/or other obligations in return for their grants, thereby entering the sphere of exchange. Yet he neglects to explain how the proposed transaction could be a valid contract--a voluntary, free agreement between independent individuals--when one party lacks the barest means of subsistence while the other is the U. S. government.

The appeal of arguments like Mead's shows that the contract myth remains a difficulty for social provision today. Since the wage appears as an exchange in return for labor, it is argued that all resources should be apportioned in terms of exchange. The fear that welfare "chiselers" are getting "something for

nothing" becomes the embittered response of many who work hard and get little; their own paltry remuneration becomes their norm and they see themselves as cheated by welfare clients rather than by their employers. Such responses are only exacerbated, moreover, when the poor are constructed as racially "other." The result is that, with the threat of a major depression looming, the claims of the poor today are far weaker than they were in traditional societies, thanks to the contract-versus-charity dichotomy.

In sum, civil citizenship stands in a tense, sometimes contradictory relationship to social citizenship. This is nowhere more true than in the United States, where civil citizenship remains inflected by notions of "contract" and "independence," while social provision has been constructed to connote "charity" and "dependence." What is missing is a public language capable of expressing ideas that escape those dichotomous oppositions: especially the ideas of solidarity, noncontractual reciprocity, and interdependence that are central to any humane social citizenship.

**Political Citizenship and Social Citizenship:
On the Relation between Participation and Provision**

Marshall saw political citizenship as a discrete concept and a determinate stage in the progress of civilization. He used the concept to refer to participation in policy-making and distinguished it from social citizenship, by which he meant entitlement to social provision. Such a separation of

participation from provision is a standard feature of official political culture, especially in the United States. Yet historically systems of participation were never separable from systems of provision; and they developed in tandem, not sequentially. The two notions are conceptually related, moreover, since participation requires provision as a condition of its possibility; they only appear separable when both are reductively defined.

In fact, the development of political citizenship cannot be understood in isolation from the question of entitlements to social resources. Nor without challenging the dominant but limited conceptions of "participation" and "provision" that Marshall presupposed. These conceptions, which derive from liberalism, reduce political citizenship to voting and provision to collecting government benefits. Consequently, they occlude other important forms of participation and provision: notably, the activism of the disfranchised--in popular social movements, for example; and what is arguably the most universal form of social provision, the nonmarket labor of women. In addition, the dominant understandings in the United States often polarize participation and provision, associating the former with "independence" and "activity," the latter with "dependence" and "passivity." They thereby inhibit the capacity to envision new forms of social citizenship that could integrate participation with provision.

In what follows, we reconsider the relationship between these concepts, showing how Marshall's limited definitions of

them led him to truncate and distort their history. We argue, first, that the qualifications for modern political citizenship were defined in ways that presupposed specific systems of social provision; second, that the democratization of modern political citizenship was not the simple quantitative extension of a fixed status but a series of uneven and bitterly resisted struggles over the content of the status, which seemed to threaten entrenched systems of provision; and third, that historical struggles for political citizenship were not always distinguishable from struggles for social citizenship.

Throughout, we try to restore the suppressed connections between participation and provision, while reconstructing the process by which they came to appear dissociated from one another.

We begin by recalling that political citizenship has usually comprised a smaller, more exclusive subset of the larger, but already exclusionary circle of civil citizenship. Political participation has typically, albeit reductively, been identified with voting and office-holding, activities viewed as prerogatives to be conferred in accordance with "qualifications." Throughout most of modern European and American history, only a minority of those subject to the laws of any given state have been deemed deserving of these prerogatives. Those excluded have either been denied citizenship altogether or cast as "passive," as opposed to "active," citizens.

