



The Other America: Yesterday and Today

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1962: Four Documents – and Their Impact

- *The Other America* – Michael Harrington
 - The War on Poverty and Medicare/Medicaid
- “The Port Huron Statement” – SDS
 - The 1960s student movement
- *Silent Spring* – Rachael Carson
 - The environmental movement
- *The Feminine Mystique* – Betty Friedan
 - The modern feminist movement

The Other America
Poverty in the United States
by Michael Harrington



*The book that sparked the
War on Poverty*



a Penguin Special 95c

Who and Where Were Harrington's Poor?

- People 65 and over
- Children under 18
- Rural
 - Migrants
 - Appalachian farmers
- Urban
 - African Americans
 - Rural migrants (especially from Appalachia)
- Small town
 - Mines close
 - Factories move

**If a free society cannot help the many who are poor,
it cannot save the few who are rich.**

- John F. Kennedy, 1963

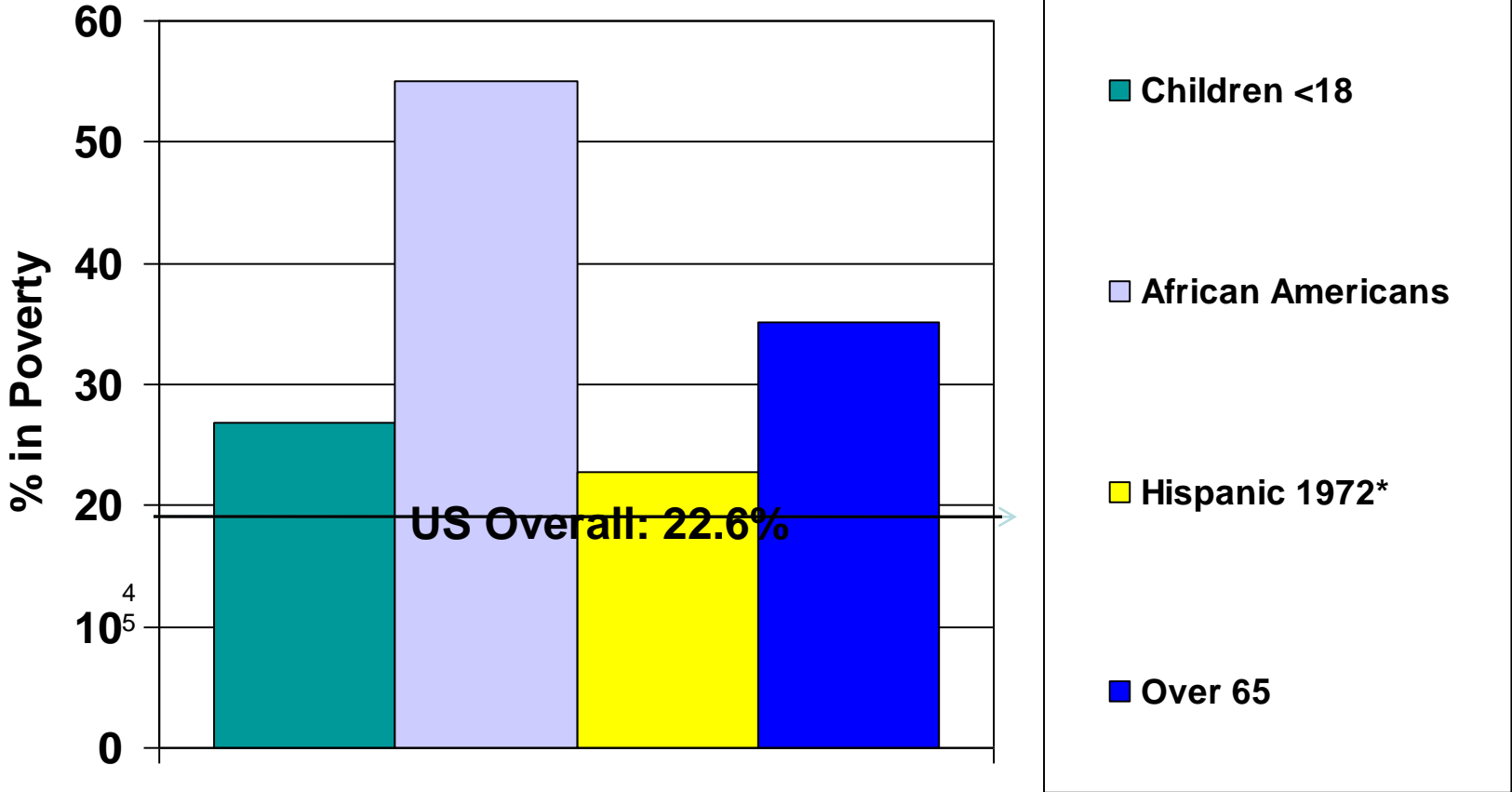
**In the sixties we waged a war on poverty, and poverty
won.**

- Ronald Reagan, 1987

The poor you will always have with you.

