

**Financial Fetters:
Mothers, Lone Parents
And
Welfare Reform, Winnipeg in the 1960s**

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of Manitoba's social welfare system in the 1960s based on findings in the provincial and City of Winnipeg's annual reports. In order to understand the position of welfare administrators during this decade, a general history of welfare reform is included. This history begins with the early forms of relief and incorporates a comparison of welfare programs as they developed in Canada and the United States. The main focus of this thesis is to determine the effect that welfare policies had on single mothers. In order to understand these policies an in-depth examination of the monthly allowances, the application process and the level of stigmatization surrounding welfare is included. This thesis concludes that the Mothers' Allowance program was the precursor of today's social safety nets, which culminated in a fully-realized social welfare system in the 1960s.

Introduction

Welfare recipients will have to cut grass, paint fences and clean up neighbourhoods – or see their benefits cut – as part of an ambitious plan of reforms the Tories will announce this week....“It’s about giving something back in exchange for getting something...We know passive welfare is bad for people.”¹

¹ “Want welfare? Get to work, Tories say,” In *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 16, 1999, 1-2.

“Want welfare? Get to work, Tories say.”² The headline reflected a common and long-standing sentiment when I first began studying welfare histories in the late 1990s. After nearly a decade of fiscal restraint and economic restructuring, we had entered a renewed phase of poor bashing. With fears of lay-offs, and adjustments to the federally funded Unemployment Insurance Act, euphemistically retitled Employment Insurance in 1996, taxpayers appeared to be losing their compassion towards the less fortunate of our society. I found myself intrigued with the stigma attached to welfare recipients and was curious about whether or not there had been any changes over the last few decades as to how the poor were regarded by mainstream society.

I was first drawn to the study of welfare because as a “starving student” I had the unforgettable experience of living in a subsidized townhouse run by the Manitoba Housing Authority of Winnipeg. (At that time rents for students were set at a base rate of \$79.00 per month, an offer that was hard to turn down.) When I first moved there, the complex was made up of a heterogeneous group comprising of students of all levels from adult education to University, low-income earners and welfare recipients. The welfare recipients were comprised mostly of single mothers, including those who chose to live in poverty in order to stay at home with their children, and those who had grown up in welfare homes. This setting offered me for the first time, close exposure to welfare mothers, with whom I had had no former experiences.

Over time I came to realize that welfare recipients do indeed have their own culture. The positive aspects of this culture included looking out for each other when times were rough. I met many people who were generous with the little that they had; neighbours often borrowed food, feminine hygiene products, vacuum cleaners or offered the use of washing machines in order to

² *Ibid.*, June 16, 1999, 1-2.

avoid the stress of taking young children to the local laundry. On the other end of this scale, ran an undercurrent of blame and jealousy aimed at those of us who were trying to improve our lot in life. As neighbour spied on neighbour, and rumours ran rampant throughout the complex, I began to suspect that many of these women had too much time on their hands, and too little money to enjoy their so-called freedom from the working world. For the most part, I was impressed with how these women coped with the intrusive home-visits from social workers, and the constant monitoring of their lives, both physically and economically. I was most impressed, however, with their ability to survive on such limited finances.

Life has its own ironies, and so long after I had moved out of housing, while in the middle of my graduate studies, I was forced to turn to the institution I was now studying. My son who by this time had been ill for a few years suddenly took a turn for the worse and I had to pull him out of grade six. Between home schooling and running from doctor to doctor, specialist to specialist, I was unable to either work on my thesis or support myself financially. I was left with no option but to apply for social assistance. Once I was able to get past the front-line person who was quite disgusted with female students who could not make their financial aid last until the end of the year, I was quite pleased with the way I was treated. I assumed this was because of my situation. I was unable to support myself due to illness in the family and was often reminded that this is what welfare was there for. The most interesting aspect of my initial foray into welfare was that it was no longer referred to as welfare or social assistance, instead it was now called the “Income Supplement” program. The implication of this term was quite clear. All applicants, excluding single parents with pre-school children, were expected to look for work while receiving benefits. During orientation, as it was explained to other single mothers and

myself, we were expected to undertake a comprehensive work search, as laid out in the guidelines given to all applicants.

I was now faced with the reality my former neighbours faced on a daily basis. I experienced, first hand, how to survive on a subsistence level of income. As a single mother with one child, I was allowed a monthly allowance of \$816, or \$9,792 per year. Since I was living in a subsidized unit in a housing co-op my rent was re-evaluated from 25% of my previous earnings to \$374 per month, or nearly 46% of the monthly allowance. In theory that would have left me \$442 for the rest of the month, but there were more surprises in store for me. Also deducted from the allowance were the majority of the Canada Child Tax Benefit, and the Orphans Benefit I received for my son. More importantly was the treatment of earned income, as I was still managing to work part-time. As long as I earned less than \$100.00 per month, I would be allowed to keep the full amount. For amounts over \$100.00 a percentage was clawed back. This percentage ranged from 25 to 40 percent, depending on the amount earned. I realized that the more you earned the more would be deducted until such time that your income equals or is greater than the welfare allowance. Out of all of the welfare policies this one infuriated me the most. Regardless of what I earned and what was deducted, I was left with somewhere between \$400 and \$500 per month for bills, food and household supplies. Entertainment and clothing were luxuries I could no longer afford and I found myself thinking twice about spending any amount over \$10. Consequently, I remain grateful for existence of the University of Manitoba's food bank.

By September of the same year, my son's health had improved enough for him to attend school on a semi-regular basis. I felt I was now ready to remove myself from the dole. Imagine

my surprise when my caseworker offered to let me stay on welfare while I finished my thesis. As tempting as this offer may seem, I turned it down. I decided that by working part-time I could easily earn as much as my monthly allowance without worrying about deductions, earning too much or the dreaded month-end reporting. Additionally, my rent would again be based on 25% of my earnings thus leaving me with a substantial increase in my level of disposable cash.

Once I was able to return to my studies, I realized that my experience with welfare, or what I prefer to call my “field research,” now offered me an insight into both the welfare machinery and the people it is supposed to serve. I believed that in order to appreciate contemporary welfare ideology I needed to understand the changes in welfare departments during the post-war period, since so many programs in our social safety net were instituted during this period. I have focused on the decades of the 1950s and 1960s in Manitoba and on single mothers for three key reasons.

Firstly, the majority of welfare studies have been concerned with what I like to refer to as masculine social programs such as the former Unemployment Insurance, the Canada Pension Plan and Workmen’s Compensation. These contributory programs are based on earnings from work, historically, the male domain.³ More importantly, Canadian studies appear to be primarily concerned with the affluent province of Ontario, and if Manitoba were mentioned at all, it was only in passing.⁴ I believed a closer look at Manitoba’s welfare history, as it applied firstly to

³ Margaret Hillyard Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), xvi and xix to xx.

⁴ Little uses the prairie provinces as a comparison to Ontario’s support of incapacitated family members in 1921, 69 and Hepworth includes Manitoba in his comparative study of Canadian provincial social service departments. H. Philip Hepworth, “Trends in Provincial Social Service Department Expenditures 1963 – 1982 in *Canadian Social Welfare Policy: Federal and Provincial Dimensions*, Jacqueline S. Ismael, ed. (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press), 139-172.

women, and secondly to gender, would be beneficial to our understanding of today's programs.

Secondly, throughout the post-war years society experienced many changes in family responsibilities. Immediately after the war there was a strong desire by many to settle down into the safe and comfortable existence of marriage and the nuclear family. This middle-class ideology, which had begun to take shape in the early part of the century, had once again captured the imagination of our citizenry.⁵ Families began the exodus to the suburbs. For those who could afford it the father took on the role of the "breadwinner," while the mother remained at home, raising children and maintaining the household. This image was perpetuated in the media by such shows as "Leave it to Beaver," "I Love Lucy," "The Dick Van Dyke Show," and "Bewitched." By the mid 1960s, however, large numbers of married women were leaving the privacy of their own homes and venturing out into the work world, both to contribute to the family income and to realise their potential as productive individuals. It was also during this period that the Canadian social welfare system was reorganised and extended as a federal-provincial cost-sharing programme. Mothers on welfare were encouraged to enter or re-enter the work force.⁶ I wondered if this was because of federal government intervention that forced provinces to become more concerned with the rehabilitation of women into the work force. If so, did this change in policy affect women already collecting assistance under the old system?

⁵ Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 7 and Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 5.

⁶ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 139.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly there appears to have been a major shift in provincial and national welfare policy during the 1960s. Nowadays, this shift tends to be regarded as the one in which a fully-realized social welfare system was created and from which the contemporary erosion of social welfare may be dated. Certainly the sixties saw an increase in the provincial welfare rolls and welfare expenditures. But several questions emerge from these apparent changes. Was this increase of recipients due to the expansion of the cost-sharing program, which presumably extended benefits to a larger number of people? Was it due to educational deficiencies in the work force in a period of rapidly changing work environments? Or finally, was it in response to public opinion and the plight of the poor? Since most social welfare histories are centred on the affluent province of Ontario, I believed it would be beneficial to know if and how the Social Allowance Act and the inception of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) affected a less wealthy prairie province such as Manitoba. Was Manitoba more or less reluctant than Ontario in accepting the Federal Government's offer? Did CAP allow us to improve the amount of financial aid available for those who so desperately needed it, were our benefits in line with the rest of Canada, or was our relatively low cost of living used as justification for paying less to recipients?

When I had first delved into the literature, I began with the traditional studies of welfare departments, their policies, and their restrictive nature. These themes have been examined in such works as Dennis H. Guest's *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada*, James Struthers' studies including *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920-1970*, Margaret Hillyard Little's *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit*, Mimi Abramovitz's *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present*, Linda Gordon's *Pitied but not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare 1890-1935* and the numerous studies of

Michael B. Katz, including for instance *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* and *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare*. (Complete citations for these works are found in the thesis bibliography.) However, after personally experiencing the deprivation of welfare, I found myself drawn to the books that included first-hand experiences of poverty, such as David Zucchino's *Myth of the Welfare Queen* and Sheila Baxter's *No Way to Live: Poor Women Speak Out*. I realized that, although much may be derived from the examinations of policies designed for the poor, more often than not, the experience of those who received public assistance was not examined at the level where programmes were being delivered. I hoped to be able to interpret the impact that policy had on the poor themselves. While I had been forced to revise that goal due to the unavailability of sources, I was able to examine the impact of policy from the perspective of welfare managers rather than recipients and from head-office rather than the case-workers. I have nonetheless shifted the study of social welfare from grand policy to local programmes.

In order to achieve my goal, I began my primary research with a review of the local newspapers of the period to try to define public opinion on the poor and the programs designed to assist them. I was hoping to discover evidence of public input or response to welfare recipients through editorial cartoons, letters to the editor, and in the day-to-day reporting. For the most part, the newspapers tended to remain silent on their plight until well into the late 1960s. However, I did manage to uncover three crucial instances of what I believe reflected the voices of the public.

For primary evidence on departmental policies, my preference was to access the correspondence of the provincial and municipal welfare departments, including inter-

departmental letters, memorandums, and if I was lucky, case studies. After spending time at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, however, I was greatly disappointed that the material I was searching for was either inaccessible or destroyed. My attempt to gain access to Winnipeg municipal files was blocked by bad timing. The City of Winnipeg archives was in the process of computerizing their inventory and thus was unavailable to researchers.

I also looked at the Manitoba Legislative Debates hoping to find evidence of ministerial concerns for the poor. Needless to say I was disappointed. Policy was occasionally considered, notably in the annual debates over Department of Welfare estimates, but the ministers and MLAs spent more time haggling over whether allowances should be raised or lowered by minuscule amounts than debating broad goals of welfare policy. I could not help but wonder if they believed the rhetoric that they repeated about welfare recipients already receiving more than was necessary to survive. This unrelenting barrage of concern about overly generous welfare allowances by men who very likely never had to worry about where to find the money to feed their family was eerily reminiscent of Ebenezer Scrooge. Even with the inception of the Canada Assistance Plan, they remained politically impassioned only about the danger posed by policies that rewarded the undeserving poor.

I then turned to the Annual Reports published by the Manitoba and Winnipeg welfare departments. With these sources I found a wealth of information on policy issues, statistics on welfare cases, and administrative impressions of the poor. I found that both departments claimed to provide comprehensive programs to help maintain a decent standard of living for those who are unable to fend for themselves. But as is often the case, what is put on paper is not necessarily what is reflected in the lives of those affected. The Mothers' Allowance program was

particularly stringent with regards to who was deemed eligible for assistance and in the allowances granted. As with all social welfare programs, despite amalgamation and federal regulations, provincial programs continued to carry some level of stigma. Thankfully, the period under review was not known for its political correctness, and so we have access to the bluntly expressed views of administrators and welfare supervisors about the poor.

My most exciting find was the City of Winnipeg Department of Public Welfare *Workers' Handbook of Policy and Procedures* located in the University of Manitoba's Dafoe Library Government Documents section. The manual had somehow been overlooked and not yet bar-coded, much to the surprise of library staff. Perhaps as a reward for finding the document, I was allowed to remove the publication from the library to peruse at my leisure. In the pages of this comprehensive guide for Welfare workers, were the newly instituted rules, regulations and guidelines designed to assist the worker in deciphering the often-ambiguous commands of the Department. As in the Annual Reports, the poor were not portrayed in a flattering manner.

Armed with what I believed was a substantial amount of primary sources I began work on the first chapter, "The Labyrinth of Poverty," which provides a history of welfare beginning with the introduction of the Mothers' Allowance program in the early years of the twentieth century. The majority of Manitoba's history was culled from the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba Departments' annual reports from 1958 to the end of the 1960s. Interestingly enough, in the later years I reviewed, I was unable to find any response to the implementation of the Canada Assistance Plan in 1966. Additionally, there were many contradictions in how Manitoba administrative accounts of policy history compared with the secondary sources used to fill in the gaps. Despite these omissions and differences this chapter

will demonstrate that Canada and the United States experienced similar social movements designed to help the poor. A movement began in both countries in the early twentieth century to help destitute mothers and their children, and over time was extended to assist larger portions of the population including employables, both male and female.

The second chapter, “Living with Reality,” takes place in 1960 and is based on a series of articles from the *Winnipeg Free Press* describing the plight of a single mother on welfare. This chapter documents many aspects of the Welfare Department’s approach to assisting destitute mothers, including the argument that the application process and departmental guidelines were intentionally cumbersome and designed to filter out the “worthy” from the “unworthy” applicant. This chapter will argue that imbedded in the administrative rhetoric was a deep-seated mistrust of women based on a long-held belief that women were naturally predisposed to lie and deceive in order to achieve dependency on the state.