When properly interpreted, legal qualifications for political citizenship constitute a veritable map of assumptions about social entitlement. Qualifications have varied with time

and place, but most have been glossed in terms of "independence," which has itself had different interpretations. "Independence" has minimally meant freedom from subjection to a master, a requirement that excluded slaves, servile peasants, and indentured servants. Yet that sort of independence has only rarely been considered sufficient. Additional, more stringent requirements have included heading a family or household, thus excluding wives, children, and servants. More stringent still is "economic independence" in the sense of property ownership, which excluded not only slaves and most women, but also white male wage laborers and tenant farmers. Finally, "independence" has also meant possession of a requisite set of mental, moral, and/or martial capacities, including rationality, public-spiritedness, and physical bravery. That sort of "independence" has been assumed to be constitutionally lacking in white women and in members of "inferior races," in the U.S., for example, in Blacks, Native Americans, and Chinese.

All these meanings of "independence" simultaneously defined contrasting senses of "dependence," which constituted disqualifications for political citizenship. All were also inflected by constructions of gender, race, and class. Contra Marshall, those inflections were not attenuated but exacerbated with the construction of modern political citizenship. The more patriarchy and tyranny came under attack in, for example, 18th century France, England, and the U.S., the less "dependents" such as women, servants, and subordinated peoples seemed citizen-like. (%Kerber 1990%) The American Revolution radically strengthened

the pejorative meanings of "dependency," emphasizing its powerlessness and removing its implications of mutuality. At the same time, as the designers of the republic mapped out its governance, they widely assumed that "independence" was a prerequisite for political participation. Later this rationale was reversed: women could not be trusted as voters, antisuffragists argued, because men would herd them to the polls. (%Gundersen 1987%) And servants were too identified with their masters to act independently of them.

In these cases, the "independence" and "dependence" defining political citizenship formed a vicious circle. First, the discourse helped to normalize conditions that made certain categories of persons appear "dependent." Then, the resulting "dependence" of those persons was invoked to disqualify them from opportunities which would have made "independence," and hence political citizenship, possible.

Underlying this circularity, however, was another, more embarrassing complication: The "independents" were dependent on the "dependents" for the production of their political qualifications. Some "democratic" theorists made this explicit with respect to family headship. For example, Rousseau's "tutor" tells Emile, "when you become head of a family you are going to become a member of a state." (%Pateman 1985%) Likewise, Thomas Jefferson proposed that the suffrage be granted to family heads as well as to property owners on the grounds that a man's dependents, like his property, constituted his stake in the society, hence his qualification for political rights. Those

proposals treated the subordination of some people, deemed undeserving of the vote, as grounds for enfranchising others. So did the rules apportioning electoral representation prior to the American Civil War, by which the numbers of slaves served to increase the weight of the votes of their masters. In both cases, the "dependents" constituted the qualifications of the "independents."

In the preindustrial era, the same was true of the worker and the employer, but white workingmen eventually succeeded in overturning that arrangement. They won the suffrage in England by valorizing labor in a way that recast the relationship between "participation" and "provision." They reinterpreted "economic independence" to mean above all "breadwinning," earning wages to maintain a household and support a dependent wife and children. Eventually, the new ideal of "the family wage" underwrote the husband's political participation by pronouncing him the sole family "provider" and his "breadwinning" the sole qualifying labor. This new constellation of meanings obscured women's and children's contribution to the family economy. Thus, it simultaneously denied women's "provision" and legitimized their "non-participation." Yet it was still the case that a wife's unrecognized labor supported her husband's political participation, and that he depended on her for the production of his qualifications. Thus, household production and nuclear family organization constituted, in essence, a system of provision that made possible male householders' political participation.

Moreover, the rise of modern political citizenship may

actually have set back social entitlement, a possibility Marshall failed to consider. Inasmuch as it revalued "independence" and devalued "dependence," the culture surrounding modern political citizenship tended to lessen the sense of obligation to the needy and to undercut traditional modes of claiming help. Certainly, tensions increased between political participation, associated with "independence," and claims to public provision, associated with "dependence." During the nineteenth century in the U. S., for example, the poor who were "dependent" on "public provision" often forfeited political rights, just as they had in the English poor law tradition. (%Katz 1986; Abbott 1934; Brown 1940; Marshall 1950; Nelson 1990%) Thus, shifting meanings of "participation" and "provision, " "independence" and "dependence," formed the conceptual substructure of modern "political citizenship," linking its history to that of social entitlement.