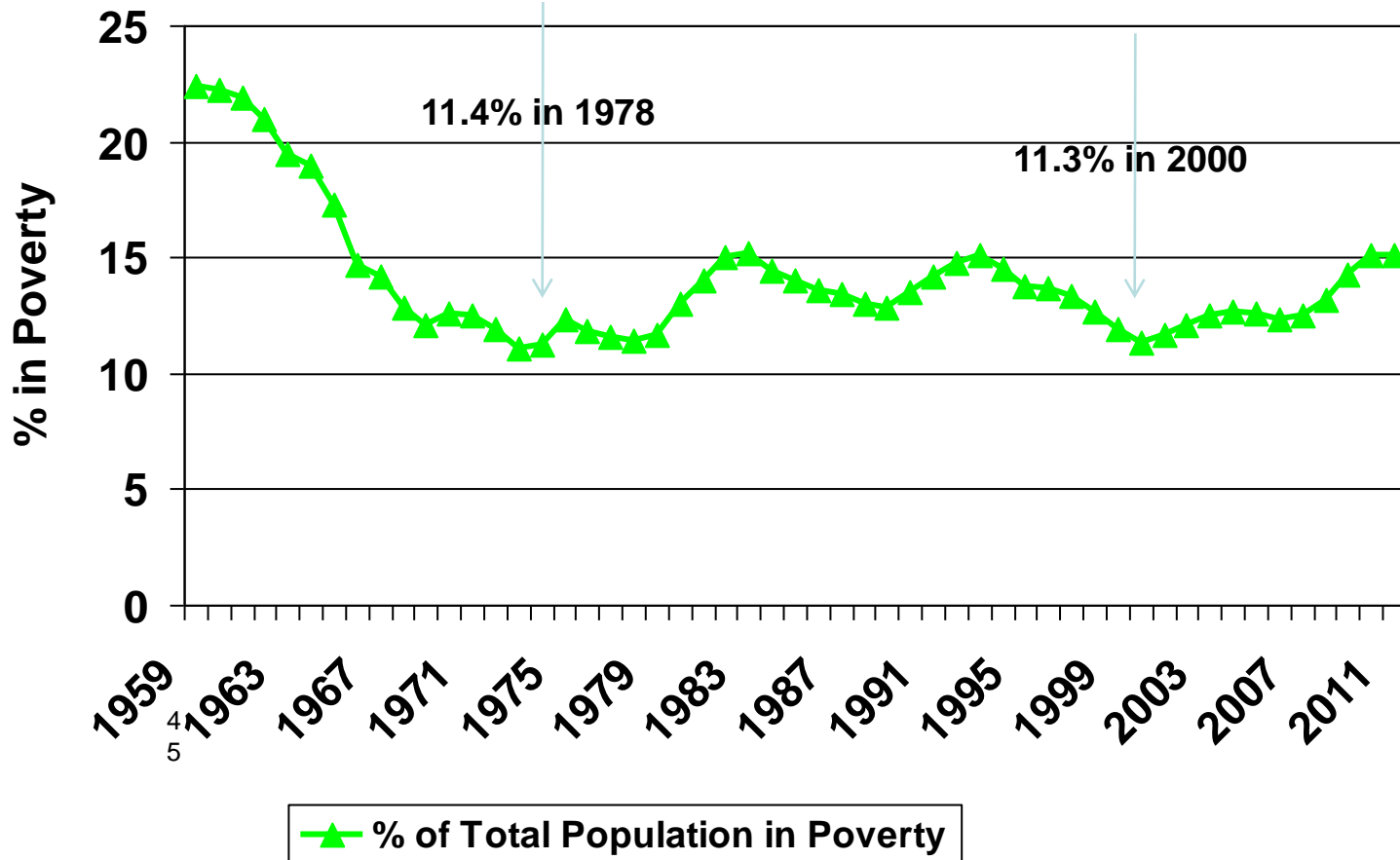
- Matthew 26:11

Who Was Poor When Michael Harrington Wrote *The Other America* (official stats)