The third chapter, “Laying the Blame,” is a more generalized study of welfare recipients and concentrates on the stigma surrounding the poor, both male and female. Based on media reports of increases in welfare expenditures and on a letter to the editor, this chapter examines the feelings and beliefs embedded in society concerning those less fortunate. This includes not only the welfare administrators and workers, but also those who had to depend on welfare to avoid absolute destitution. This chapter will show the prevailing belief that poverty was not a result of society’s failure to support all segments of the population, but instead was due to an individual’s inability to successfully participate in the market economy because of inherent character flaws found in the poor.

The fourth chapter “Give and Take,” will look at the how, during the 1960s, the approach by Welfare Departments used to alleviate poverty underwent a paradigm shift. Due to changes in the economy and increasing requirements for a more educated work force, the types of individual applying for assistance broadened. As a result, welfare administrators were forced to re-examine policy and to develop a system that would assist recipients to participate in the market economy. Over a period of less than a decade, emphasis began to move away from monitoring the lifestyles of the poor to redefining recipients’ future resulting in programs designed to educate and train those previously considered unemployable. This chapter concludes that changes in policies during this period were transformed from public assistance acting as a means of financial support to programs designed to create a productive supply of low-paid workers.

Chapter One

The Labyrinth of Poverty

The Social Allowance Act provides that the Government of Manitoba and each of the several municipalities may take such measures as are necessary for ensuring that no resident of Manitoba lacks such things, goods and services as are essential to his health and well-being.¹

¹ K.O. MacKenzie, Deputy Minister of Welfare, (Deputy Minister's Message), Community Development Services, *Department of Welfare*, Year ending March 1963, 6.

The Mothers' Allowance Programme in Canada, and the Mothers' Pension in the United States, were the first social welfare programs created to assist female heads of family. These programs, although originally designed specifically for women, lay the foundation for universal public welfare programs enacted later in the century.² Initially, these programs were funded and administered by the municipalities. Over time, as the welfare roles expanded and a more diverse section of the population was included, Canadian provinces sought to simplify the administrative nightmares created by the social safety net, and amalgamated provincial and municipal programs. Manitoba, however, is unique in that until recently, social welfare was maintained as a three-tier system; the province funded the municipalities, while the federal government reimbursed the province.³ Unlike most Canadian jurisdictions, Winnipeg's reluctance to eliminate its municipal welfare departments contributed to serious complexities within the system. It was not until late in the 1990s that Winnipeg agreed to a complete merger with the Provincial Welfare Department with the expectation that this move would simplify the disbursing of benefits.

This chapter will examine the origins of social welfare programs in Manitoba and will offer comparisons to programs as they developed in other parts of Canada and in the United States. Due to the close relationship between the two countries, many similarities existed between the original Mother's Allowance and the Mothers' Pension programs. Since both programs were enacted within about a decade, and since both countries developed general welfare programs during the 1930s, it would be negligent to state that Canada's welfare policies

² The Provincial Welfare Department claims that this was Manitoba's first and oldest regularised social welfare program, and recognises it as a building block for later programs, *Manitoba Department of Welfare*, Annual Report, 1963 – 64, 10.

³ The completion of this amalgamation was planned for September, 1998. Brian Smiley, "City, Provincial Welfare On Next Year: Official," in *Winnipeg Sun*, August 29, 1997, 2.

were created in a vacuum. This chapter will also show that Ontario strongly influenced the development of Manitoba's early welfare programs. This history of social welfare will demonstrate that Mothers' Allowance served as the model for the more inclusive social welfare programs that emerged in the 1960s.

Throughout the twentieth century, social welfare programs have been created ostensibly to eradicate poverty through the awarding of relief to the needy. In earlier times, however, it would have been inconceivable to consider that providing relief would hasten the "abolition of poverty. Resources were finite; life was harsh."⁴ Large portions of the population were born poor, lived and died in poverty. Although debates ensued over "who among the needy should be helped," the responses were not based on the morality of the poor. Poverty in the colonial years did not entail disgrace. Instead, concerns for assisting the poor were based on the limited amount of tax money available for relief.

Welfare historians argue that modern society, characterized by urbanization and the market system with its wage labour, played an important role in the creation of our social safety nets. According to Katz, the implementation of the Elizabethan poor law in the United States symbolizes the modern change in attitude towards the poor.⁵ Abramovitz adds that "English statutes, religious doctrine and Old World traditions" influenced the colonial poor laws. "Calvinist ideas about the virtues of hard work and the sins of idleness" left the colonists "with little sympathy for the able-bodied poor."⁶ Due to limited funds available for relief, communities

⁴ Michael B. Katz, *The Underserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989,) 11.

⁵ Katz, *The Underserving Poor*, 11.

⁶ Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 77.

created laws and guidelines to separate the deserving from the undeserving poor. Additionally, settlement laws were enacted to protect the assets of communities by assisting only those who truly belonged there.⁷ By the late nineteenth century, a further separation between the poor and pauperism was postulated as a means to further define the deserving from the undeserving. The poor were simply victims of misfortune. Paupers, on the other hand, were blamed for causing their own degradation by giving in to “the vice of intemperance.”⁸

In Canada, the development of relief and later welfare assistance programs, appear to have been influenced more by regional cultural differences than by the impact of English poor laws. Quebec, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island developed relief based on the “residual approach in which state responsibility was extremely limited.”⁹ As Boychuk explains “Residual regimes reinforce dependence on the market and family simply by providing state assistance at such low levels that market or family participation is relatively attractive by comparison.” Residual regimes neither stigmatize nor stratify, “they are simply predicated on principles of less eligibility.”¹⁰ Nova Scotia and New Brunswick enacted programs that most resembled the New Poor Law of 1834. In these provinces “the state accepted responsibility for providing assistance to the poor – but only to those desperate enough to endure the stigmatization of the workhouse.”¹¹ Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia chose a stratifying and more stigmatized system in which recipients were clearly categorized as deserving or undeserving. Manitoba limited relief only to the deserving poor. Ontario, British Columbia, and to some

⁷ Katz, *The Underserving Poor*, 11-12.

⁸ Katz, *The Underserving Poor*, 13-14.

⁹ Gerard William Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose: The Development of Provincial Social Assistance Regimes in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998), 25.

¹⁰ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 14-15.

¹¹ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 25.

extent Alberta, accepted responsibility for undeserving recipients, “only if they were willing to endure the stigmatization of the workhouse or work tests.” Consequently, the boundary between the worthy and unworthy poor was refined and imbedded in early welfare policies as they developed into the programs we are familiar with today.

Feminist welfare historians have expanded on the argument that the notion of modern society was influential in the creation of assistance programs. They contend that state-sanctioned welfare has led to the feminization of poverty. By keeping welfare allowances below subsistence levels, governments have essentially forced women into dependency on either the state or their husbands.¹² Prior to the modern age, disgrace did not always accompany poverty. Husbandless mothers could turn to their family, friends or community for help without experiencing shame. Assistance for the poor, however, got lost in the shuffle of the emerging capitalist economy and consequently, it became increasingly more difficult for women bereft of family support, to obtain state support. Abramovitz states that adult women “faced poverty if they did not wed, married a poor man, or lost their breadwinner...women frequently turned to family members or to the town for support.”¹³ Private charities and municipalities continued to offer aid to women in need, but the benefits were mostly insufficient, inadequate, and attached with a stigma, emphasizing the moral deficiencies of the needy.

By the late nineteenth century, apprehension was growing around women’s participation in society as workers, and their responsibilities as mothers. Single mothers were not a new phenomenon, but they were perceived as “a new social problem, requiring new societal

¹² Margaret Jane Hillyard Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), xi-xii.

¹³ Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 76.

remedies.”¹⁴ This, despite the fact there have always been women who have been left alone to raise their families, because their husbands died or deserted them or because they gave birth outside of marriage. As early as the turn of the century, state laws were enacted to distinguish “male from female labour,” and limitations were set on the hours and type of work available for women.¹⁵ As a result of these laws, employers viewed women as an economic liability, forcing them into “a low-paid, sex-segregated job sector,” bereft of protection. Although these regulations were put in place to protect women in the workforce, the underlying principle of segregating women from men would prove to be prophetic for future social assistance programs.

As the segregation of women in the work force solidified, concerns were raised over the growing number of children running wild on the streets. It was argued that if single mothers were forced to work, there would be little or no supervision of their wayward offspring. Concerned with the welfare of families, the wives of the upper classes lobbied governments to enact some form of allowance to assist needy widows. In Toronto, the Local Council of Women successfully administered an experimental project that provided a monthly subsidy to six needy widows for a period of one year.¹⁶ The Winnipeg Mothers’ Association of Manitoba also initiated a program to assist working widows to remain in the home to care for their children.¹⁷ These reformers, like their eastern counterparts, stressed the “value of the natural home and the supreme importance of mothers.” United States progressives were campaigning for a Mothers’ Pension to provide financial assistance to “indigent mothers without breadwinners,” to help them

¹⁴ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, xi.

¹⁵ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, xvi.

¹⁶ James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 22-23.

¹⁷ Lorna Fay Hurl, *An Analysis of Social Welfare Policy: A Case Study of the Development of Child Welfare Policies and Programmes in Manitoba 1870-1924*, M.S.W. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1981, 141-142.

remain at home with their children.¹⁸ They argued that the earnings of an unskilled or a semiskilled woman in the workforce were not enough to support a family. Thus “it was in the public interest to conserve their child-rearing functions,” and to ensure that “the unpaid work of motherhood helped to provide a more stable and healthy future workforce.”¹⁹

In 1911, Illinois became the first North American jurisdiction to enact legislation to assist single mothers.²⁰ Between 1913 and 1921, forty states, including Hawaii and Alaska passed laws to enact the Mothers’ Pension.²¹ In Canada, between 1916 and 1920,²² Ontario and all four western provinces had enacted similar forms of Mothers’ Allowances.²³ Manitoba was the first province to pass The Mothers’ Allowance Act in 1916.²⁴ Of the five provinces, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta “readily accepted responsibility for the care of deserving recipients ... [and] adopted categorical allowances for the deserving poor very early, in comparison with other provinces.”²⁵ Despite the success of the Mothers’ Allowance it was nearly another twenty years before all ten provinces had initiated some form of assistance.²⁶ Both the Mothers’ Pensions and Mothers’ Allowances, however, were highly stratified, helped only a small portion of needy mothers, and tended to stigmatize recipients.

¹⁸ Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 193.

¹⁹ Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, op. cit. 193.

²⁰ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 20.

²¹ The southern states, containing the largest populations of “blacks,” were the last to participate in providing relief for mothers, and as late as 1933, Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina, had not yet implemented assistance programs. Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 194.

²² Manitoba passed the Act in 1916, Saskatchewan in 1917, Alberta in 1919, B.C. and Ontario in 1920. Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 28.

²³ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 20.

²⁴ Boychuk, 37 and Patricia Evans, “Single Mothers and Ontario’s Welfare Policy: Restructuring the Debate” in *Women and Canadian Public Policy*, ed. Janine Brodie, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 153.

²⁵ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 33.

²⁶ For Nova Scotia, Mothers’ Allowance was passed in 1930, Quebec in 1940, New Brunswick in 1943, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland both in 1949. Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 28.

The Manitoba Mothers' Allowance programme was "administered by a commission – a citizen board."²⁷ Since legislation for this act was not clearly defined, administrative decisions were left to the discretion of the members of the commission. Ontario's influence on Manitoba's legislation is shown by the composition of the board. Of the first four commissioners, three were "Ontario born," and all were Protestant, reflecting the bias of the "Anglo-Saxon, middle and professional" classes.²⁸ The first commissioners included chairman E.D. Martin, Protestant, Ontario-born businessman; J.H.T. Falk, English-born Protestant, secretary Social Welfare Commission, (formerly Associated Charities); Mrs. Dick, Ontario-born Protestant, executive member of the Mothers Association; and Mrs. T.R. Deacon, Ontario-born Protestant, president of Local Council of Women and Mothers Association. In addition to the Commission, committees were appointed to assist in regulating the program, including investigating and approving applicants and in supervising recipients.²⁹ These committees, normally consisting of doctors, clergymen and their wives, appointed housekeepers to attend to and "teach recipients thrift and to provide supervision 'from a general standpoint'." Their goal was to ensure that the recipients received instructions on "proper moral behaviour, thrift, adequate standards of child care," and were not in receipt of unreported income. Accordingly, Mothers' Allowance was designed with "levels of discretion and moral judgement borrowed directly from the realm of charity organization."³⁰

Deciding which women were worthy of assistance was both a moral and political issue, resulting in the exclusion of the majority of single mothers. In order to limit costs in Ontario it

²⁷ A.C. MacKenzie, "A Brief History of Welfare Services in Manitoba," in *Department of Welfare, Province of Manitoba, Annual Report, 1966-67*, 16.

²⁸ Hurl, *An Analysis*, 142-143.

²⁹ Hurl, *An Analysis*, 143.

³⁰ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 32.

was suggested that widows with less than two children should be excluded.³¹ These women could be helped in other ways, such as placing them as “live-in domestic servants.”³² Widows with more than one child would be accepted, providing they owned less than \$2,000 in property and had liquid assets of less than \$500. More importantly, they had to be “British subjects” who had lived in Canada for at least three years, with two of those years in Ontario “prior to their application.”³³ Deserted mothers were excluded in order to avoid “inclusion of unmarried mothers” which would appear to “sanction immorality.”³⁴ Unmarried mothers were an entirely separate issue requiring special treatment.

A final provincial inquiry that included the issue of single motherhood was the study of the ‘feeble-minded’ in 1919. ‘Feeble-minded’ was a term widely employed at the turn of the century to categorize and segregate those who were considered of low intellect, psychologically damaged, or morally deviant. This commission included unwed mothers in this category and argued that ‘feeble-minded women should be institutionalized to prevent them from reproducing other feeble-minded citizens.’³⁵

Accordingly, the first version of both Ontario and Manitoba’s Mothers’ Allowance assisted only British subjects,³⁶ widows with more than one child and wives whose husbands were in a mental hospital.³⁷ By 1927 Manitoba was offering assistance to wives whose husbands were “totally and permanently disabled.”³⁸ Legibility in the United States was also limited to those who were

³¹ This suggestion was put forward by Dr. W. A. Riddell, superintendent of labour in the Ontario government and architect of Ontario’s first Mothers’ Allowance Act. Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 30-31.

³² Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 30-31.

³³ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 30-31.

³⁴ Hurl, *An Analysis*, 145.

³⁵ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 6.

³⁶ Evans, *Women*, 153.

³⁷ A.C. MacKenzie, 1966-67, 16.

³⁸ A.C. MacKenzie, 1966-67, 16.