Assumptions about provision not only saturated definitions of qualifications for political citizenship, they also underlay struggles over who qualified. That was nowhere more true than in the 18th-century United States, where republican influence was strong and the value accorded "participation" was high. The republican tradition associated citizenship with "material self-reliance." It propounded an activist view of citizens' participation in government as requiring deliberative reason and public virtue, qualities deemed wanting in "dependent" white women and people of color. Republicans assumed, in addition, that republican government required the absence of factions or

interest groups and a homogeneous citizenry. Together, these assumptions gave some support to a restrictive view of the franchise. And that view remained influential even after the development of a less strenuous, interest-oriented, liberal conception of politics, which reduced political participation to voting.

Throughout their history, Americans have conducted a romance of the vote, some fighting great battles to prevent others from having it, others struggling mightily to win it for themselves. In these struggles the vote was not only an instrument for influencing policy in order to get what one wanted; it was also a matter of "standing," of being "in" or "out," "above" or "below." Enfranchisement in the U.S. meant not being a slave or a woman, an Indian or a Black. [%Shklar 1991%] Even some of the "outs" internalized this view. In the struggles surrounding the passage of the 15th amendment, for example, some white woman suffragists were enraged at the thought that Black men would be able to vote while white women would not. Every bit as racist as the men of their peer group, they could not endure to "stand" beneath Blacks.

The vote thus was a marker of distinction, and it was employed precisely to maintain distinctions. Yet the distinctions at issue were usually rooted in systems of provision, which a limited franchise helped preserve. Thus, electors' (economic and emotional) investment in entrenched systems of provision frequently fueled intense resistance to enfranchising "dependents." Certainly, anxieties about provision

were particularly vivid in the resistance to women's political citizenship.⁹ Anti-woman suffrage propaganda, for example, repeatedly featured images of women attending meetings rather than cooking, men forced to wear aprons, etc. Thus, the resistance derived not only from the fact that woman suffrage would force men to share political power but also from the perceived threat to the system of provision on which they depended.

The intensity of the resistance to democratization has often been missed due to dominant but erroneous views, like Marshall's, which posit a steady expansion of the franchise. In fact, the spread of political citizenship was highly uneven and bitterly contested, due largely to its inseparability from "the social question." In the U.S., movements to roll back previous increases in the suffrage have been as strong and historically momentous as have been movements to further extend it. The most famous example, of course, is the disfranchisement of southern Blacks in the late 19th century by means of poll taxes, literacy and residency requirements, "good character" tests and violent intimidation; this was a response to growing black economic power, aspirations for landownership, and threats to the sharecropping system. It was soon followed by a less well-known but major reduction of white workingmen's voting in the north. Voting had peaked at the end of the 19th century when nearly 80% of those eligible actually went to the polls; but only males were generally eligible, and these voters were often controlled by the clientelism of political party machines. That system was

challenged in the election of 1896 when populism threatened a strong third-party movement. The response of political elites and party leaders was a large-scale disfranchisement that reduced national voter turnout to 49% by 1924. They employed some of the same techniques used in the south as well as new ones: pre-election voter registration requirements that were disproportionately burdensome for the poor and the foreign-born. In addition, the governance of many cities was removed from the influence of voters altogether by the replacement of elected mayors and aldermen with appointed city managers or city commissions. By the time of the woman suffrage amendment, these restrictions were all in place. They combined with many women's lack of comfort in actually existing (male) politics to produce a turnout at the polls for white women that was at first even lower than white men's. (Piven and Cloward 1988) The refranchisement of southern Blacks had to wait for the struggles of the 1960s and remains incomplete to this day. In the early 1980s--after substantial Black refranchisement--U. S. voter turnout averaged 53%.