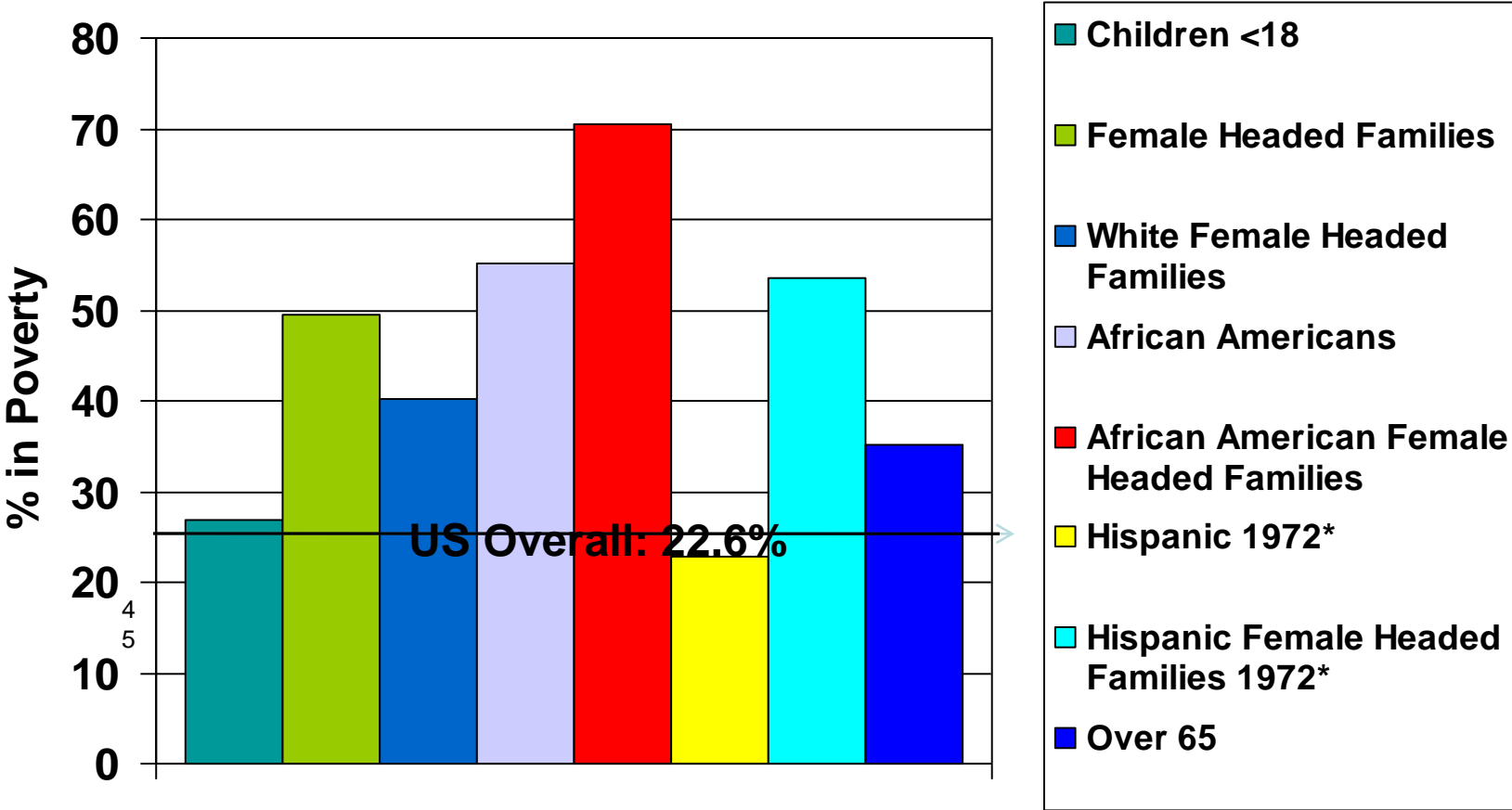
*1972 was the first year separate data was reported for Hispanics

Percent of Population Officially Poor, 1959 - 2011



In 1987, Reagan gave up fighting poverty.

