

Lisa Dodson

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Professor Dodson teaches in the *Poverty, Families, and Social Policy* specialty area, focusing on the effects of poverty and related public policy in the US; low-income work and family life; and collaborative research methods. Professor Dodson also conducts field-based research, providing opportunity for student research and community-based engagement. Her research is currently funded by the Crittendon Women's Union and previous research was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Service Employees International Union, and the Ford Foundation.

Education

1993, Ph.D. Social Research and Public Policy, Heller School, Brandeis University
1983, Master of Public Health in Maternal and Child Health, School of Public Health, Boston University
1975, B.A. Political Science with honors, Boston University

Books

The Moral Underground: How Ordinary Americans Subvert an Unfair Economy (The New Press, 2010). Based on seven years of mixed-method research, the book examines moral dilemmas and economic disobedience among middle-class and working-poor people, in response to unsustainable wages and deepening economic disparity.

Don't Call Us Out of Name: The Untold Lives of Women and Girls in Poor America (Beacon Press, 1999) Based on seven years of qualitative research, this book examines the life course of poor women and families in the context of welfare reform policy.

Harvard University 1996-2002

Public Policy Fellow at the Radcliffe Public Policy Center
Lecturer in Sociology and Women's Studies

Awards and Fellowships

2002-2003: Harvard Law School Fellowship
2001-2002: Research Fellowship, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study
2000: Harvard University Joseph R. Levenson Award, nominated for "*academic excellence and dedication in teaching*"
1997-1999: Policy Fellowship, Radcliffe Public Policy Center
1999: Toth Award for Best Single Author Study of American Culture
1999: Boston Author's Club Award
1991: Peter Heller Fellowship
1987: Alfred E. Frechette Award for Outstanding Contribution in Public Health Research

Publications

Dodson, L. and L. Schmalzbauer (2009) "Poor Women and Habits of Hiding: Participatory Methods in Poverty Research" in *Qualitative Educational Research Readings in Reflexive Methodology and Transformative Practice*, editor Luttrell, Routledge Press.

Dodson, L. and W. Luttrell (2009) "Family Ties and Blind Policies: Mothers and Children Climb Together" in *The Future Rests on Working Moms*. Forthcoming volume of the Civil Rights Project, University of California, Los Angeles.

Dodson, L. and R. Zinzavage (2008) "It's Like a Family: Caring Labor, Exploitation and Race in Nursing Homes" *Gender & Society* 21(6).

Dodson, L. (2007) "Wage Poor Mothers and Moral Economy" *Social Politics: International Journal of Gender, State & Society* 14(2).

Dodson L., D. Piatelli, and L. Schmalzbauer (2007) "Researching Inequality through Interpretive Collaborations: A discussion of methodological efforts to include the interpretive voices of participants in research findings" *Qualitative Inquiry* 13(6).

Dodson L., D. Piatelli and L. Schmalzbauer (2006) "Behind the Scenes" A conversation about interpretive focus groups in *Feminist Research Practices*, Editors Hesse-Biber and Leavy, Sage Publications.

Dodson, L. (2006) "After Welfare Reform: My Children Come Before this Job" *Focus: Journal of the Institute for Research on Poverty* 24(3).

Dodson, L. and L. Schmalzbauer (2005) "Poor Women and Habits of Hiding: Participatory Methods in Poverty Research" *Journal of Marriage and Family: Special Issue on Theory and Methodology* 67.

Dodson, L. and E. Bravo (2005) "Managing Work and Family: Why It's Not Working for the Bottom Third" *Work, Family and Democracy*, Editors Beem and Heyman, The New Press.

Dodson, L. and J. Dickert (2004) "Girls' Family Labor in Low-Income Household: A Decade of Qualitative Research" *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66.

D. Belle and L. Dodson (2004) "Poor Women and Girls in a Wealthy Nation" in *Handbook of Women's and Girls' Psychological Health*. Editors Worell and Goodheart, Oxford University Press.

Dodson, L. and O. Cole (2002) "On Acting White: Mother-Daughter Talk" in *When Race Becomes Real: Black and White Writers Confront Their Personal Histories*. Editor Singly, Lawrence Hill Books.

Dodson, L., T. Manuel, and E Bravo. (2002) “Keeping Jobs and Raising Families in Low-Income America: It Just Doesn’t Work” Radcliffe Public Policy Center Publications, Harvard University.

Dodson, L. (2000) “At the Kitchen Table: Poor Women Making Public Policy” in *Women and Welfare: Theory and Practice in the United States and Europe*. Eds. Hirschmann and Liebert, Rutgers University Press.

Dodson, L. (1999) “This River Runs Deep: Single Mothers in Poor America” in *Lost Fathers: The Politics of Fatherlessness*. Editor Daniels, St Martins Press.