Contrary to Marshall, one can hardly describe this history as the progressive expansion of the franchise. Moreover, to the degree that the franchise did eventually widen, the effect and meaning of the gain was not merely a quantitative expansion of an entitlement whose meaning was fixed. It is misleading to see political citizenship, as Marshall did, as a fixed set of powers that are occasionally redistributed. Rather, the struggles over enfranchisement were also struggles over the forms and boundaries

of political participation as such, especially in relation to social provision. At stake was not only the size and composition of the electorate but also what it was to have power over, hence a challenge to the liberal definition of the state. Most parties to the struggles over Black and woman suffrage thought that these democratizations could not be contained within the existing "democracy," that new "participation" would challenge old systems of "provision."

Woman suffrage, for example, was not about adding some voters to the rolls but about ending the system of coverture that had defined the norms of modern gender relations. Thus, the resistance involved not merely men's reluctance to share power, but a passionate defense of a whole social, cultural, and economic system. Conversely, the women's campaign for the vote and against coverture was directly related to "social welfare." As we saw, a citizenship based on the political participation of male family heads had been premised on a system of "social provision" in which nonfranchised women cared for children and men. The "political participation" of women required a substantially new system of "social provision." Feminists were asserting not only that coverture was unjust but, first and foremost, that it did not work, that women and children did not in fact get any satisfactory guarantee of personal well-being from that system. The relatively low rates of women's political office-holding today, seventy years after enfranchisement, reveal the impact of their continued responsibility for the care of others. For over a century now, U S feminists have been in the

forefront of the struggle for social citizenship, and even today the "gender gap" is significant on welfare issues.

Black enfranchisement also challenged prevailing distributions of social entitlements; the definition of emancipation, for African Americans, included "40 acres and a mule." The first national effort to raise freedpeople to citizenship, the Freedman's Bureau, was essentially the first federal welfare agency; its overthrow was the first step on the road to Black disfranchisement.¹⁰ Once denied the franchise, Blacks developed other forms of political activism, equally concerned with provision, and among Blacks, as among whites, women disproportionately assumed responsibility for these efforts, organizing schools, old age homes, orphanages, health care, kindergartens. The classic rendition of early-20th century Black history as a struggle between the giants W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington could be mapped onto the distinction between political citizenship and social citizenship, with Du Bois emphasizing the need to challenge racism and unequal treatment and Washington stressing "race-uplift" through self-help. Washington's approach rested on an assumption similar to Marshall's, namely, that citizenship comes in stages--first one kind of rights, then another; but he argued that social welfare must precede demands for legal and electoral equality. Du Bois's approach, in contrast, was to insist that Blacks could not advance socially and economically without civil and political equality. Yet recent historiography, especially that including Black women's public-sphere activism, tends to challenge the

dichotomy, noting wide areas of overlap between the two aspects of Black activism. Race-uplift campaigners could not in fact avoid challenging segregation and legal subordination, while anti-discrimination activists always recognized the urgency of social welfare projects. (Gordon 1991) When both kinds of activism are located within the context of civil-rights thought, labelling the first "apolitical" and "social," and the second "asocial" and "political," seems artificial and misleading. Today, 130 years after the end of slavery, with Black poverty and its attendant damages at genocidal levels, it is abundantly clear that there can be no civil or political citizenship for African-Americans without social citizenship. Racial equality, like sexual equality, cannot be achieved within the terms of liberal or republican models of citizenship that divorce political participation from social provision. These limits were clear to Black leaders within a few decades after emancipation. Every civil rights struggle since then has included demands for affirmative government action within the meaning of social citizenship.