Who Was Poor When Michael Harrington Wrote *The Other America* - another view

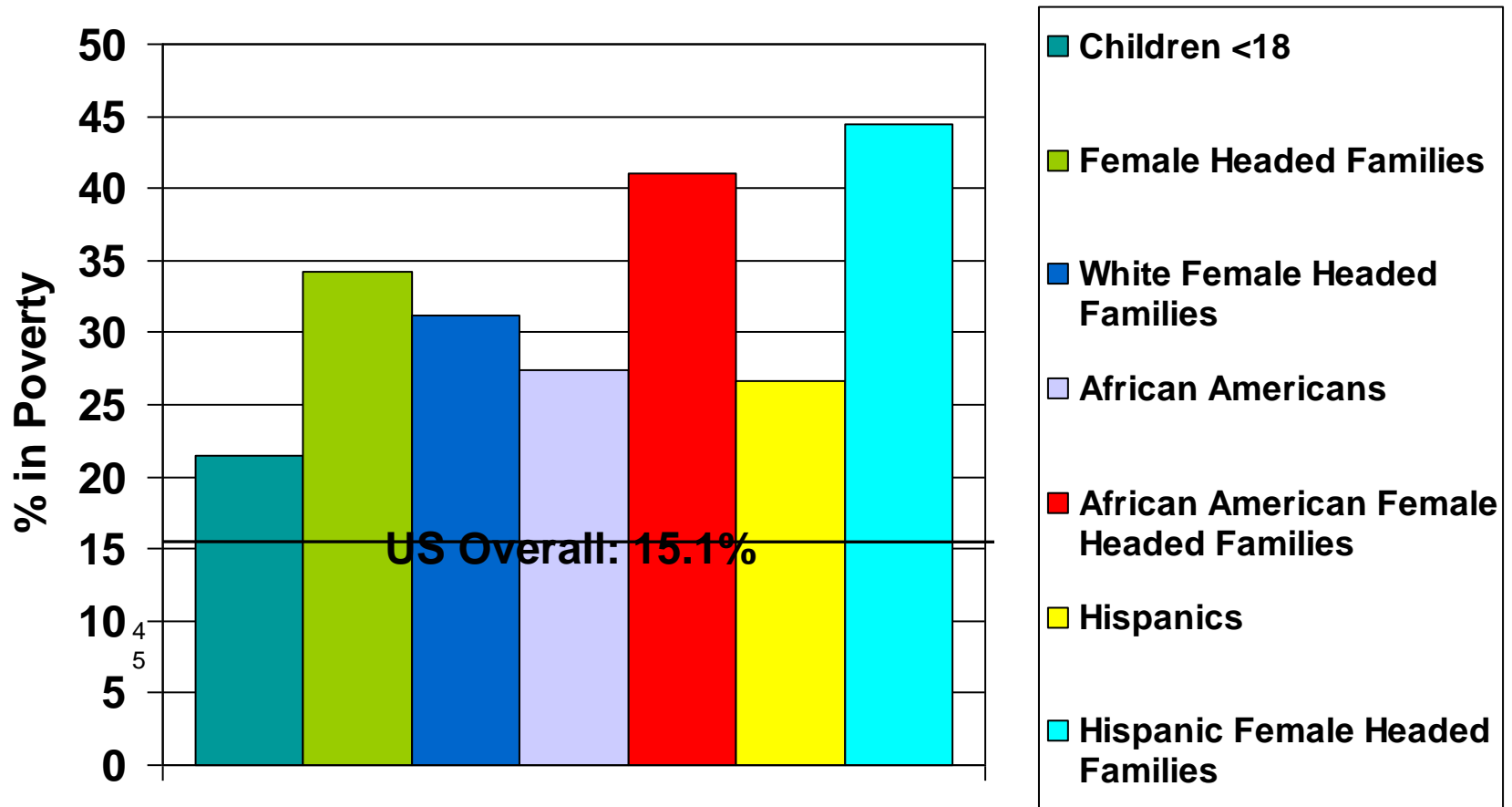


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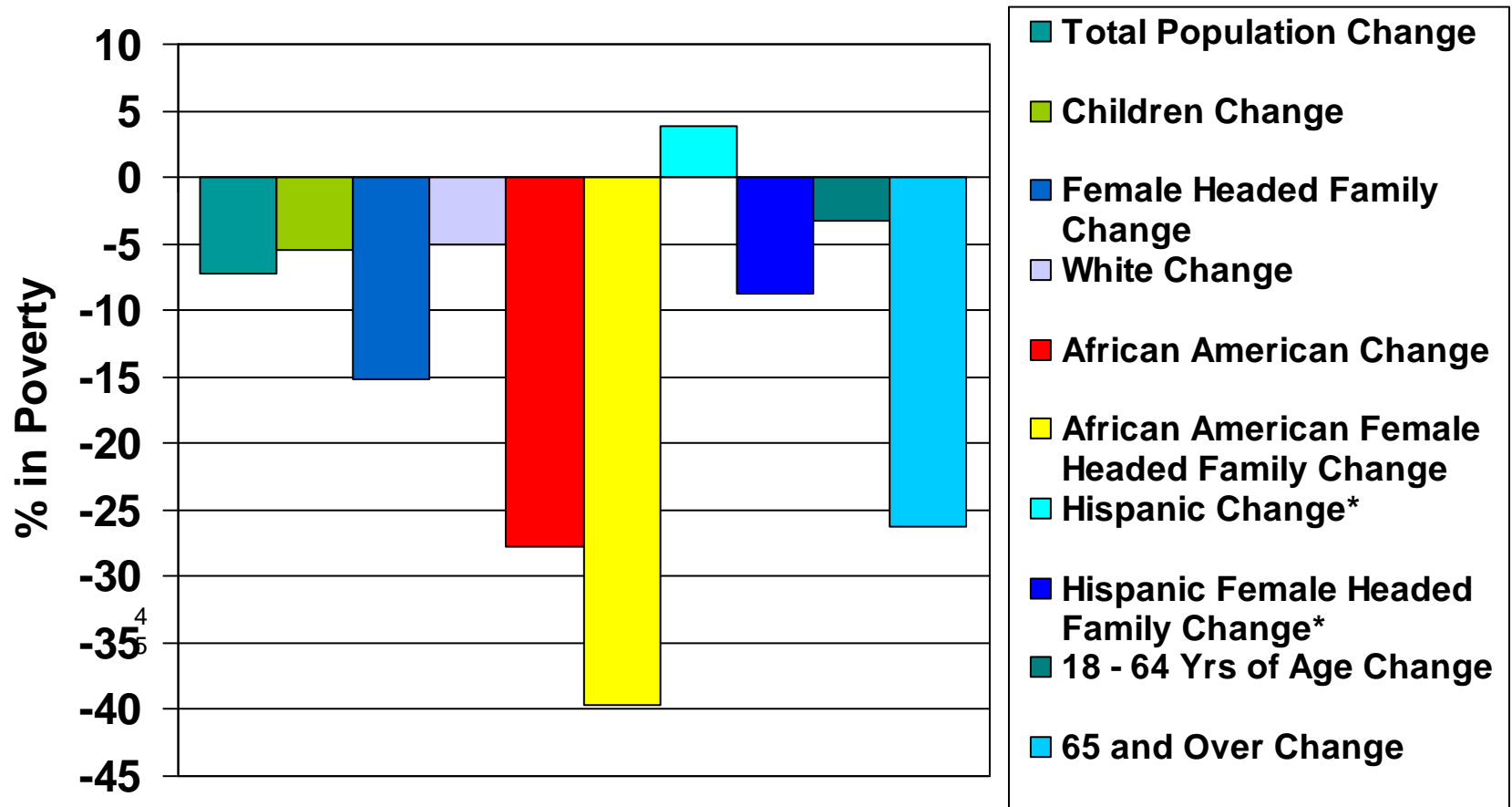
“A tremendous growth in the number of working wives is an expensive way to increase income. It will be paid for in terms of impoverishment of home life, of children who receive less care, love and supervision.”

