Means-tested government assistance in the United States requires recipients to meet certain criteria and continue to maintain their eligibility so that benefits are paid to the “truly needy.”

**Policing Welfare** shows how the enforcement regime of welfare has been constructed to further stigmatize those already living in poverty and deepens disparities of class, race, and gender in our society.

"Policing Welfare is a breakthrough book, a close-up examination of how welfare fraud investigation units institutionalize surveillance and punishment as the chief imperatives of contemporary welfare bureaucracies in the U.S. Spencer Headworth’s rich empirical study skillfully integrates insights from the sociology of law, stratification, and organizations to show how welfare enforcement erodes the dignity of impoverished citizens literally struggling to purchase a simple loaf of bread. It is a remarkable accomplishment that shows how debates on inequality and policing must be broadened to include welfare agents and the criminalization of poverty."

- Benjamin Fleury-Steiner, author of Dying Inside: The HIV/AIDS Ward at Limestone Prison

**Readers**

**Kaaryn Gustafson**
University of California, Irvine-School of Law
Director, Center on Law, Equality and Race
Associate Dean of Academic Community Engagement

**Kathryne Young**
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Assistant Professor and Honors Program Coordinator