“both widowed and white,”³⁹ and to women whose husbands were permanently absent “due to long-term imprisonment, and incurable insanity.”⁴⁰

Administrators of the Mothers’ Allowance in Manitoba were clearly pleased with the program. Despite its restrictive nature, it provided the “means of putting into a home in which the father is dead or disabled, a monthly income to meet the cost of food, clothing, shelter, fuel and household operation.”⁴¹ Unlike other provinces, Manitoba rejected the popular standardized means-test formula, and instead opted for a budget system “established by Government policy.”⁴² The budget system allowed administrators greater flexibility in determining levels of assistance. They believed that by measuring a budget “in relation to a fixed amount distributed over the various elements referred to as basic requirements” allowed a more humane approach for helping destitute women.

[W]e are authorized to deviate from the limits of the budget in order to recognize and deal with variations of real need which cannot be encompassed within a broad policy outline. In this way, we are enabled to meet the demand of flexibility which must be pointed out again, with due emphasis, that any departure from the nature and extent of assistance provided in the budget must be supported by due authorization as provided under “Signing Authority....”⁴³

Furthermore, Manitoba’s commissioners clearly believed that Mothers’ Allowance was not “a charity or a right, but a salary.”⁴⁴ Lorna Hurl explains:

They believe that the Province should satisfy itself that it is employing the right kind of women to bring up its future men and women and that when the contract of employment between the mother and Province is signed and the mother in

³⁹ Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 193.

⁴⁰ Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 201.

⁴¹ *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1955, 226.

⁴² *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1955, 226, and Boychuk, 37.

⁴³ “Budget,” In *Department of Public Welfare, City of Winnipeg, Workers’ Handbook Policy and Procedures*, 1962, 1-2.

⁴⁴ Hurl, *Analysis*, 143.

receipt of her salary, that the Province should satisfy itself that the services rendered for that salary are accomplishing what was intended, namely the bringing up of happy children, mentally and physically efficient, and morally sound.⁴⁵

Similar arguments were heard in Ontario. The Ontario Mothers' Allowance Commission stated that "the mother is regarded as an applicant for employment as guardian of future citizens of the state, and if she does not measure up to the state's standards for such guardians other arrangements must be sought."⁴⁶

The Manitoba Provincial Welfare Department recognizes Mothers' Allowance as the precursor of social welfare, in that it provided the fundamental steps required for designing programs to help all individuals in need of relief.⁴⁷ Furthermore, Mothers Allowance, like later programs, was originally funded by a provincial levy on participating municipalities.⁴⁸ For example, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, many Canadian municipalities were nearly bankrupted trying to provide relief for the large numbers of unemployed. Communities that offered assistance were responsible for 70 per cent of the "almost \$1 billion [spent] in unemployment relief."⁴⁹ Throughout the decade, the federal government remained reluctant to take over the funding of relief as it was considered "an area of provincial jurisdiction."⁵⁰ From 1930 to 1937 they reimbursed the provinces only about forty percent of "the total outlay."

⁴⁵ Hurl, *Analysis*, op. cit., 143.

⁴⁶ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, op. cit., 34-35.

⁴⁷ A.C. MacKenzie, 1966-67, 16.

⁴⁸ Manitoba did not take "full [financial] responsibility" until 1931, although by the end of the 1920s most of the provinces offering Mothers' Allowance were financing the cost of the program. A.C. MacKenzie, 1966-67, 16 and Keith G. Banting, *The Welfare State and Canadian Federalism* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 61.

⁴⁹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 166.

⁵⁰ Dennis Guest, *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 1997), 87.

The United States was experiencing similar measures of financial stress in trying to assist the unemployed. On January 17, 1935, as part of the New Deal, the Social Security Bill was passed to help finance a contributory unemployment insurance scheme funded by a federal payroll tax.⁵¹ In response, R.B. Bennett proposed a Canadian version of the American “New Deal.”⁵² On March 12, 1935, the House of Commons passed the Employment and Social Insurance Act. This act was designed to cover “all employees over the age of sixteen and earning less than \$2,000 per year.”⁵³ The Privy Council, however, ruled that the majority of the Act was unconstitutional and “ultra vires of the Dominion, on the grounds that the legislation dealt with matters of ‘property and civil rights’ in the provinces and was therefore beyond the powers of the Dominion Government.”⁵⁴ It was not until July 1940 that the “British Parliament amended Section 91 of the BNA Act” giving the federal government “exclusive jurisdiction over legislation in the field of unemployment insurance.”⁵⁵ This amendment allowed the federal government autonomy to create the Unemployment Insurance Plan.

Perhaps in response to federal government involvement, in 1940 the Winnipeg City Council established the Department of Public Welfare in order to incorporate the separate “Civic Departments giving assistance to needy citizens.”⁵⁶ “The Social Welfare Commission had for years assisted unemployables, while the unemployed employables were handled by two unemployment relief departments set up during the depression years, one for male and the other for female.”⁵⁷ This suggests that any unemployable person, male or female, was now eligible for

⁵¹ Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), 92.

⁵² Robert Bothwell, et al, *Canada 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 267.

⁵³ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 88.

⁵⁴ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 89.

⁵⁵ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 105.

⁵⁶ “Central registry – Filing System,” in *Workers’ Handbook*, 1.

⁵⁷ “Central registry – Filing System,” in *Workers’ Handbook*, 1.

relief through municipally funded welfare programs. Those deemed employable, however, now had the support of a rudimentary federal unemployment insurance program. Consequently, the treatment of males separately from females continued throughout the 1930s and well into the era of federally funded social programs.

Gender demarcation is demonstrated by an examination of who was covered by the federally funded Unemployment Insurance plan. The original plan was designed to cover “75 per cent of all wage-earners, provided they had made contributions to the scheme.” However, many were not covered. Those in “agriculture, forestry, fishing, government, hospitals, charities, domestic service, and schools, were excluded.”⁵⁸ Thus in actuality only about 40 per cent of “Canada’s total civilian labour force” was protected.⁵⁹ Furthermore, since the last four categorical exclusions were considered primarily female occupations, this program was designed more for the support of male employables than for women.

A flat rate of benefit, graded according to sex and age, was provided for. Male workers over twenty-one could qualify for the highest weekly benefit of \$6.00; for women in the same age bracket, the maximum benefit was \$5.10; workers under twenty-one received less. For married workers, a supplement of \$2.70 was to be paid, with 90 cents for each child under fourteen (or sixteen if in school or defective).⁶⁰

According to Struthers, wage-supplemented programs were designed with a differential in benefits due to the influence of the industrialists who had “set the terms for the male, work-based parts of the welfare state,”⁶¹ solidifying the feminization of poverty. Consequently, between

⁵⁸ Little, 109.

⁵⁹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 166.

⁶⁰ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 88.

⁶¹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 32.

1950 and 1957, women, upon marriage, were disqualified from receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits “unless special requirements were met.”⁶²

Despite the limitations of the Unemployment Insurance plan the federal government appeared committed to constructing a social safety net to protect all Canadian citizens. The Family Allowances Act of 1944 was Canada’s “first universal welfare payment program”⁶³ designed to supplement families with young children. By May 1946, 3,333,763, or 92 per cent of all children under the age of sixteen, were being subsidized; the average monthly payment per family was \$14.18, or \$5.94 per child. It was hoped that these benefits could be drawn from a payroll tax on employers. Due to constitutional reasons, however, the government was denied this revenue. Instead, families in receipt of family allowance, found their income tax relief reduced.⁶⁴ As the decade progressed more programs were designed and implemented to help the more vulnerable members of society: the Old Age Security Act and the Blind Persons Act in 1951, Disabled Persons Act in 1954, and the Hospital Insurance Act in 1957.⁶⁵

In 1956, the federally funded Unemployment Assistant Act was implemented to assist the provinces in supporting “unemployed employable persons who were in need but did not qualify for UI entitlements.”⁶⁶ The Act provided funding for services to a wider number of unemployed, including three new categories for the blind, the aged and the disabled. This expansion accorded the Provinces the ability to further develop their assistance programs to better meet their distinct regional needs. Although “benefit rates and eligibility were left to the discretion of the

⁶² Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy, 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women’s Press, 1992), 246.

⁶³ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 124.

⁶⁴ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 124.

⁶⁵ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 42-43.

⁶⁶ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 44.

provinces,” the federal government required that “assistance should be provided on the basis of a needs-test.” The needs-test in theory “attempted to fill the gap between resources and budgetary requirements,” unlike the means test, or Manitoba’s budget system, which placed an arbitrary “ceiling on the amount of help provided.”⁶⁷ Consequently, it would not be long before the repercussions of introducing federally regulated needs-based assistance would affect potential applicants throughout the provinces.

Provincial social welfare programs also continued to evolve, and by the early 1950s the Manitoba “Social Assistance program of the Division” was providing “direct relief to those in need” throughout Manitoba.⁶⁸ The provincial government financed the program by supplying refunds to municipalities “on a case by case basis.” Welfare was becoming more universal as shown by the province’s new willingness to assist people who resided in the cryptic “Unorganized Territories.” According to the residence rules of The Municipal Act, the province was responsible for all “residents of Unorganized Territory,” which included citizens who did not reside in any Manitoba municipality, and for those who held “neither municipal nor provincial residence” but were “destitute here and for whom no provisions for relief may be made elsewhere.”⁶⁹ Additionally, assistance was allocated based on specific eligibility criteria based on a “schedule of assistance.” This schedule took into consideration the basic necessities, as well as an allowance for medical, dental and optical costs “when necessary.”⁷⁰ Since it was no longer a prerequisite that welfare recipients must be a resident of the province, it can be

⁶⁷ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security*, 138.

⁶⁸ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Province of Manitoba Annual Report, 1956*, 194.

⁶⁹ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Annual Report, 1955*, 227.

⁷⁰ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Province of Manitoba Annual Report, 1956*, 194.

argued that the rules of the old settlement laws were breaking down, paving the way for a national assistance program.

According to the 1959 annual report of the Manitoba Department of Health and Public Welfare, on July 1, 1955 the Federal-Provincial Unemployment Assistance Agreement was legislated to allow the province to recover from the federal government “50% of the cost of relief granted by municipalities or directly by the Public Welfare Division.”⁷¹ In actuality, the province did not recoup the promised fifty percent due to exclusions in the agreement. It was unable to recover the costs⁷² for child welfare, health and burials. Furthermore, for individuals who did not “qualify for either federal or provincial assistance,” Winnipeg’s City Public Welfare Department maintained responsibility for “supplementing other forms of assistance where they are insufficient to maintain a minimum standard of living.”⁷³ In other words, there were still many people who were not covered by the Unemployment Assistance Act, and thus remained reliant upon autonomous municipal welfare departments.

Throughout the post-war period of economic restructuring, women’s participation in the paid workforce declined substantially. They were encouraged to return to their homes in order to ensure employment for the returning soldiers. From the end of the war and well into the 1950s there was an increase in the number of women requiring financial assistance, and accordingly an increase in the costs of provincially run welfare programs. By this time the Mothers’ Allowance program had undergone a fundamental change. When first enacted it provided a monthly

⁷¹ *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1959, 146-7.

⁷² This claim is odd, given that the Unemployment Assistance Act was not legislated until 1956. Moreover, none of the prevailing welfare historians refer to this agreement. *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1959, 146-7.

⁷³ The Canadian Welfare Council, *Canadian Welfare Council Study of the Winnipeg Public Welfare Department*, Ottawa, November 1955, 7.

allowance to help keep widowed mothers in the home with their children. By 1958, however, the Manitoba Department of Health and Public Welfare reported that the program had been originally designed as a supplement for destitute mothers rather than as a complete maintenance program. “Mothers’ Allowances are especially beneficial in families where some earning power exists, enabling the family to develop its own internal resources and capabilities.”⁷⁴ Mothers were expected to supplement the allowance by undertaking what Patricia M. Evans, professor of Social work at York University, terms “hearth-bound” activities such as taking in boarders, laundry or sewing.⁷⁵ Full-time work by single mothers was strongly discouraged by the administrators of the program. Based on the post-war conviction that a mother’s place was in the home⁷⁶ participation in the “formal labour market ... was viewed as incompatible with the duty to their children.”⁷⁷

The Mothers’ Allowance remained restrictive in its eligibility criteria. The most decisive factor of exclusion dealt with long-term destitution cases. Although Mothers’ Allowance had been expanded to include helping the “long-term desertion cases” of seven years or more, as well as “children up to seventeen years of age if attending school and making satisfactory progress there,”⁷⁸ this still left many single mothers bereft of financial assistance. By 1952 Manitoba was allowing families whose father had been absent for less than seven years and more than four years eligibility for Mothers’ Allowance, providing they met the right criteria. At the time of application, the “mother and/or children” had to have been on municipal relief or social

⁷⁴ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Annual Report, 1955, 226.*

⁷⁵ Evans, *Women*, 153.

⁷⁶ Judy Fudge, “Fragmentation and Feminization: The Challenge of Equity for Labour-Relations Policy,” in *Women and Canadian Public Policy*, ed. Janine Brodie (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1996), 66.

⁷⁷ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Annual Report, 1955, 226.*

⁷⁸ *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Annual Report, 1955, 226.*

assistance or been collecting assistance for a “considerable period during the four years prior to the application.”⁷⁹ Additionally, the father’s “whereabouts” had to be either unknown at the time of application or he had to be “in a jurisdiction where legal action” could not be taken. Furthermore, “every effort within the law” had to have been made to locate him and to “secure support” for his family. If any of these criteria were not met, then assistance from Mothers’ Allowance was denied.⁸⁰

In 1958, the Province adjusted the Mothers’ Allowance program to reflect current living costs. After studying financial assistance rates both locally and in other areas of Canada, a “simple but flexible schedule” was introduced to cover basic needs including a fixed rate for utilities.⁸¹ A special allowance was made for those who did not have other income from earnings or others sources by way of special needs grants, “as requested,” up to a maximum of \$180 in a year. “For families with other income a larger amount of income was made non-deductible, particularly in the case of earning children living at home, and allocation of deducted income to special needs was restricted.” The “overall effect” allowed for an increase of average payments to rise from “approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 a year,”⁸² which in most cases averaged out to about \$100 per month. In 1958, 1,121 Manitoba families were collecting about \$1,181.00 per year from Mothers’ Allowances. This was a generous amount for Manitoba to pay given that the wealthier province of Ontario allowed for an average of \$1040.00 per family.⁸³ Nevertheless, both Manitoba and Ontario rates were well above Alberta’s at \$805.00, Quebec’s at \$671.00 and

⁷⁹ *Workers’ Handbook*, 2(d).

⁸⁰ *Workers’ Handbook* 2(d).

⁸¹ Basic needs covered food, clothing, shelter and fuel requirements, and will be studied more closely in Chapter 2. *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1958, 219.