Dodson, L., P. Joshi, and D.McDonald. (1998) *Welfare in Transition: Consequences for Women, Children and Communities* (with P. Joshi and D. McDonald) Radcliffe Public Policy Center Publications, Harvard University.

Dodson, L. (1996) “*We Could Be Your Daughters*” Girls, Sexuality and Pregnancy in Low-Income America, Radcliffe Public Policy Publications, Harvard University.

Courses

Poor Law to the Working Poor

From “warning off paupers” to welfare reform and unsustainable wages, this course offers an overview of American attitudes and public policies toward poor/low-income people and their children from colonial to contemporary society. The course examines race, gender, and citizenship versus “stranger” status in patterns of American inequality and policy responses.

Research at the Margins: Research in a Context of Inequality

This advanced methods course focuses on graduate students research related to poverty and socioeconomic marginalization. The curriculum is tailored to projects that graduate students bring to the class methods with a focus on field research. We examine “habits of hiding” in conditions of marginalization, developing collaborative research design, creative methods of data gathering, and interpretive approaches that include people “under study.”

Carework and Inequality

What is carework? Is it work, family duty or a public good? And what does love have to do with carework? This course examines historical patterns and social forces that circumscribe caring labor and traces carework as a form of reproductive labor, primarily provided by women and girls. We then explore the “commodification” of care or carework for hire and the development of a global class of careworkers, largely low-income women of color.

Women, Families and Survival Strategies: Race, Class and Gender

This course examines the work and family nexus with a focus on how mothers manage to negotiate the labor market and also their ongoing role as primary – or sole – family care takers. Race, class, ethnic/immigration and gender issues are integrated throughout, drawing out the profound stratification of resources to which parents have access, trying to keep families safe and intact.

University Committees

Current *Poverty, Families, and Social Policy Specialty Area*

The Poverty, Family, and Social Policy specialty area, a new track within the Sociology Department, is a carefully coordinated and progressively challenging curriculum of classes that address poverty, effects of poverty on families, and related social policy. Drawing from the principles of Public Sociology, the concentration is designed for both graduates and undergraduates and seeks to integrate community-based research and service-learning projects with academic study.

2004 - 2008 *Boston College Institutional Review Board Member (IRB)*

The university board reviews all Boston College human subjects protocol, sets guidelines for research with human subjects and board members provide IRB guidance in their academic departments.

Previous Faculty Appointment

Harvard University

2000-2002 Department of Sociology

Lecturer: *Poverty, Policy and Controversy*: Historical and contemporary issues in American poverty and the evolution of public welfare as controversial policy.

1999-2001 Committee on Degrees in Women's Studies

Lecturer: *Women, Girls and Poverty*: An examination of the intersection of gender, class, race and ethnicity in America.

Research

Current: Principal Investigator 2009-2014

Career and Family Opportunity Study: Funded by the Crittenton Women's Union this five-year, mixed-methods study will follow the lives of 30-40 low-income single parents and their families and the effects of a comprehensive career development and asset-building program .

Principal Investigator 2005-2007

Engaging Workers and Improving Care: Undertaken by an interdisciplinary research team (including healthcare policy experts and an economist from Brandeis University) and sponsored by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Commonwealth Foundation.

Senior Researcher 2004 - 2005

Better Jobs and Better Care: This research was a collaborative study funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropy with Brandeis University,

studying job and care quality in long-term care facilities in Massachusetts, with a focus on frontline careworkers.

Principal Investigator 2001-2003

Lower-Income Work and Family Research Project: Funded by the Ford Foundation this study pursued themes uncovered in previous research, examining effects of unsustainable but demanding jobs on parents, children, family life and community institutions including childcare centers, schools and workplaces.

Sponsored research at Harvard University

Co-Principal Investigator (2000-2001) Harvard Law School

Study on *Border Crossings*, a research and public policy project comparing American and global human rights projects and economic development practices.

Principal Investigator (1999-2001) Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study

Across the Boundaries: A national 2-year study on work, family and community life in low-income America, funded by the Ford and Annie E. Casey Foundations.

Principal Investigator (1998-1999) Radcliffe Public Policy Center

Welfare in Transition: A study on low-income, single-mother families during welfare reform funded by Cities of Cambridge and Boston.

Principal Investigator (1996-1999) Radcliffe Public Policy Center

Conducted post-doctoral research on low-income girls and family work roles and produced monograph, "*We could be your daughters*" funded through Radcliffe Public Policy Center grant.

Selected previous sponsored research

Senior Research Associate 1994-1996

Tobin Family Support Program: W.K. Kellogg Foundation research project at the Maurice J. Tobin School in Mission Hill, Boston that examined the impact of parental involvement upon children and educational programs.

Senior Research Associate 1993-1994

Healthy Transitions/Healthy Futures: W.K. Kellogg Foundation research project of the Urban Health Institute of New England Medical Center that examined the career development of a young people from low-income urban neighborhoods who were involved in a multi-service youth support program.