- Michael Harrington, *The Other America*

Who Is Poor Today: 2011 Official Statistics



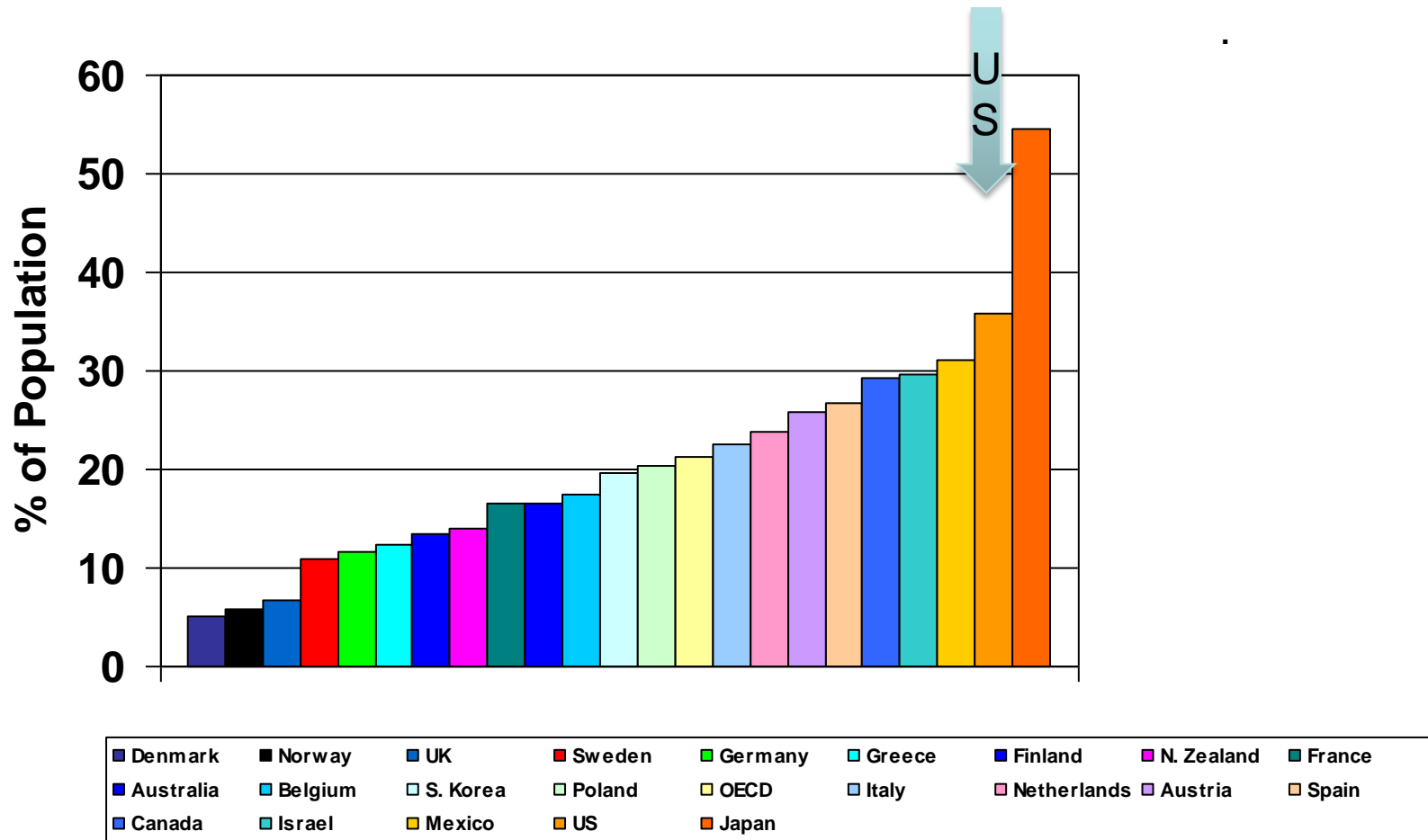
Changes in Poverty Status, 1959 vs. 2010