⁸² *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1958, 219.

⁸³ These numbers were calculated by dividing the funds allocated by the number of families receiving Mothers’ Allowances, as reported in the tables in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Prince Edward Island's at \$335.00. Since the national average for Mothers' Allowances was \$820.00, this shows that Manitoba's allowances were closely aligned to Ontario's.⁸⁴

In June of 1958, Manitoba proceeded with more changes to its welfare programs, supposedly under the guise of simplifying the complexities within the system.

Families with legal residence in unorganized territory were transferred to [Provincial] Social Assistance and the deserted families eligible for Mothers' Allowance were retained in Social Assistance while children over 15 years of age attending school were transferred back to Mothers' Allowance...⁸⁵

Accordingly, the Social Assistance rates "in unorganized territory were raised to equal the new Mothers' Allowance rates,"⁸⁶ bringing the two programs more closely aligned with each other. In 1960 "residents of unorganised territory" were provided aid through provincial welfare based on "conditions of unemployment, failure of normal income source, unemployability, desertion or incarceration of the family supporter."⁸⁷ The Manitoba's Mothers' Allowance program continued to assist children, "their mother and their father, as applicable." Both the provincial social assistance program and the Mothers' Allowance offered financial assistance based on a predetermined monthly budget, or on a "means test basis" funded by the Manitoba Government.⁸⁸

Before an applicant could satisfy the requirements of the means-test assessment, specific conditions of eligibility still had to be met in order for a mother, or orphaned child, to receive

⁸⁴ These numbers were calculated by dividing the funds allocated by the number of families receiving Mothers' Allowances, as reported in the tables in Appendix A and Appendix B.

⁸⁵ *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1958, 219-220.

⁸⁶ *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, Annual Report, 1958, 219-220.

⁸⁷ *Manitoba Department of Welfare*, Annual Report, 1962-63, 10.

⁸⁸ *Workers' Handbook*, 2(c). Manitoba's use of a monthly budget differed significantly from Ontario's Mothers' Allowance. In 1957 the province had switched to "needs-testing," likely in reaction to pressure from Ontario's municipalities. See Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 163.

any assistance from the now provincially funded, but municipally administered Mothers' Allowance. In the case of orphans, they were eligible only if it could be proven that their father was dead, "presumed dead where reasonable grounds exist for supposing the father is dead," confined in a hospital for mental diseases, or "totally and permanently disabled." For a mother who applied because of her husband's desertion, then assistance would be offered only if the father had been "continuously absent for a period of seven years or more."⁸⁹ Additionally, she had to have "legal residence in the Province at the time she was deserted," and there had to be "reasons to believe that the father has been living within that time." Furthermore, in order for the mother to receive coverage for her children, they had to be fourteen years of age or under; or if over fourteen, incapable of "self support on account of mental or physical incapacity." Nationality still played a large part in awarding assistance. For instance, for a child to be covered, she must have been born in Canada, have at least one parent who was a "British subject," or in the case of orphans, "the parent last dying was, at the time of death, a British Subject."⁹⁰

Even though the Social Allowances Act had been assented to on August 4, 1959, as late as 1963 only part of the Act had in fact been proclaimed.⁹¹ The purpose of this particular legislation was to assist the provinces in "eventually absorb[ing] the long-term cases of the municipal burden." However, the City Welfare Department, sounding somewhat bitter, reported that even by the end of 1963, the Province, which was supposed to assume responsibility for all

⁸⁹ This is in contradiction to the Manitoba Department of Welfare's report of 1952 which stated that Mothers' Allowance was applicable for women whose husbands were absent for more than seven years and less than four, see fn 78.

⁹⁰ *Workers' Handbook*, 2(c).

⁹¹ Part 3, Social Allowances and Public Assistance, *City of Winnipeg, Public Welfare Department, Annual Report*, 1963, 25.

those who were “unable to earn sufficient income because of physical or mental disability,” had not yet done so. Thus the city remained responsible for the unemployables. Meanwhile, the province continued to insist that in order to ensure that no “resident of Manitoba” should suffer unduly, the municipalities would be reimbursed for providing “emergency and necessary aid to those who don’t qualify for a provincial Social Allowance.”⁹² Accordingly, as welfare programs expanded and recipients were shuffled around the system, the differences between Manitoba’s general welfare and the Mothers’ Allowance continued to diminish.

Although there were still eligibility limitations when applying for social assistance, larger portions of the population were now covered under a myriad of programs. Widows and their children, orphans, the physically or mentally disabled and their dependants, and those 65 years of age or over plus their dependants were eligible for assistance. In cases of desertion, assistance was made available for those whose “breadwinner” had deserted and been absent for four years or more. Assistance was also obtainable for the “unemployed and unemployable residents of unorganized territories.” Full maintenance costs were also allowed for “any child declared neglected under Part IV of the Child Welfare Act.” As well, a full rebate of assistance could be “granted by a municipality to any person or family indigent in Manitoba” but who did not “possess residence in any Manitoba municipality [unorganized territory].”⁹³ In 1962 the various municipalities throughout Manitoba were reimbursed \$2,322,042.70 for “welfare expenditures.”⁹⁴

⁹² K.O. Mackenzie, 1963, 6.

⁹³ *Manitoba Department of Welfare, Annual Report, 1963-4*, 9.

⁹⁴ Mackenzie, March 1963, 6.

Under the Social Allowances Act the province was also able to complete the “gradual process of decentralization” that had begun in 1945.⁹⁵ By September 1, 1966 the provincial welfare department was now divided into six regions, “with Regional Offices at Winnipeg, Brandon, Dauphin and Flin Flon; with Regional Directors responsible to the Director. Separate District Offices were established at Portage la Prairie, Swan River and the Pas.” On October 28, 1961, the Department of Health and Public Welfare had been divided into two separate departments, “under separate Ministers.” Finally, by 1969, the re-arrangement of services was completed by integrating the “Departments of Health and Welfare, the Corrections Services of the Department of the Attorney General, and the Housing and Renewal Corporation of the Department of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs” into one Department: The Department of Health and Social Services.⁹⁶ It is quite likely that, due to the intensity of the restructuring, the Province had been unable to take over Winnipeg’s unemployable caseloads as quickly as it would have liked. Doing so would surely have resulted in an increase in the administration of the already over-burdened department. Accordingly, the best solution for provincial administrators was to continue reimbursing the municipalities.

Responsibilities to the destitute had been bounced between the Province and municipalities for nearly a decade, but there were still many women who fell between the cracks. Mothers who had been deserted for more than one year and less than four, women whose husbands had been imprisoned and unmarried mothers caring for two or more dependent children⁹⁷ were still excluded. On January 1, 1964, Part III of the child Welfare Act was

⁹⁵ A.C. MacKenzie, 1966-1967, 17.

⁹⁶ *Report of the Social Service Audit*, (Winnipeg: Social Service Audit Inc., 1969), 19.

⁹⁷ “City to Ask Province for More Welfare Aid,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, January 19, 1965 (University of Manitoba Dafoe Library Archives).

repealed. This move, combined with section 5(1)(b) of the Social Allowances Act of 1959, sealed the fate of the Mothers' Allowance program as it was finally "integrated" by the Provincial Social Allowances program.⁹⁸ As a result the municipalities were relieved of the burden of caring for destitute families. Accordingly, by October 1966 any family whose father had deserted for over a year was now eligible for assistance. By January of 1967 families of "persons sentenced to imprisonment for one year or more and unmarried mothers caring for two or more of their children in their own home" were also covered.⁹⁹ Although the province claims to have instigated a fully comprehensive welfare assistance package to help all who needed it, many needy families were still excluded. For instance, single mothers with one child, and deserted families whose "breadwinner" was missing for less than one year were still ineligible for assistance from the government agencies.

In 1966, the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) was introduced by the federal government as a cost-sharing program with the provinces. The intention of federal intervention in welfare programs was to consolidate all of "the categorical, cost-shared, social assistance programs into a single, comprehensive program of financial assistance, together with an expanded range of social services to help people retain or achieve independence."¹⁰⁰ Under CAP, the federal government matched the funds expended by the provinces for Old Age Assistance, Blind Persons Allowances, Disabled Persons Allowances and Unemployment Assistance.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, CAP included programs that offered assistance to needy mothers and widows, and for "a variety of welfare services including 'homes for special care, children's institutions, child welfare, welfare

⁹⁸ *Manitoba Department of Welfare, Annual Report, 1963-64, 10, and 1959, 147.*

⁹⁹ Miriam Ferns, Assistant Director, and Supervisor of Financial Assistance, *Department of Welfare, Province of Manitoba, Annual Report, 1966-67, 23.*

¹⁰⁰ Guest, *Emergence of Social Security, 145.*

¹⁰¹ Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose, 45-46.*

services, and health care’.” Also included in the CAP legislation were five conditions that had to be met: “(1) assistance must be provided to anyone ‘in need’; (2) there must be no provincial residency requirement; (3) an appeal procedure must exist; (4) the province must ‘maintain accounts’ regarding funds disbursed; and (5) the province must make all provincial legislation and regulations concerning the plan.”¹⁰²

How Manitoba responded to the implementation of CAP and its effect on welfare policies is not very clear. Throughout the 1960s, there was a conspicuous absence of any references to CAP by either the Manitoba or City of Winnipeg welfare departments. Given that CAP was designed to financially assist the province in its attempts to help the poor, one would think that it would have been worthwhile mentioning. Struthers states that there was great reluctance on the part of the provinces to participate in CAP, as they “wished to escape a federal regulatory presence in categorical programs that they already viewed as overly intrusive.”¹⁰³ Perhaps the silence of Manitoba’s welfare administrators was due to their reluctance in accepting further federal intrusion.

The chart in Appendix A of this thesis shows the number of families receiving Mothers’ Allowances and the dollars expended to support them over a forty year period beginning in 1926. It is interesting to note that in 1926 in Manitoba there were 825 families assisted by this program. The cost for each of these families was \$487.00 per year for a total expenditure of \$402,000.00.¹⁰⁴ In Ontario there were 5,215 families assisted at \$359.92 each for a total of \$1,877,000.00. The number of Canadian families receiving Mothers’ Allowances totaled 7,933

¹⁰² Boychuk, *Patchworks of Purpose*, 46.

¹⁰³ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 206.

¹⁰⁴ These numbers were derived from the tables in Appendix A and Appendix B. The total amount allocated has been rounded up to the nearest thousand.

at a cost of \$423.75 each for a total expenditure of \$3,433,000.00. These numbers show that Manitoba's allowances which were \$63.25 higher than the country's average were somewhat more generous than Ontario's at \$63.83 below the average.

In 1926, the first year for which statistics are reported, there were 825 families in Manitoba, who had received a yearly allowance of \$487.27. By 1929 this number had risen to 1,062, an increase of only 237 families. In Ontario there were 5,215 families on assistance in 1929 with a yearly allowance at \$358.93. By 1929, however, Ontario's numbers had increased by 1,196 families to 6,411. From 1930 to 1939 the number of Manitoba families remained relatively static, with the exception of 1936 and 1937 when the numbers rose to 1,140, and 1,141 respectively. The average annual allowance for the decade had slightly fallen to \$443.83. Ontario on the other hand experienced a steady increase from 6,712 families in 1930 to 13,937 in 1939, with annual allowances at \$344.40. For both provinces the number of families requiring support on Mothers' Allowances increased over the decade, but the allowances awarded decreased. By 1941 Manitoba families on Mothers' Allowance dropped to 946, and continued to fluctuate only slightly until 1953 when the numbers once again rose into the thousands. In Ontario the number of families did not drop until 1944, at which time the numbers decreased by 11,756. The 1960s saw the greatest increase across the country with Manitoba's average number of families at 1,726. In 1966, the final year reported for the program, there were 2,256 Manitoba families with an average annual allowance of \$1,505.76.¹⁰⁵ For the same period Ontario averaged 10,972 families per year, with the final count for 1966 at 13,621. The average annual allowance was \$1,654.06. Canada's final figure for 1966 was 46,216 families receiving

¹⁰⁵ The tables in Appendix A and B report numbers only up to 1966. This is because beginning in 1966, and over the next few years, the Mothers' Allowance programs were phased out. The introduction of

\$1,336.68 per year. In this case both Manitoba and Ontario Mothers' Allowances were well above the Canadian average and differed only by \$149.00. Furthermore, out of 4,526,266 Canadian families, women headed 300,383.¹⁰⁶ Since only one percent of all families and fifteen percent of female-headed families received Mothers' Allowance, it is clear that caring for female-headed families was more a political issue than a monetary concern.

By the end of 1968, Manitoba's Social Services industry had become a labyrinth of confusing regional offices and cumbersome administrations. In Greater Winnipeg alone, there were 278 agencies responsible for providing social services, including all "branches or departments of governmental and some other agencies, each branch or department being considered as one."¹⁰⁷ Of these 278 agencies, 75 were "under government auspices," including "1 Metropolitan Winnipeg, 30 municipal, 36 provincial and 8 federal services." The rest were comprised of "voluntary agencies such as the Salvation Army, the Jewish Child and Family Service and the Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg," who were able to offer "relatively short-term assistance" for those who were not eligible for government relief.¹⁰⁸ The Social Service Audit Committee recommended that the Provincial Government should "assume responsibility for providing and administering" all financial assistance programs administered by Winnipeg's municipal government.

[M]unicipal government units vary considerably in their interpretation of eligibility for assistance and also in the administration of the assistance programs. The recommendation is intended to bring about a uniform administration of financial assistance, unencumbered by the fiscal problems of particular

CAP replaced Mothers' Allowance by providing federal-provincial cost-sharing programs to assist the poor.

¹⁰⁶ Doris E. Guyat, *The One-Parent Family in Canada: A Study prepared for the Vanier Institute of the Family* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), 23.

¹⁰⁷ The non-governmental agencies were funded through public donations and grants or payments from governmental sources, and were governed by voluntary boards of directors. *Report of the Social Service Audit*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ *Report of the Social Service Audit*, 136.

municipalities or by philosophical differences between municipalities concerning eligibility requirements.¹⁰⁹

This demonstrates that Manitoba had not yet centralized welfare programs as provided for by CAP.

The creation of Manitoba's social safety net began with the enactment of the Mothers' Allowance Act in 1916, designed primarily as a means of providing assistance to mothers who were deemed worthy of help. Due to a lack of political will, and because of the fear of encouraging immorality, an allowance was devised to assist only destitute widows. As is so often the case with historical events, many factors concerning the role of mothers intersected at the right time to allow for the creation of Mothers' Allowance. The passing of labour laws to protect women from exploitation in the work force had the perhaps unintended result of forcing them into low paying, female segregated jobs. In turn, inadequate wages forced single mothers into working longer hours, thus contributing to the number of unsupervised children. At the same time, the role of motherhood was being re-examined. It was determined that the best place for a mother was in the home, where under proper guidance from the wives of upper class citizens, she would produce children, who were happy, mentally, physically, and morally sound, and fodder for the future workforce.