Senior Research Associate 1990-1991

Designed and wrote successful million dollar program proposal to the National Office of Substance Abuse Prevention for a residential facility, the *Basta Program*, for young mothers at risk of domestic violence and substance abuse, for Casa Myrna Vazquez, the largest domestic violence sheltering network in Massachusetts.

1981-1988 Senior Management in Public Policy

Founder & Director of the Division of Women's Health Commonwealth of Massachusetts

This position had the responsibility of providing overall leadership, development, and supervision of a multi-million dollar, government program. The Women's Health Division projects included: Black Women's Health Project, Refugee Family Health, community-based maternal and child health programs, domestic violence prevention project, Work/Family Life project for lower-income employees, and a Research and Evaluation unit.

Awards and commendations during tenure

- *Appointment to Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence* by Michael Dukakis toward integrating the needs of domestic violence survivors with the demands of the criminal justice system.
- *First Massachusetts Women's Health Achievement Award* for individual who contributed outstanding contribution to the health of women in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1988
- *Alfred E. Frechette Award for individual who performed outstanding public health service*, Massachusetts Public Health Association, 1987
- Finalist, *Innovations in American Government, Institute for Government Innovation*, 1986

During my tenure, the Women's Health Division of Massachusetts developed from a small program to a multi-million dollar state division with ten professional staff people funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Victims Assistance, & other national and state offices.

Selected Talks 2001-2009

2009

"Lower-Income Work and Family: Different Meanings of Stigma and Work Flexibility"
University California, Hasting College of Law.

2008

"Family Ties and Blind Policies: Mothers and Children Climb Together"
Civil Rights Project, University of California, Los Angeles.

2007

"Equal opportunity and best employment practices for low-income families"
Oral and written testimony for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
Washington, DC.

"Nurse practitioners and the challenges of serving low-income mothers and families "

Yale University, Office of Scholarly Affairs

“Sustainable Incomes as a Work and Family Issue”

Barnard College, Center for Research on Women
Class and Work/Family Dilemma

“All the World’s Kin: Carework as Social Transformation”

University of Massachusetts
Keynote speaker for “Gathering at the Well” annual address

“Wage-Poor Mothers and Moral Economy”

Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference

“Bridging Academia and Activism”

Keynote Panel, Graduate Consortium on Women’s Studies

2006

“Social Research as Acts of Democracy”

Harvard Graduate School of Education
Research Seminar Series on Families and Inequality

“Researching Inequality: Methods of inquiry, ethical dilemmas, and personal challenges”

Brandeis University
Heller Distinguished Scholars series

“Of Hearts and Markets: Fictive kinship, caring and exploitation in long-term care industry”

American Sociological Society and Society for the Study of Social Problems: Session on Carework

2005

“Livelihood and Family Life: Maternal strategies among low-wage workers”

Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin, Madison

“Family life and the effects of low-wage work”

Center for Family Policy and Practice, San Francisco
Annual Conference: Race, Domestic violence and Fatherhood

2004

“Human rights, the working poor and welfare reform”

Boston College Women’s Law Center

“Work and family care in low-wage America”

Harvard Law School Seminar

“Poor women, interrogatory histories and poverty research: ‘You got to be careful what you say’”

Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Conference

2003

Surviving Poverty, Work, and Bias in Post-Welfare America: How Black and Latino Mothers Try to Cope with the Continuing Legacy of the Color Line

Harvard Civil Rights Project of Harvard University

”From 9-to-5 to 24/7: How Workplace Changes Affect Families, Work, and Communities”

Business and Professional Women’s Foundation and Women’s Studies
Research Center of Brandeis University, Orlando, Florida

2002

US Congress: Congressional briefings, legislative round table and caucus presentations on research findings

Democratic and Republican House Ways and Means Committee Staff, House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the Senate Finance Committee. Briefings to staff or congresspersons, including: Senators Hillary Clinton (D-NY), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), James Jeffords (I-VT), Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Herb Kohl (D-WI), and Paul Wellstone (D-MN), and Representatives Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), Nancy Johnson (R-CT), Sander Levin (D-MI), John Tierney (D-MA), and Lynn Woolsey (D-CA). Also presented research at a congressional briefing organized by the Democratic Task Force on Reauthorizing the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program with Representatives Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Patsy Mink (D-HI), co-chairs of the task force, and Representative Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA), co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues

The Bookings Institution, Washington DC

“Living on and off welfare: Ethnographic Research on Low-Income Families”

The Harvard Club, Boston

“When work doesn't pay” Real Life in Low-Income American Families

Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Annual Conference

“Work, Family, and Community in Low-Income America”

2001

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Symposium at Harvard University

“Ordinary Heroines: Family and Work in Low-Income America”

The Cambridge Forum, Cambridge

“Children’s Work: Subsidizing the Nation’s Economy