Moreover, a proper understanding of the development of political citizenship requires rethinking what counts as political participation. We must decenter the vote in that definition as new social histories show us that, long before they could vote in the U. S., minority men and all women engaged in a variety of campaigns that considerably altered the political order. Consider, as a beginning, the impact of abolition agitation and the underground railroad. Disfranchised women,

even while denied legal independence by the apparatus of
coverture, organized powerful reform movements throughout the
nineteenth century, influencing national policy in areas such as
slavery, sexual regulation, welfare, family law, and children's
rights. For these women, the struggle for social citizenship
came before they won political citizenship. In fact, they cited
their prior record of agitation for social provision as an
argument for their enfranchisement and civil independence. Some
historians have gone so far as to label the universe of discourse
created by elite white activists a distinctive, coherent,
alternative female political culture. (%Baker; Sklar%) If this
is true it was a political culture that foregrounded welfare
issues. And in this regard, Black women's "political culture"
was similar. Some have argued that white women's autonomous
political power and effectiveness actually declined with
enfranchisement, as they became more integrated into standard
electoral activity. (%Freedman%) In any case, it would be
difficult to make historical sense of a distinction that labelled
"apolitical" voteless women's agitation through the National
Consumers' League for legislative regulation of working women's
wages and hours, while labelling "political" the mobilization a
few years later of franchised women for the Sheppard-Towner Act
establishing maternal and infant health services. Just so it is
unconvincing to label "apolitical" such activities as a Black
sorority's mobile health van which, in the 1930s, defied southern
landlords by bringing health services to sharecroppers, while
labelling "political" women's voter registration work of the

1960s.

Even the historical experience of many white men does not fit Marshall's sequential model. Where do unions and related venues for working class male activism fit in his troika of citizenships? The conservative trade-unionist self-definition as normatively economic and apolitical was hardly the only perspective and prevailed only after great struggles.

The history of such subordinated groups defies approaches, like Marshall's, that draw sharp distinctions between "the social" and "the political." Many historical actors did not think that the right to vote was distinct from the distribution of wealth. Political citizenship was not built via the progressive extension of rights whose meaning was fixed and independent of social welfare. Rather, political participation has always been closely connected to social provision in ways that are complex and often contradictory. As we saw, the participation of some rested on the provision of others; and the full participation of those "others" required structural changes in the organization of provision. Thus, although it is true in principle that political rights can be used to secure social rights, social security has proved necessary in practice for the full and effective exercise of political power. Historical struggles for either one have usually also involved the other.

Yet despite these connections, democratic movements in the United States never fully succeeded in integrating political citizenship and social citizenship, participation and provision. Certainly, the hegemonic American political culture does not

today see poverty as a deprivation of political rights, nor child care as an essential political right of women. Part of the reason is the continuing hegemony of gendered and racialized cultural meanings which value participation over provision. Political participation, associated with independence and activity, is still too often reduced to voting and separated from the help and interdependence that make it possible. Social provision, in contrast, is equated in the U. S. with "collecting welfare" and associated with dependence and passivity; or with low-status human-service work. As a result, the official political culture retains a blind spot both for extra-electoral participation and for the non-state, non-market provision that women so often supply.

Among the groups who have on occasion directly challenged the divorce of participation from provision are welfare recipients. Such a challenge was central to struggles of the National Welfare Rights Organization in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The NWRO organized poor women who qualified for AFDC special allowances to apply en masse, as a political act. In so doing, they not only called national attention to the plight of poor women and children but also demonstrated that claiming benefits as a matter of right was itself a form of democratic participation. Inspired perhaps by their example, political theorists like Barbara Nelson have recently argued that receipt of welfare should be reconceived as political participation. (Nelson 1980) And others have called attention to the amount of time, energy, and activity that is required to get on, and

stay on, the rolls. Claiming is not just "receiving" benefits, then, but citizen participation and work.