It was not until the desperation of the Great Depression that the provincial and federal governments were reluctantly forced into action to help destitute men. Although many municipalities across Canada offered a rudimentary form of unemployment relief, the federal government did not involve itself in provincial or municipal assistance until the latter half of the

¹⁰⁹ *Report of the Social Service Audit*, 136.

decade. Throughout this period Manitoba maintained a clearly defined distinction between unemployed males and females, reinforcing the demarcation of the sexes. This demarcation was also evident in federal programs as shown by the enactment of the Unemployment Insurance Plan designed to assist mostly male workers. From the 1940s onward, Manitoba's Mothers' Allowance program was revised, expanded and shuffled between municipal and provincial responsibility. As the province's contributory powers increased, general social assistance eligibility expanded. When social assistance allowances were set to match Mothers' Allowances, both programs were also redesigned to test eligibility through a provincially defined budget system. In 1964 Mothers' Allowance was incorporated into provincial welfare which, as we will see in later chapters, had long-lasting repercussions for impoverished single mothers.

Chapter Two

Living With Reality

The tensions and disruptions of family life – brought about by rapid social changes – have adversely affected larger and larger numbers of our children... The greatly increased numbers of neglected children, the rise in juvenile delinquents plus the growing list of separation, desertions and divorces all reflect the social costs of a fast, impersonal and materialistic society.¹

¹ J.B. Carroll, Manitoba Welfare Minister, in a speech to the legislature made this statement in conjunction with the need of the province to spend \$2.8 million to “protect, maintain and care for Manitoban children,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, April 9, 1964, 21.

Feminist welfare historians have demonstrated that social welfare policies have been structured around society's demands for female domesticity. As James Struthers points out, Ontario welfare workers and administrators of the 1950s were more concerned with regulating family life than with creating a socially acceptable work ethic among welfare mothers.² Like their married counterparts who were expected to remain at home to raise their children, welfare mothers were not encouraged to seek work. In return for state support, they were subjected to intrusive visits from social workers concerned with the women's morality, parenting skills and personal behaviour, all under the guise of legal sanctions.³

This chapter focuses on the female experience, because, as Mimi Abramovitz explains, most welfare historians have concentrated on the "experience of male recipients." By ignoring women, too much emphasis has been placed on "the acceptance of the nuclear family as the only viable work unit," and on social programs put in place to protect male workers.⁴ Unlike programs designed to assist women, gendered programs such as workers' compensation, unemployment insurance and retirement pensions were based on contributions from employment and were "more generous and dignified in design."⁵ Mothers' Allowance, on the other hand, was stigmatized, highly regulated and parsimonious. Furthermore, it has been only recently that poor women have been studied. According to Margaret Little, feminist "contributions to social science have tended to focus on the lives of working-class, middle-class, or bourgeois women," reflecting the invisibility of poor women in society.

² James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920-1970*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 19-20.

³ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 14.

⁴ Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women; Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 1-3.

⁵ Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled; Single Mothers and the History of Welfare 1890-1935*, (New York: The Free Press, A division of Macmillan, Inc., 1994), 7-8.

It is important to recognize that the treatment of single mothers reflects societal values on mothering and marriage for all women. ‘A lack of social support for single mothers makes marriage coercive. If mothers must be supported by men to be good mothers, then it would appear that good mothering is dependent on women being dependent.’ The status of single mothers...indicates a society’s and a government’s commitment both to women’s economic independence and to children’s welfare.⁶

Poor, single mothers who are dependent upon the government for survival, “have presupposed their reproductive role within the family and their economic dependency upon men. Only women still fulfilling the first role and deprived of the second were considered eligible for state support.”⁷ The following story, which focuses on the struggle of a lone-parent to support her family will be used to illustrate the precarious situation for families headed by women, whose only means of supporting themselves was through reliance on Social Assistance or Mothers’ Allowance.⁸ This chapter will demonstrate that consistent with the ideology of domesticity, state-sanctioned welfare was a means for governments to exert control over the lives of husbandless mothers.

With the temperature dipping to “5 below” (-20 C.), on Sunday, January 3, 1960, two young boys from Fort Rouge in Winnipeg were arrested while stealing coal. This coal, they claimed, was needed to “light the range in the kitchen,” as the oil space heater in the living room of their seven-room house was not enough to keep the family of seven warm. Their mother, who I will refer to as Joan Clemens, claimed that the heater had stopped working.⁹ She had been

⁶ Margaret Jane Hillyard Little, *No Car, No Radio No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), xi-xii.

⁷ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 19-20.

⁸ I have chosen the term “lone-parent” to describe a single parent because it was a term commonly used in the 1960s. Previously, a single mother was more commonly referred to as a widow, or deserted woman.

⁹ “Boys had to Steal Coal: No Money and Family Freezing, Mother Sent Sons for Fuel,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 6, 1960, 1.

unable to contact anyone at the welfare department, and did not have enough money for the purchase of the coal. She did, however, promise to pay for the coal the following weekend when she was expecting to receive some money.

According to the City of Winnipeg Welfare Department, the theft was merely a misunderstanding between Mrs. Clemens and the department. Welfare records showed that the family used oil for heating, and electricity for cooking, but there was no mention of coal requirements. Regardless, they were planning on sending a worker to the house on Thursday to readjust the budget “to cover the cost of coal for the kitchen stove, *if it was needed.*”¹⁰ By Friday, five days after the event of the stolen coal, Mrs. Clemens had not yet received a visit from a welfare worker or additional money for fuel.

As was demonstrated in Chapter One, there was an association between social assistance and child welfare. Since Mrs. Clemens was collecting social assistance, and because her children were involved in the theft, the police were obligated to inform both the Welfare Department and the Children’s Aid Society. Although the city Welfare Department was considering investigating the family’s situation, it was impossible for the *Winnipeg Free Press* reporter to obtain any information. He was informed that only a supervisor could comment on the case, but since all supervisors were in a meeting, none could possibly be reached. Thus the paper could not report on whether or not the two agencies were investigating or if the family was still suffering from the cold.¹¹

¹⁰ “Family Still Waiting for Visit, Coal”: But Mother Fears Anger of City Welfare Department,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 7, 1960, 4, (my emphasis).

¹¹ “Boys had to Steal Coal: No Money and Family Freezing, Mother Sent Sons for Fuel,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 6, 1960, 1.

As early as the day after the robbery was reported, at least one Winnipegger had offered to assist the family financially.¹² Since departmental policies prevented welfare workers from releasing the names of any recipients to outside sources, this Good Samaritan had run into a bureaucratic “wall of silence at the city welfare department.” According to a welfare staff member, “a list of those wanting to help would be made and ... turned over to the family,” allowing the family to decide if they would accept outside help. Although Mrs. Clemens had been contacted later that day, she had not been given any indication of a list or of offers to help.

Five days after the incident the mother of six still had not received any additional assistance from welfare. Nevertheless, she was reluctant to complain about the Department in a public forum. Because of media exposure in the theft of the coal, she was concerned that the department was probably already angry with her.¹³ Knowing she had no chance of escaping from the welfare system, she was concerned about being penalized by the department. As for the offers of help, she was not worried about being given a list of contacts. Any financial help she received would be deducted from her allowance, leaving her in the same situation at the end of January as she had been at the beginning of the month.

Mrs. Clemens claimed that since the previous fall she had been involved in numerous disagreements with the Welfare Department. Even though her husband had deserted her years earlier, it was only recently that a court order for financial support had been laid against him. Departmental policies had left it up to her to collect the money from her ex-husband. Regardless of whether or not she received the alimony payments, the amount he was supposed to pay was

¹² “Would Help Family But Can’t Get Name,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 7, 1960, 4.

¹³ “Family Still Waiting,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 8, 1960, 1.

deducted from her welfare allowance. Since the government had not yet enacted a maintenance enforcement program to assist women in her situation, she acknowledged that “from time to time” she had trouble obtaining money from him. In these instances she had been compensated for the outstanding amount from the Department, only after a number of confrontations with her worker.¹⁴

City Welfare director, C.A. Patrick claimed that this incident was merely “an attempt by the family to get out of an ‘embarrassing situation’ ...[in order] to obtain sympathy.”¹⁵ According to Patrick, Mrs. Clemens had told a worker on Monday there was no immediate need for fuel, as she had available money. He also stated he could not understand how the family could be “without funds” so early in the month, since their January cheque had been mailed early enough to arrive by December 31. According to the Director, the cheque in the amount of \$111.72, “covered a \$90 payment that should have been paid by the husband the previous month.” Additionally, an undisclosed allowance had been included to bring the family budget up to a pre-determined amount. She had also received money from her working daughter; however, he neglected to mention that 45% of her daughter’s wages was deducted from the monthly allowance. As far as the director was concerned, Mrs. Clemens had three sources of income: maintenance from the absent father, money from her daughter and the social assistance allowance. Accordingly, Patrick claimed her story of inadequate funds for heating was simply an “appealing way for the family to get out of an awkward situation.” Regardless of his claims,

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p 1.

¹⁵ “Patrick Says Family Was After Sympathy,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 9, 1960, 4.

all of this was in contradiction to a welfare worker that had stated that the cheque was mailed on January 1.¹⁶

This narrative about the Clemens' family reveals the contradictions found in social assistance programs and the effect on the lives of those who relied on them. One significant fact in this example, was the assumption that Mrs. Clemens, the mother of six children, should have had enough money to pay for fuel since she had just received a cheque in the amount of \$111.72, plus an undisclosed welfare allowance. Since the amount of the allowance remained undisclosed, an analysis of the monthly financial guidelines will allow a determination to be made for the approximate value of her compensation.

The following charts are from the City of Winnipeg's Department of Public Welfare *Workers' Handbook, Policy and Procedures* published in 1962 as a guideline for the Department's social workers.¹⁷

Rent per Month

2 persons	\$30.00
3 persons	35.00
4 persons	40.00
5 persons	45.00
6 or more persons	50.00

As the chart demonstrates, rental allowances are predicated on the number of family members, starting with \$30 per month for two people, with increments of \$5 for every additional member to the maximum of six people.¹⁸ For recipients who preferred to reside in "heated

¹⁶ This story was assembled from various reports in the January 1960 *The Winnipeg Free Press*; January 6, 1, January 7, 4, January 8, 1, January 8, 19, January 9, 4, and January 19, 3.

¹⁷ *The Workers' Handbook, Policy and Procedures* will be examined more fully in Chapter Four.

¹⁸ "Budget," In *Workers' Handbook, Policy and Procedures*, Department of Public Welfare, City of Winnipeg, 1962, 1(a-b).

accommodation, the monthly rate may be increased by \$5.00,” at the Department’s discretion. Money in excesses of the allowance “may be recommended on the basis of exceptional circumstances due to illness or accident, large family, rehabilitative reasons, or other circumstances which may provide a realistic basis for deviation from the budget.”¹⁹ Since Mrs. Clemens’ relied on oil heat, it is unclear if her home would have been considered as a “heated accommodation.” Under the assumption it was, she would have been allowed \$55 per month for rent.

Utilities Per Month

2 or 3 persons	\$3.50
4 or 5 persons	5.00
6 or 7 persons	6.50
8 or more persons	8.00

Utility allowances were also based on the number of family members, in the range of \$3.50 to \$8.00 per month.²⁰ In cases where “utility deposits” were required in order to procure accommodation, an advance may be allowed “on the recommendation of the Supervisor.” These advances, however, were recoverable from the recipient “at the rate of \$5.00 per month.”²¹ Under the assumption that Mrs. Clemens had been residing in the same place long enough to have repaid any advances, and given that she had six children, she would have been allocated \$6.50 per month, putting her allowance at \$61.50.

Heating Fuel Per Month

1 room	\$ 5.85
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¹⁹ “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(a-b).

²⁰ “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(a).

²¹ “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(a).

2 rooms	8.00
3 rooms	10.15
4 rooms	12.25
5 rooms	13.85
6 rooms	16.00

Unlike the previous two allowances, heating fuel was based on the size of the house, not on the number of occupants.²² Seasonal changes were taken into consideration when determining allowances. Thus the “amount shown is the basic rate for the months of September, October, November, April and May.” For the colder months of December, January, February and March, “[o]ne and one-half times this rate is payable” to offset additional heating expenses.²³ Since, according to the newspaper report, Mrs. Clemens home contained seven rooms, she would have been allocated the maximum allowance plus an additional 1 ½ times the amount for a total of \$24.00. This would bring her housing allowance to approximately \$85.50.

Food per Average Month

Adult	\$19.91
13 – 17 years	21.50
10 – 12 years	19.39
7 – 9 years	16.91
4 – 6 years	13.74
Birth – 3 years	11.72

Determining food allowances, is somewhat problematic. We know that her twin boys were ten years old, thus allocations would have been \$19.39 each, or \$38.78. We also know that her daughter was employed, so quite likely she would have been in the 13-17 year range, allowing for an additional \$21.50. Since we do not know the age of her other three children, I have chosen one from the 7-9 year range, and two from the 4-6 year range for a total of \$44.39. With

²² “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(b-c).

²³ “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(b-c).

Mrs. Clemens allowance added in, this would give her approximately \$124.58 to provide food for a family of seven.²⁴

There were further “Adaptations” on food allowances that were factored in. For a single person, an additional 25% was added on, for a family of “two persons,” 20% was added on, and for “three persons” 10%. For a “family of five or six persons,” however, 5% was deducted from the total food allowance, and for a “family of seven person or over,” 8% was deducted from the allowance.²⁵ It was not stated in the *Workers’ Handbook* why larger families were, in all appearances, penalized by having a percentage deducted from the scheduled amounts. Perhaps this was to discourage welfare mothers from having additional children in order to stay on Welfare. Or perhaps, it was based on the assumption that large families were in a better position to buy their groceries in “bulk” in order to reduce the cost of food. Regardless, for Mrs. Clemens it would be reasonable to deduct 8%, or \$9.97, leaving her with a food allowance of \$114.61, and a monthly allowance so far of \$200.11.