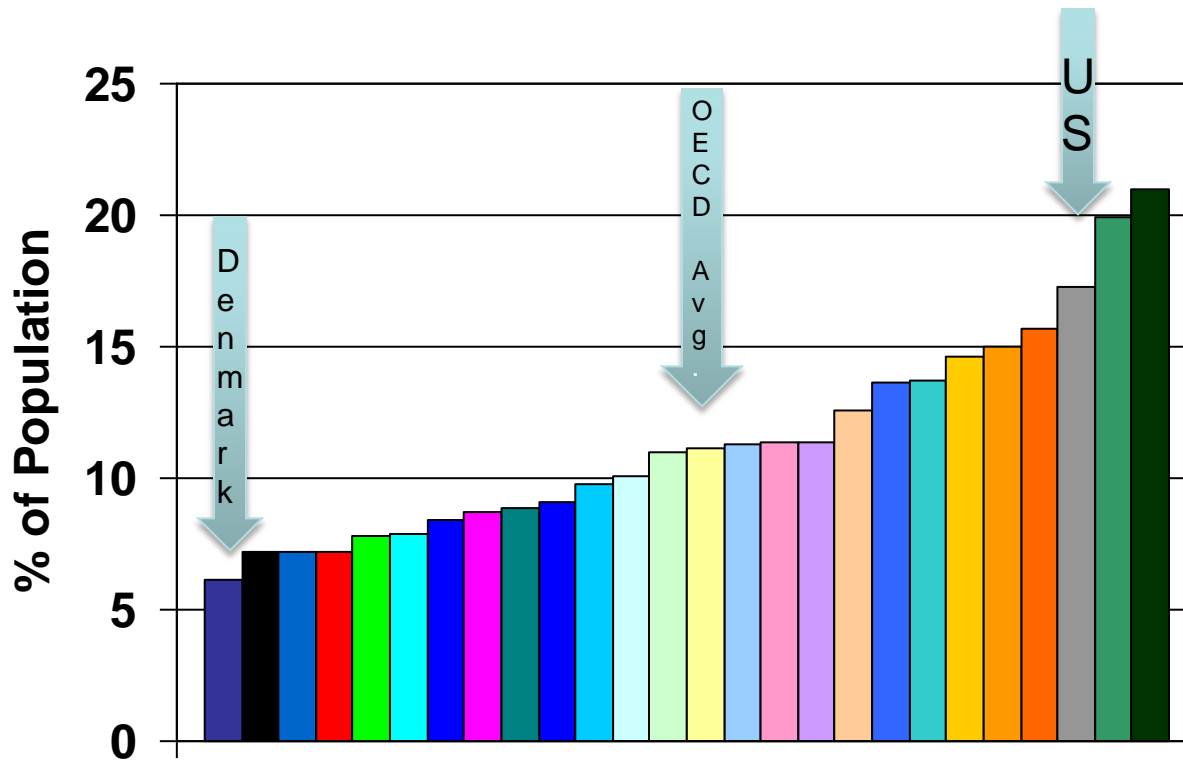
From Poverty to Inequality

The US in Comparative
Perspective

Percent of Children in Poverty in Single Parent Families, Parent Working (2008/2009)



Percent of Population with Incomes Less Than 50% of the Median (2007/2008)



1 in 6 workers in the US earn less than half the median income.

In Denmark, only 1 in 16 workers earn less than half the median income.

Denmark	Austria	Netherlands	France	Norway	Finland	Sweden
Switzerland	Germany	Belgium	Ireland	Poland	New Zealand	OECD
United Kingdom	Canada	Italy	Greece	Portugal	Spain	Australia
Korea	Japan	United States	Israel	Mexico		

Where the Jobs will be: 2010 - 2020

Occupation	Median Annual Wage, 2010
All Occupations	\$33,840
Registered Nurses	\$64,690
Retail Salespersons	\$20,670
Home Health Aides	\$20,050
Personal Care Aides	\$19,640
Office Clerks, General	\$26,610
Food Preparation and Service Wkrs	\$17,950
Customer Service Representatives	\$30,460
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Drivers	\$37,770
Laborers (freight, stock, hand, etc)	\$23,460
Postsecondary Teachers	\$45,690

A Social Market Policy for Labor

- CPEG jobs program: A job for anyone willing and able to work.
 - Create 4.5 million new jobs/yr for five years
 - Most of those jobs would be **direct hires in the public sector**
 - Would pay a living wage (\$18/hr)
 - Included training and a training level for youth entering the labor force
 - Include training to being provide skills to workers who may not usually hold these jobs (e.g., women in construction)

A Social Market Policy for Labor: II

- Three targeted areas for employment:
 - **Physical infrastructure** (highways, bridges, schools, etc.)
 - **Social infrastructure** (CNAs, caring for very young and very old, teacher aids, etc)
 - **Green economy** (manufacturing/services with higher labor content)
- How much would it cost?
 - \$175 billion/cohort or \$875 billion by year 5

What would this Social Market Policy for Labor do?

- It would end poverty and solve our unemployment problem
- It would generate increased aggregate demand in the economy
- It would change the power relationships in the workplace

- Is there anything out there like this?
- Yes, HR 1000 (Conyers

“Do you think that, in general,
most people can be trusted?”

From Poverty to Inequality

Social Trust and Inequality

