The first book to study women's poverty over the life course, this wide-ranging collection focuses on the economic condition of single mothers and single elderly women--while also considering partnered women and immigrants--in eight wealthy but diverse countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In a rich analysis of labor market and social welfare sectors, Gertrude Schaffner Goldberg and a team of outstanding international contributors conclude that both living-wage employment and government provision of adequate benefits and services are necessary if lone women are to achieve a socially acceptable living standard. Taken together, the chapters extend a feminist critique of welfare state theories and chart nations' disparate progress against poverty -- probing, for instance, how Sweden emerged a leader in the prevention of women's poverty while the United States continues to lag.

Features:
- The first analysis of women's poverty over the life course
- Extends feminist critiques of welfare state theories
- Compares labor market forces and government policies across eight countries
- Covers single mothers, elderly women, and immigrants
- Predicts the future of feminized poverty in light of the study's findings

By identifying the social and economic policies that enable women to live independently, Poor Women in Rich Countries provides nothing less than a blueprint for abolishing women's poverty.