Clothing per Month

Adult	\$5.00
13 – 17 years	5.00
7 – 12 years	4.00
4 – 6 years	3.25
Birth – 3 years	2.90

Determining clothing allowances requires similar assumptions to the above schedule for food. Her twin boys would have been allocated \$4 each, for a total of \$8 per month. Her three younger children would have been allowed \$4 for one and \$6.50 for the other two. While Mrs. Clemens

²⁴ “Budget,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1(a).

would have been allowed \$5, it is quite likely that her older working daughter would not have received an allowance. Regulations state that when “an earning child included in the family budget for assessment purposes is receiving \$100.00 or over per month, no clothing allowance is made for such person.” Unlike the adaptations for food allowances, there was no addition to allowances based on family size. Instead, for a family of “five or six persons” 5% is deducted, and for families of “seven persons or over” 8% is deducted.²⁶ Again, there is no further elaboration on why larger families were penalized. Perhaps it was assumed that the children of these families were expected to rely on *hand-me-down* clothing. For clothing then, Mrs. Clemens would have received approximately \$23.50, less the 8% or \$1.88, for a total of \$21.62.²⁷

As per the above calculations, Mrs. Clemens should have received a monthly allowance of \$221.73, less \$90 for alimony, to provide for a family of seven. The *Winnipeg Free Press* did report that \$90 in back pay had been included to compensate for the alimony payment missed in December.²⁸ This back pay, however, would not have had any negligible effect on her January cheque, since this was a monthly adjustment and the same amount would have been deducted again. Presumably, her December cheque reflected the alimony deduction and she would have received \$131.73 at the beginning of December. According to the *Workers' Handbook*, “extra grants” were made available at Christmas time: “\$3.00 for heads of families and single person, and \$1.50 for each dependent included in the budget.”²⁹ Accordingly, she may have received an additional \$12 for Christmas celebrations, for a total of \$143.73 for the month of December.

²⁵ “Budget,” In *Workers' Handbook*, 1(a).

²⁶ “Budget,” In *Workers' Handbook*, 1(c).

²⁷ “Budget,” In *Workers' Handbook*, 1(c).

²⁸ “Patrick Says Family Was After Sympathy,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 9, 1960, 4.

Due to the missed alimony payment from December, it is quite likely that by January 1, Mrs. Clemens' budget had been exhausted, causing her to fall behind in rent, utilities and other living expenses.

At the time of the incident, the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported that the same Welfare Director, C.A. Patrick, acknowledged that the scale of payments allowed for a "maximum rent of \$50 for any one family."³⁰ Departmental studies showed that for almost two families out of ten, this allowance was inadequate. To make ends meet, recipients had to take money out of the family allowance cheques and the Welfare food allowance.³¹ Under a city bylaw the director had the power to approve additional payments to help families under certain circumstances. Patrick admitted that the number of "exceptional cases" had been increasing in recent months. Where only a few weeks earlier there were 17 families entitled to extra payments, by January the number had risen to "about 25." Furthermore, two "unsuccessful attempts" had been made to adjust the rate scale to allow for more rent, but the City Welfare Committee refused these requests. Consequently, the director planned to call upon his technical advisory committee to "help prepare a report on the rental scales with fresh recommendations for the City Welfare

²⁹ "Budget," In *Workers' Handbook*, 2.

³⁰ "25 Welfare Families Get Extra Money For Rent,:" *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 8, 1960, 19.

³¹ The Family Allowance Program provided allowances for Canadian children of \$6.00 up to age ten and \$8.00 between the ages of ten and fifteen. This program was designed to subsidize the costs of raising children in order to ensure they had better opportunities. See Doris E. Guyatt, *The One-Parent Family in Canada; A Study Prepared for the Vanier Institute of the Family* (Ottawa, April 1971), 82.

Committee.”³² Apparently his advisory committee was unsuccessful given that a year-and-a-half later, rent allowances had still not been adjusted.³³

An examination of the costs of rental housing in Winnipeg in 1962 will demonstrate the difficulty in accepting that only two out of ten welfare families had trouble paying their rent. The Clemens family was renting a seven room, oil heated house in Fort Rouge.³⁴ The rent for unfurnished houses varied, as they do today, based on the size of the home and the area of the city. For example a three bedroom, gas heated home in Windsor Park cost \$125 per month, whereas a six room house on Boyd Avenue in the North End was only \$75.³⁵ Oil heated houses appear to have been more expensive as shown by an oil-heated two-bedroom home on McAdam Avenue for \$85 and one on Pritchard Avenue for \$110. Both of these homes were in the north end of the city, historically a less expensive area to live in. Although there were not any listings for houses in Fort Rouge, a St. Vital four-room house was being rented for \$80, a five-room apartment on Talbot for \$65, and a Fort Rouge five-room apartment for \$70. This clearly demonstrates that the \$50 rent allowance could not have been enough for the family of seven.

In Toronto, welfare families were experiencing similar difficulties in making ends meet. Although the cost of living in Toronto was higher, the rental allowance was equivalent to Winnipeg’s housing budget. Families with up to four members were allocated \$40 per month for rent, whereas larger families were allowed \$50. Since one-bedroom apartments were being

³² The exceptional circumstances covered under this bylaw included instances of illness or accident, the presence of a large number of individuals in the family, the availability of *suitable* housing or any other reason *satisfactory* to the director. *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 8, 1960, 19 (my emphasis).

³³ Rent allowances were based on family size. Thus two persons were allowed \$30 a month, three were given \$35 with increments of \$5 for each additional family member up to six or more persons whose allowance was set at \$50. For *heated accommodations*, the monthly rates *may* be increased by \$5. “Budget,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, p 1 (a-6) (my emphasis).

³⁴ “Boys Had to Steal Coal: No Money and Family Freezing, Mother Sent Sons For Fuel,” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 6, 1960, 1.

rented on an average at over \$100 per month, and due to the “severely restricted supply of public housing,” recipients in that city were also being forced to spend large percentages of their food and clothing allowances on shelter.³⁶ It is likely that the similarity in budgets was due to an adjustment in allowances by Manitoba’s provincial welfare department in 1958, based on their national study of financial assistance rates.³⁷

Mrs. Clemens’ reluctance to pursue the help of generous citizens illustrates her acceptance for the rigid rules of social assistance. Welfare allowances included money for the basics such as rent, utilities, food and clothing, but any other money received, such as maintenance, earnings or gifts, was deducted from the next month’s payment.³⁸ The reason for these deductions was due to the mandated belief that public assistance was a short-term device “intended to sustain people until a more *socially* effective mode of living may be regained or devised.”³⁹ Thus recipients were given benefits not “far removed from subsistence in relation to the standard of living which prevails in the community.” Welfare policy emphasized that the recipient had to learn to survive as “effectively as possible” within the limits of the budget.⁴⁰ For the recipient to be given any extra money would achieve “nothing in itself...there is no virtue in avoiding reality....” Mrs. Clemens acknowledged that as a single mother of six, there was little chance of her breaking away from welfare. Accordingly, she had to avoid accepting any amount of money that would put her above the needs-based budget.

³⁵ *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 1, 1960, 29.

³⁶ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 146-7.

³⁷ *Department of Health and Public Welfare Annual Report*, 1958, 219.

³⁸ Eligibility was based on an applicant’s need and resources. For example, if resources matched or exceeded the budget, assistance would be denied. If there were no resources, then the applicant would receive a full budget allowance. If, however, there was some means of income, which is less than the budget level, the difference is calculated and the “applicant receives the difference.” “Introduction: Eligibility,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 2.

This case story also exemplifies the social implications of welfare on its recipients. Although this event took place at the beginning of the 1960s, the hopelessness and frustration of the recipient is timeless, and could have happened at any time during the history of Canada's welfare system. It is important to note, however, that this event occurred when attitudes towards mothers were in flux. In the immediate post-war era, a mother's main role was focused on her abilities to care for her home and children. Doug Owram argues that the desire for a solid family life in Canadian families, was the result of the economic uncertainty of the Great Depression and the disruption of the Second World War. The desperation of the Depression years undermined the stability of the home as many families were separated by the father's quest for paid work. Generational homes were often a requisite to survival and many marriages were delayed until such time that the economy could support family life.⁴¹ During the war, the economic spin-off of the war industry had improved the finances for the majority of Canadians. Family life, however, was still disrupted due to the numbers of absent fathers fighting overseas, and by the legions of mothers who entered the workforce to fill the vacuum created by the missing male workforce.⁴² By the end of the war these stresses on familial life reinforced the desire for a secure home.

The 1950s could easily be defined as the epitome of middle-class ideology. By society's standards the nuclear family was considered the norm. The ideal life style for families centered on the suburban mother as homemaker and the father as the wage earner. In this model, mothers were expected to remain in the home as consumers, not producers, and as the moral guardians of

³⁹ "Supplementary Services (Agencies – General)," In *Ibid.* 11 (my emphasis).

⁴⁰ "Budget," *Ibid.* 1.

⁴¹ Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: a History of the Baby Boom Generation*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 8.

⁴² Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 9.

their family, responsible for socializing their children into healthy, educated adults.⁴³ This era, however, also brought with it new fears contributing to the desire for a stable family life. With the cold war rhetoric of nuclear annihilation and the propaganda of the Americanized hunt for communists, there was an increased need to conform to the predominant social values of mainstream society. Mary Louise Adams states the conformity of the post-war era was not “simply a characteristic of increased consumerism,” it was also the result of an “approach to citizenship that demanded a willingness to participate in social consensus, to adopt a shared set of behavioural standards and mores.”⁴⁴ In response to this desire for security, middle- and upper-class families moved outwards away from the cities’ core areas, settling in the suburbs “where the purchase of new bungalows signified the beginning of their lives together.”⁴⁵

The societal conformity of the nuclear family model, however, was “an aberration... characterized by deviant family patterns.”⁴⁶ Although the common belief that “full-time mothers” did not work, many middle-class wives did in fact enter the workforce, albeit mostly in part time jobs. “Despite the fact that women were employed outside the home in increasing numbers, the pretense was that they were not...” Consistent with the 1950s ideology of domesticity mothers who wished to work were faced with state-sanctioned barriers. Income tax laws were adjusted, day cares closed down, and domestic courses became mandatory in schools.

⁴³ Abomavitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 3 and Adams, *The Trouble with Normal; Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 25.

⁴⁴ Adams, Mary Louise, *Trouble with Normal*, 23.

⁴⁵ Korinek, Valerie J., *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 5.

⁴⁶ Shari L. Thurer, *The Myths of Motherhood: How Culture Reinvents the Good Mother*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), 250.

Accordingly, the “formal and informal bias to female employment” contributed to the “commercially fuelled celebration of domesticity and maternity.”⁴⁷

With the majority of suburbanites living in single-family dwellings, peoples’ priorities turned inwards towards themselves and away, both mentally and physically, from the plight of the cities’ poor. Urbanization, with its tendency to separate families and alienate neighbours, left single mothers alone, vulnerable, and reliant upon public assistance for survival. A 1968 study noted that in 1961 there were 272,215 families across Canada headed by women, accounting for 6.6% of all family groups. Manitoba’s female led families accounted for 6.9%, or 15,308, while in Metro Winnipeg there were 8,984 families, or 7.7%.⁴⁸ Of these nearly 9,000 families, only 2,800 “sole support mothers” qualified for aid under the Mothers’ Allowance. By averaging family size at one adult and three children, it was estimated there were around 8,400 children living in poverty; with 1,032 families headed by widows, 1,300 by deserted mothers and 84 by single mothers.⁴⁹ “The biggest single and continuing problem of the sole-support mother is a basic financial insecurity and a subsistence level of living which they have no real hope of improving.”⁵⁰ If they were dependent upon “court awards payable by husbands,” they were at an even greater disadvantage. They lived in “constant fear” that the maintenance, which was deducted from their monthly allowance, may be paid late, or not paid at all. Additionally, it was nearly impossible for these women to improve their financial situation through paid work. If they were to try to supplement the “low basic award given,” then the monthly allowance would be cut back “due to their ‘improved economic circumstances’.” Therefore, the only way a single

⁴⁷ Veronica Strong-Boag, “Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-60,” In *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 72, No. 4, 1991, 480-1.

⁴⁸ *Report of the Manitoba Volunteer Committee on the Status of Women*, March 1968, 34.

⁴⁹ *The Status of Women*, March 1968, 54.

⁵⁰ *The Status of Women*, March 1968, 35.

mother could hope to improve her financial circumstance was by finding paid employment and severing her ties with the Welfare Department.

Finding paid employment would not necessarily be the answer for women like Mrs. Clemens. When a woman participates in the labour market, she is disadvantaged because of a disparity in wages.⁵¹ In 1961 the average earnings of “male heads of families were just about twice as high as salaries made by female family heads.”⁵² The average earnings for Canadian men was \$4,195 while for females it was \$2,128 per annum; a 51% disparity. In Manitoba the average yearly salary was \$4,107 for men and \$2,030 for women, while in MetroWinnipeg it was \$4,403 for men and \$2,121 for women, a difference of 49% and 48% respectively. Part of the difference could be explained by the fact that “many women work part time.”⁵³

A quick study of the January 1, 1960 full time Help Wanted section also offered a snapshot of not only employment opportunities, but also of the gendered divisions commonly found during this period. The help wanted ads were separated between “Female Help Wanted” and “Male Help Wanted.”⁵⁴ Due to the vast variety of jobs for both genders, and given the lack of published salaries in most instances, choosing a “Female Accountant” and a male “Bookkeeper” should provide a reasonable comparison.⁵⁵ The woman’s position offered a salary

⁵¹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 242.

⁵² *The Status of Women*, March 1968, 35.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, March 1968, 35.

⁵⁴ *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 1, 1960, 27.

⁵⁵ Although this will provide an acceptable comparison, it is also based on the assumption that the female applicant had a formal accounting education and/or the proper experience to rate the title and the corresponding salary. A good portion of the jobs advertised required less education, usually at least grade eleven, and so offered a lower salary. Besides educational criteria it was not unusual for ads to post preferred ages, for instance, “Young lady 18-21 years of age,” for an accounting clerk. More importantly, advertisements requested specific personality traits. The Manitoba Telephone System in advertising for a Switchboard Operator requested “*girls of high physical and moral standards.*” *The Winnipeg Free Press*, January 1, 1960, 27.

of \$185 per month, or \$2,220 per year, while the male, in a lower position, was set at \$250 per month, or \$3,000 per year. Therefore, the female *accountant* would only earn 74% of the male *bookkeeper's* salary.

The following chart demonstrates that disparity in wages between male and female workers was an acceptable practice well into the 1970s.⁵⁶ The reported numbers represent weekly salaries, and except for the predominantly female position of typists, are separated into male and female categories.