Still, most Americans today view welfare recipients as passive takers, not active doers. And the welfare system itself tends to enforce that interpretation by a mode of administration that produces "clients" as opposed to "citizens." Thus, reality conspires to fulfill the conceptual divorce of participation from provision. The result is to perpetuate longstanding tensions between political citizenship and social citizenship, tension premised on interpretations that oppose independence to dependence, activity to passivity, participation to provision. What is missing is a language and a practice that can restore the suppressed connections, thereby helping us to envision new, more participatory arrangements for organizing provision.

Conclusion

[to follow]

1 In this essay we use "social citizenship" to refer to Marshall's, and others', vision of an ideal "welfare state;" where we refer to actually existing welfare, we call it "social provision" or the like.

2 Today there is such a critique of privacy rights; see

MacKinnon. Nevertheless, many functional rights of women originated as protection of the property of their masters; this was the case, for example, of laws against (extra-marital) rape. 3 That at least was the situation in theory. In fact, very few men actually earned a wage sufficient singlehandedly to support an economically dependent wife and children--so the paid and unpaid labor of wives and children was crucial to the family economy.

4 Central to that construction, and to the entire opposition between contract and charity, is the hegemony of wage labor as the privileged basis of entitlement. This privilege is ironic, of course, since the view of the "wage labor contract" as a free agreement between independent individuals is a mystification. Yet that fiction supports the presumption that social insurance beneficiaries are independent contractors, hence full citizens of civil society.

5 Some advocates of the early 20th century state "mothers' pensions" programs, the forerunners of AFDC, justified these programs as compensating motherhood, which they cast as a valued service to society on a par with soldiering. Yet the pensions, like AFDC later, never supported motherhood per se but only single motherhood. Moreover, the compensation for service view was never institutionalized and it had largely disappeared by the time the state programs were federalized in the Social Security Act of 1935. By then wage labor had become so hegemonic that it and military service were the only bases of entitlement to

provision other than abject need. See Ann Orloff paper and Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Mothers and Soldiers* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming).

6 Moreover, there is also a third tier of provision, not even visible to the casual observer, that equally defies the dichotomy. This is the whole range of occupational "fringe benefits" and market-purchased pensions and insurance available to unionized workers, the salaried middle classes, and the wealthy. Usually considered "private," and thus quintessentially contract as opposed to charity, this provision enjoys a tax exempt status that amounts to a major government subsidy, one that could even be considered a "handout." But it, too, appears legitimate because of its link to paid employment, the quintessential form of "contribution" in a male-dominated capitalist society.

7 Reich, "The New Property," and "Beyond the New Property." Sparer, "The Right to Welfare." Other contributors to Brooklyn Law Review Symposium on the 20th anniversary of *Goldberg v. Kelly* (esp article by Sylvia Law). Majority opinion of the Supreme Court in *Goldberg v. Kelly* and Justice Black's dissent.

8 Sparer (1970) provides the most lucid and politically astute account of the achievements and limitations of the legal strategies pursued in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Reich (1990) and Simon (1990) describe the partial erosion of procedural safeguards as a result of court decisions of the 1970s and 1980s.

⁹After the Civil War the 14th amendment to the U. S. Constitution codified a gender hierarchy which had existed informally since the establishment of the republic: while the first section of the amendment offered citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States," the section on the vote inserted the word "male" for the first time in the Constitution in order to decree that some citizens would vote and others would not. That amendment was written after three decades of women's-rights and abolitionist agitation had raised sensitivities to the point at which it no longer seemed safe to use gender- and race-neutral terms such as "persons" to mean white men. Even after the passage of the woman suffrage amendment, women continued to have fewer rights than white men; the rights they gained came piecemeal, over centuries, by the layering of legislation on judicial decisions and vice-versa. When the struggle for woman suffrage is examined in the context of other democratic movements, the length of time it took to win and the intensity of the resistance stand out dramatically.

10 Feminists too were influenced by the role of the federal government in abolishing slavery and, like many civil rights activists, tended to look to the federal government to help win female citizenship. See DuBois, 1990.

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