Year	Junior General Office Clerk		Senior general Office Clerk		Female Typist		Senior Bookkeeper	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Junior	Senior	Male	Female
1956	41	34	75	47	35	41	73	55
1957	42	35	77	52	36	44	79	61
1958	44	37	82	57	38	46	84	61
1959	47	39	83	57	40	47	84	61
1960	46	40	81	60	42	49	82	64
1961	47	41	82	64	44	51	84	66
1962	46	42	85	65	44	52	86	67
1963	47	44	88	68	45	55	90	68
1964	49	45	94	71	47	56	92	69
1965	54	49	98	76	50	59	97	73
1966	56	51	105	83	53	63	105	78
1967	61	55	110	88	57	67	108	81
1968	65	60	114	92	60	71	119	86
1969	70	64	128	100	66	79	125	89
1970	74	69	138	108	70	85	129	99
1971	82	76	145	116	77	90	138	106
1972	86	81	157	126	82	97	153	112
1973	88	90	160	139	90	104	163	123
1974	108	101	189	160	103	121	168	135
1975	125	119	204	177	122	143	208	155

In 1956 a female junior office clerk was reported as earning 83 percent of male wages. By 1975, this same clerk was averaging 95 percent of her male co-worker's salary. Examples from the same years show that a female senior office clerk was receiving 62 percent of male wages in

⁵⁶ F.H. Leacy and M.C. Urquhart, eds., "Series E326-376. Average weekly salaries for selected office occupations, by city, 1956 to 1975", In *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd edition (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre Supply and Services Canada, 1983).

1956, but had climbed to only 86 percent by 1975. In the specialized field of accounting, a female senior bookkeeper in 1956 was receiving 75.3 percent of male wages, but by 1975 her salary had dropped to 74.5 percent. These examples show quite clearly that in the predominantly female fields such as the junior office clerk, the disparity in wages between gender was decreasing. For male dominated fields, however, women were unable to make gains and instead experienced a decline in earning power. Jane Ursel agrees that a disparity in wages was due to women, for the most part, being relegated to lower paying jobs in the “clerical, peripheral manufacturing and unskilled personal service” sectors.⁵⁷ In 1967 the annual average wage of women in “periphery industries” was \$1,681, whereas the average for men in the “core industries” was \$4,670.

Participating in the paid labour force did not necessarily mean that a single mother would be better off than if she were to raise her children on a welfare allowance. If her children were pre-school or school age, a good portion of her salary would go towards paying daycare, or for before and after school care. She would more than likely be responsible for providing lunches for the children, and for herself. As a stay at home mother on welfare, she would not have to be concerned with costs for items such as daily transportation, medical prescriptions, dental costs, suitable work clothes, and nylons. Additionally, unlike her male counterpart, a working mother was responsible for maintaining the household, including cleaning, meal preparation, bedtime routines, and nursing sick children. “In our society it is still generally assumed that women will

⁵⁷ Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy: 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women’s Press, 1992), 240.

take primary responsibility for house and children, which means that they are defined in terms of the family (and, in particular in relation to a male wage-earner), and that their work outside the home is considered to be of secondary importance.”⁵⁸

Lone parent mothers entering or returning to the work force were also faced with the dilemma of inadequate day-care facilities. In 1971 the Special Senate Committee on Poverty reported that day-care centers are “in crucially short supply, and which are essential to working mothers, especially in one-parent families.”⁵⁹ They found there were about 9,000 children attending day-care, but “about 900,000 need them.” Their research, however, did not fully address the situation for “one-parent families,” as shown by their reliance on statistics, which only include married women in the workforce. They report that in 1969, 31.2 percent of married women were employed. This “second employment has been one of the most effective routes out of poverty for many families.”

Studies have shown there is no need to equate maternal employment with poverty or deprivation, just as there is no reason to equate it with emotional problems – providing that satisfactory arrangements for supplementary child-care facilities can be made. These studies show that great numbers of normal, middle-class, intact, responsible families with working mothers need day-care services.⁶⁰

According to Struthers, although day-care costs could be covered by the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), Ontario officials were reluctant to recognize the importance of “adequate subsidized day care as an urgent need for women who wished to escape from poverty.”⁶¹ The prevailing attitude was founded on the fear that employed single mothers would contribute to social problems found

⁵⁸ Jane Lewis, ed., *Women's Welfare, Women's Rights*, (Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd, 1983), 1.

⁵⁹ Report of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, *Poverty in Canada* (Ottawa: The Alger Press Limited, 1971), 155.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 157-8.

⁶¹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 243.

in children from welfare homes. Similarly in Manitoba, working mothers were faced with the same paucity of safe, reliable day care.

Due to the lack of sufficient community-subsidized resources, many pre-school children are placed in private nurseries, some of which provide a lower standard of care than that which is available in the few non-profit nurseries in operation. In addition, many school children aged five to nine years are inadequately cared for or supervised during lunch time and after school hours.⁶²

The welfare Director's comment that this story was merely a way for Mrs. Clemens to get out of a difficult situation, exemplifies both the Welfare Department's and society's views on mothers and women in general. A mother was considered entirely responsible for the behaviour of her children. There was, and still is a tendency to "blame working mothers if their children misbehave."⁶³ As Shari L. Thurer states, the "dominant belief after the Second World War was that 'there are no problem children, only problem parents'."⁶⁴ The fact that Mrs. Clemens' boys were caught stealing coal would have been viewed by many as her failure to provide moral guidance for the family. To cover up for her inability to properly raise her boys, the director's comment implies that she concocted this story to protect her shortcomings as a mother. Since he claimed the family did not really need coal because they relied on fuel for heat and because they had enough money to keep the home sufficiently heated, the boys must have acted on their own mischievous behavior. Accordingly, this would not look good on her Family Service or Welfare records. Since this type of behavior may have forced the department to take away her children, it follows that according to the welfare department, she must have fabricated the need for extra heat to protect her children and herself. A closer look at the department's classification system

⁶² *Report of the Social Services Audit* (Winnipeg: Social Services Audit, Inc., 1969) 31.

⁶³ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, xvii, and Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 192.

⁶⁴ Thurer refers to child rearing as a "perilous endeavor, a virtual setup of parental blame," due to the "onerous myth of motherhood," Thurer, *Myths of Motherhood*, 254.

of female applicants will demonstrate that welfare policy was equipped to identify a woman's moral aptitude as well as her ability to deceive.

In Winnipeg, mothers who applied for assistance were systematically labeled based on three sets of categories. These were unmarried, deserted or separated, and "irregular unions." Although unmarried motherhood was not as acceptable as it is today, single mothers were still accorded assistance if they met the right criteria. Before being considered a worthy applicant, the Department first had to obtain clearance from the Children's Aid Society who was responsible for determining if the woman had the capacity to be a responsible mother. "If the Children's Aid Society is not able to *arrange a placement*, or indicates to us that such a placement is not desirable, the woman is then referred back to the Department, and if eligible, assistance is granted."⁶⁵ As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, Mothers' Allowance was originally designed as a method for protecting children and maintaining maternal custody. Thus before the Welfare Department could consider providing assistance to an unmarried mother, the Children's Aid Society had to first decide if the woman was capable of raising her children by society's standards.

Departmental policies further defined married mothers as either separated or deserted. In the case of marital separation the referral for aid went first to Family Court, as it was responsible for obtaining maintenance from the "head."⁶⁶ The category for separated women contained further demarcation of eligibility. These included applicants who had moved out of the family home "by agreement" or "as a result of *conflict*" and the "head of the household" remained in the

⁶⁵ "Conditions of Eligibility, Procedure," In *Worker's Handbook*, 22, (my emphasis).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

family home “presumably able to support.”⁶⁷ Also included were those cases where “both parties to the union” remained in the home and the applicant *alleged* that the head refused to help support the family. Based on the assumption that “*alleged* destitution” was the consequences of marital differences, these applicants were considered a “primary responsibility” of the Family Court, because “legal responsibilities of the head” to support the family was mandated in Family Law. Consequently, aid was refused until the Family Court deemed it necessary to assist the applicant. Involving the Family Court during the application process was another measure used to determine the legitimacy of the woman’s claim. Both separated and deserted mothers were ineligible for aid until the Family Court concluded unequivocally that the “head,” or the father, was unable to pay maintenance.⁶⁸

These categorical policies imply that separated women were forced to remain dependent upon their husbands despite the end of the union. In these instances the Welfare Department did not address the safety of the applicant. Given that the “head” was refusing to financially support the family then it can be speculated that the situation had already become emotionally destructive, and quite possibly physically abusive. Instead of helping the woman to find safety by giving her financial assistance to be on her own, departmental policy remained dispassionate to her situation and instead assumed the allegations would quite likely turn out to be false.

According to policy,

[t]his procedure is valid, not only in terms of relative responsibility, but also as a means of screening out those cases in which an application for assistance is made in *pique, on impulse, or as a means for punishing the man* in a matter of difference of no great consequence.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 6(a) (my emphasis).

⁶⁸ “Legal Matters, Family Court, Desertion – Separation – Maintenance,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 3.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 3 (my emphasis).

The classification of deserted women was somewhat more precarious. If the “whereabouts of head of household” was found to be in the metropolitan Winnipeg area, then financial help was withheld until the worker contacted the man.⁷⁰ If he was found, and was willing and able to provide support, then the file would be closed, and aid denied. If he refused, then he would be faced with possible charges under the Wives’ and Children’s Maintenance Act. In the meantime the woman was left without financial support.

For those whose husbands’ whereabouts were unknown, or if the “situation appears to be obscure,” then it was the Department’s accountability to the City that required the worker to inform the applicant that the application would be held up until a thorough investigation could be undertaken.

The point of this advice is that the applicant has a right to know what we propose to do, and the warning may provide an opportunity for her to disclose more information.⁷¹

Accordingly, the threat of intense investigations and the denying of aid would prevent deception from female applicants. If the investigation revealed that the “head” could be located, then the investigator *may* instruct the man to contact the Department. Perhaps the contact was suggested only if the investigator believed that the woman truly did not know of the father’s whereabouts. As with the other cases, the application for aid, and the “opening or closing of the case” would be dependent upon the findings of the investigation.

In all of the above cases, the Department presumed that any woman who applied for financial assistance was capable of giving false testimony. According to the 1971 report on poverty presented by the Report of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, unlike other areas

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 6(a).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 6(a). This rule questions the integrity of the woman applying for assistance.

of law, the perpetrator was considered guilty until proven innocent. For example, in instances of criminal activity police must procure a “judicial warrant before entering the home of even a dangerous criminal,” whereas welfare recipients “routinely sign documents allowing welfare officials continuing access to their homes.”⁷² Regardless of whether the estranged couple lived together or apart, or if the “head” was willing to support the family, the woman was forced to remain destitute until if and when Family Court decided otherwise. There are no references in the *Workers’ Handbook* or in any of the annual reports on the average time the Family Court took to process approval for assistance. We can only imagine the stress experienced by a lone-parent waiting for a decision, while trying to survive without financial support.

The last category, irregular unions, was a grey area in Welfare policies. Departmental policy attempted to sort out the problem of couples who were living together without being legally married. It was determined that the “term ‘common-law’ [was] being used improperly.”⁷³ In order for the term to be considered appropriate two factors had to be present. The couple had to demonstrate that they possessed the “legal capacity to marry,” and that they had an “agreement to marry.” With the introduction of the Marriage Act, “common-law unions” did not have any rights except if the woman had “lived and cohabited” with a man for a year or more and if there had been “a child born of the union.” If, however, *one of the partners* was married to someone else, then the woman could not be considered a “common-law” wife. Instead she was labeled a “concubine.” Regardless of which of the couple was married to someone else, it was the woman who was branded with the dubious title of “concubine.” The term implies that even if the man was married, it was the woman who was responsible for being

⁷² Report of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, *Poverty in Canada* (Ottawa: The Alger Press Limited, 1971), 147.

⁷³ “Legal Matters,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 6.

involved in a sordid affair. This demonstrates that women were considered the guardians of moral responsibility. Additionally, it implies that the man was responsible for financially supporting the woman, and that he was awarded authority over her, as if he were her legal husband. If in fact the term was meant only to differentiate living “in sin” from a pseudo-legal common-law couple, why was it only the woman who was classified and not the man as well?

No matter how these unions were defined, the category of common-law marriages remained ambiguous to the welfare bureaucracy as indicated by further instructions. After taking the time to thoroughly define the term “irregular unions,” the *Workers’ Handbook* further states that despite the Marriage Act, the term was chosen as it implied “that no distinction” was made between “common-law and adulterous unions.” There was “no point in precise definition relative to need.”⁷⁴ As charitable as this may sound, the family was still treated the same as other applicants. Regardless of financial destitution, the applicant still had to go through the same stages of investigation and acceptance, leaving her financially unstable until such time as eligibility was determined.

Women who were separated from or deserted by their husbands were put through an intrusive and rigorous examination before being *awarded* assistance. Quite often, welfare departments would withhold assistance until such time as the father could be located and his ability to pay support examined. “Across Canada there is little or no assistance given to the deserted wife who must locate her husband and charge him with non-support in order to obtain the assistance of the Family Court.”⁷⁵ Even if the man was located, there was no guarantee he would pay, as there was a lack of regulated enforcement to pursue him. Since the absent father

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

was expected to continue supporting his family, it was imperative for the department to undertake an intensive “examination of the circumstances” of the applicant.⁷⁶ This investigation, however, was beyond the normal scope of a social worker’s duties. Hence, upon completion of an application for support, the file was turned over to the Law Department for review. The file would then be sent to Family Court, and in the cases of default on alimony payments, would “institute action” for a “Maintenance Order” against the absent father. In the meantime, the social workers would continue their job of “social investigation” of the applicant. In order to keep welfare costs down, many women were cajoled into remaining in abusive relationships, based on the assumption that they were at fault for the husband’s behaviour.⁷⁷ Women who were dependent upon welfare became “the principle targets of moral...regulations that reinforced their dependency on either abusive or deserting husbands, common-law partners, or intrusive state agencies.”⁷⁸ Single mothers were encouraged to either put their babies up for adoption, or to place them in day-care centres, which would allow the women to work, meet other people and “possibly marry.”⁷⁹ Regardless of whether or not the woman’s application was approved, a welfare social worker, the Law Department and the Family Court would have closely scrutinized her lifestyle.

The Department recognized that the “material service” of welfare was seen by many people as a “highly limited program.”⁸⁰ Many people were denied assistance because they did not meet all of the qualifications of the “standard budget” even though they were still “very much in need.”

⁷⁵ Doris E. Guyatt, *The One-Parent Family in Canada, A Study Prepared for The Vanier Institute of the Family* (Ottawa, April 1971), 62.

⁷⁶ “Conditions of Eligibility, Procedure,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 6.

⁷⁷ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 155-6.

⁷⁸ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 158-9 and Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 72-73.

⁷⁹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 155.

⁸⁰ “Introduction: Eligibility” in *Ibid.* 3.

For those who were refused assistance, it was necessary that the worker explain in “patient detail” why they were not eligible. Due to limitations in welfare programs, anyone denied benefits was given “every opportunity to appeal an individual decision if they [believed] that they have not been given due consideration.” How often was this course of action taken? Although there are no statistics on the frequency of appeals, quite likely the numbers were low.

By the time an individual approaches a welfare department, he or she is already destitute and usually applying as a measure of last resort. Factors such as job loss, illness, death or desertion by a spouse and irreconcilable differences in the marital home, are all reasons to leave an individual feeling lost and no longer in control. Whatever confidence the person may have had would have been severely damaged. He or she would be emotionally exhausted and unable to battle for assistance. For women, it would have been even more difficult. Society considered a married woman as subordinated to her husband’s authority and dependent upon him to make the major decisions in the family. Thus she would find it difficult to argue with a person in an authoritative position in control of financial decisions. Furthermore, education was often not a priority in post-war Canada. Many women applying for assistance had not finished high school, or in some cases junior high. Given that in 1966 only 32.5 percent of males and 38.5 percent of females completed grade twelve, it was not inconceivable that welfare policies recognized this trend.⁸¹ This is shown by Manitoba’s welfare departments disallowing support for children over the age of 14, unless physically or mentally incapacitated.⁸² Accordingly, a lack of education

⁸¹ F.H. Leacy and M.C. Urquhart, eds., “Series W30-40. Persons leaving full-time studies and potentially available to the labour force, by sex and education attainment, Canada, 1966 and 1971 to 1975,” In *Historical Statistics of Canada*.

⁸² Department of Public Welfare, City of Winnipeg, *Workers’ Handbook of Policy and Procedures*, April 1962, 2.

would leave the applicant feeling intimidated by an educated person in power, and therefore unable to stand up for her rights.

That applicants were feeling the pressure of an uncertain financial future by the time they approached Welfare for assistance is demonstrated in the high praise the welfare department had for its social workers. These workers were seen as an integral component for dealing with applicants and recipients. Their skills in diagnoses, counseling and interviewing were considered “useful and important.”⁸³ Their greatest contribution, however, “rests in the unqualified acceptance of responsibility to give help to people who are in need, regardless of the nature of that need, and to define that help in terms of the *troubled personality*.”⁸⁴ Despite the circumstances surrounding an application, the social worker was trained to consider applicants as being unable to take care of themselves, placing the worker in a position of absolute authority.

After having been put through the intrusive procedure of application and assuming the lone-parent had been approved for financial assistance, the Department then became the replacement for the absent husband. This can be demonstrated by the “man in the house,” or the “substitute father” rule. “Although in principle the mother was not morally to blame for being deserted, she and her children were the ones left behind whom welfare authorities had to support.”⁸⁵ Based on the “male-breadwinner ideology,” support would only be continued as long as she remained dependent upon welfare.⁸⁶ The presence of “any man” in the home would immediately disqualify “the entire family on the grounds that the children were no longer

⁸³ “Social Service, “ in *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1, (my emphasis)

⁸⁵ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 156-7.

⁸⁶ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 173.

‘deprived of parental support’.⁸⁷ Since a woman could not be denied assistance “‘on the grounds of suspicion only,’ [p]ositive evidence of cohabitation had to be established.”⁸⁸ Any means necessary could be used to catch the woman in her deceit. This would be done through “credit checks, and collateral contacts with relatives, friends, and neighbors,”⁸⁹ or through volunteered information from teachers, judges, and landlords.⁹⁰ As if these intrusions were not enough, welfare investigators were encouraged to conduct “midnight raids,” “parked-car surveillance,” and to make unexpected visits at supper time, or early in the morning”⁹¹

This account of the Welfare application process demonstrates the delicate situation that Mrs. Clemens was in. Given that the report did not state how long she had been on welfare, the fact that her husband had deserted her years before suggests that she had received welfare long enough to recognize the paternalistic power the Department held over her. With her original application, she would have been faced with the decisions of the Family Court, which held the final decision over her ability as a mother. She would have known first-hand the experience of intrusive home visits from social workers from the Welfare Department. Mrs. Clemens would also have learnt to survive as well as she possibly could on the monthly budget that had been awarded her, and the consequences of receiving any money not approved by the Department. The involvement of the Children’s Aid Society clearly reflected society’s expectation for mothers as moral guardians of their children. Director C.A. Patrick’s suggestion that the whole

⁸⁷ Abomavitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 324.

⁸⁸ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 157.

⁸⁹ Abomavitz, *Regulating the Lives*, 324.

⁹⁰ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 173.

⁹¹ Struthers, *Limits of Affluence*, 157 and Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), 127.

affair was just a way to garner support to protect her status as a mother, was really just a reflection of how women, especially those on public welfare, were perceived as being capable of lies and deception. In conclusion, under the guise of middle-class domesticity, welfare was designed as a legalized method for governments to replace the authoritative male head of the household in order to control the lives of the single mothers excluded from familial homes.

Chapter Three

Laying The Blame

In all the absurdities and inconsistencies of human behavior, and man is capable of wondrous paradox when he sits in judgement of himself, none is quite as massive as the expectation that the beggar will become noble through the alchemy of denial. On the one hand we consign the “undeserving poor” to a pariah limbo, and with the same injunction we demand of him that he extricate himself by exercising the highest ideals of selflessness. The poor man is not endowed with a nobility of soul, as we measure that dimension in 1966. He tends to snort skeptically into his forbidden beer when urged to haul upon his bootstraps, and if he is backed into a corner bounded by logic and sweet reason, he may muster an awkward argument to the effect that his kind never make the payoff....¹

¹ City of Winnipeg, *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1966, 26.

On January 4, 1960 the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported that over the previous decade, Winnipeg's welfare caseload had risen by approximately 15 per cent.² As of December 26, 1959, 2,374 cases were recorded, an "increase of 19 over the previous week and a rise of 91 over the same week of 1958." This number compared poorly to the 1,904 cases recorded for the same week in 1949. One reason for this, claimed the report, was due to the increase of people who were receiving institutional care, particularly those in nursing homes: 400 in 1947 compared to almost 700 at the end of 1959. More importantly, the number of "employable family heads" collecting welfare benefits had increased from 117 in 1947 to 293 by the end of December 1960.

This report failed to explain precisely why more families were dependent upon welfare, and was perhaps a reflection of how society viewed the less fortunate. If the reporter had delved into the reasons for the increase of families on welfare, then the readers would not have been left on their own to decide who they were. Instead, they were granted free reign to reinforce the myth of the welfare recipient as lazy, incompetent, and as responsible for their situation. There were two factors that contributed to the rise of caseloads, neither one of which was defined by the article. The first was due to policy changes made over the previous decade that made eligibility for assistance more accessible. The other factor directly related to the growing numbers of unemployed as a result of changes in Canada's economy.

According to Andrew Armitage, all "social welfare programmes have a tendency to stigmatise their recipients, principally as a result of the fact that to receive welfare support continues to be viewed as an admission of failure on the part of the beneficiary."³ There are two theories used in defining the poor, the cultural and the situational perspectives. During the period covered by this study, Manitoba's

² "Welfare Cases Up No 2,374," In *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 4, 1960, 1.

³ Andrew Armitage, *Social Welfare in Canada: Ideals and Realities, and Future Paths* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1988), 29.

welfare system had developed to reflect the cultural perspective, which proposes that the poor are viewed differently than the non-poor. "Their being different, or deviant, with respect to a whole set of patterns of behaviour...sets them apart basically from the rest of the society."⁴ These behaviours are intergenerational and difficult to change. Conversely, the situational perspective states the differences in behaviour "derive not internally, generated by the unique values of the poor, but rather, externally, as the inevitable consequences of their occupying an unfavorable position in a restrictive social structure."⁵ Their behaviour is not due to their inherent culture, but because they are not allowed the opportunities to "realize these values through the socially sanctioned avenues." By the middle of the 1960s, welfare administrators were trying to accept that perhaps society was partially at fault for its inability to provide for and to protect all Canadian citizens. They, however, remained reluctant to alter their beliefs of the poor. This chapter will concentrate on the negative image of the welfare recipient and will demonstrate that departmental policy was predicated on the premise of personal failure.

During the same time as the above report there was a growing concern over the increase of the unemployed. According to the Unemployment Insurance Commission, as of December 31, 1959 "the number of job seekers" in Winnipeg had increased by 1,377 bringing the total of those "seeking jobs or a change of employment" to 19,599.⁶ Of those nearly 20,000 unemployed, 5,038 were women, indicating the necessity of women in the workforce. Dean F.C. Cronkite of the Faculty of Law, University of Saskatchewan, states that the unemployment rate estimated at 7 percent, was not yet "critical."⁷ If the rate were to climb to 10 per cent then there would be reason for concern. Cronkite believed that a large part of the problem lay with changes in the "industries of the future," which

⁴ Chaim I. Waxman, *The Stigma of Poverty: A Critique of Poverty Theories and Policies* (Willowdale: Pergamon Press Canada Ltd., 1983), 7.

⁵ Waxman, *Stigma of Poverty*, 27.

⁶ "Area Jobless Total Continues to Rise," In *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 6, 1960, 1.

⁷ "Unemployment Not Critical: UIC Advisor," In *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 9, 1960, 3.

required “more education both academic and technical.” Although unemployment insurance had been in place since 1940, there were many people who were still ineligible for coverage, and benefits were payable for only a limited period of time.⁸ The increase in welfare caseloads, as reported above, could be partially contributed to strict eligibility criteria of the unemployment insurance plan and to insufficient periods of payment, forcing many to apply for Social Assistance.

Welfare departments did not necessarily agree that the level of unemployment and the absence of available jobs were factors of destitution. In an anonymous letter to the editor “A Canadian Citizen” claimed to be unable to find full-time paid employment.⁹ “Since January 1958, I have only worked nine months due to lay-offs.” He had been forced to apply for welfare in order to support his wife and two small children. He was awarded \$29 per week to “pay for food, clothing, rent, water, phone, plus other bills” which left him with less than a “dollar a day” to buy food to feed his family. It was difficult to watch his family suffer because he could not provide enough money to support them. He believed that complaining to the Department would only exasperate his situation.

If you should speak up you are considered a nuisance and told to behave or face the consequences. I am willing to work at any job which will provide me with an opportunity to make a living as I still have too much pride to start begging, which has been suggested by certain people who are supposedly appointed to aid the public.¹⁰

Just as Mrs. Clemens had been worried about upsetting her worker, so too was this Citizen.

Unlike Mrs. Clemens, there is no background information on the author of this letter. However certain assumptions can be made. Since he was constantly being faced with lay-offs, it is likely he was a

⁸ Margaret Jane Hillyard Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 109 and James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 166.

⁹ Letters to the Editor: A Chance to Work. In *Winnipeg Free Press*, February 4, 1960, 13.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

blue-collar worker, subject to the whims of labour-intensive occupations. Additionally, many children did not finish high school since it was fairly easy, especially for young men, to find employment in the labour and delivery markets, since neither of these required formal education or intensive training. Based on high rates of school dropouts during the early post-war era, the Citizen more than likely lacked a high school education.¹¹

Social welfare historians argue that policies were designed to compliment the market economy by maintaining a steady supply of workers to fill the lowest echelons of employment. There has been and always will be a section of the population that is unable to fully participate. “Those with limited education find employment only at the most menial levels of unskilled labour where they are subjected to irregular, seasonal, and intermittent employment at the lowest wage-levels.¹² These people are the most vulnerable and the most likely to turn to government subsidies during times of unemployment. Furthermore, keeping benefits “below current wages” ensures that “public aid does not become more attractive than the lowest paying job.”¹³ By stigmatizing welfare and its recipients, governments and society have turned being on “the dole” into an unattractive alternative to working at “any job at any wage.”¹⁴

The Citizen was faced with dependency upon the welfare system until such time as he could improve his situation. In his letter to the editor, he clearly perceived his case as being handled with the lack of respect he believed he deserved. Despite how he was treated by departmental staff, he remained

¹¹ In 1951, the majority of 14 to 17 years olds were not in school. By 1960, enrolments for the same age group were up, but at least one-third was not in school. Doug Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 111-113.

¹² Report of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, *Poverty in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 113.

¹³ Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 317.

¹⁴ Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), xvii.

a proud man anxious to work, and clearly did not relish his association with the welfare department. He also recognized both the negative attitudes emanating from welfare workers, and the self-imposed stigma found in many recipients.

The Canadian Welfare Council's (CWC) study of 1955 hints at serious ideological problems within the City of Winnipeg's welfare department. They reported the administration still "bear[s] the stamp of the depression philosophy." The "policies and practices" of the department were "introduced during the depression years," and except for some minor amendments in 1943 remained the only written policy.¹⁵ Through a series of interviews, the CWC determined the department's out-dated philosophy was found in agencies throughout Winnipeg.¹⁶ The Council heard that in several cases, welfare workers had humiliated people who came in on their own seeking assistance.¹⁷ These people had been "shouted at, or bawled out or shoved around on occasion." Those referred by other social agencies received only somewhat better treatment.

Although the CWC recognized the difficulty in documenting abuses, it did not change the fact that reports were heard on many occasions and "from a number of sources."¹⁸ Regardless of the validity of these claims, the fact that complaints existed at all raised concerns about the department's public image. The CWC recommended the department "give more thought to its public relations" and to the interpretation of its services. They emphasized that individuals who required relief from the City should

¹⁵ Canadian Welfare Council, "The Purpose of the Department," In *Canadian Welfare Council Study of the Winnipeg Public Department* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), 6.

¹⁶ Social agencies supported by the Public Welfare Division included the Children's Aid Societies, The Society for Crippled Children and Adults. Other agencies used for short-term assistance were the voluntary agencies such as the Salvation Army, the Jewish Child and Family Service and the Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg. *Department of Health and Public Welfare*, 1959, 146, and *Report of the Social Service Audit* (Winnipeg: Social Service Audit, Inc., 1969), p 136

¹⁷ "Services to Clients," In *Social Service Audit*, 25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

not be viewed as less worthy than groups assisted by higher levels of government, such as the federally funded Unemployment program, the Canada Pension Plan or Workmen's Compensation.

There is no reason why a person applying to the Public Welfare Department for help should receive less consideration than one who applies for the services of a bank, an insurance company or any office established to serve the public. In fact many of the clients...are aged, ill or disabled in some way and should, therefore be given the utmost consideration of the staff of the Department.¹⁹

The CWC also indicated that financial assistance was not available on an equitable basis to all that met the "requirement of economic need." Exclusions occurred "because of race, religion, political beliefs, *personal habits*, residence, citizenship, or artificial classification of people into categories."²⁰ Due to an impartial administration, "persons in comparable financial circumstances" did not necessarily receive comparable treatment.

There is evidence that welfare offices in many municipalities are deliberately made as unpleasant as possible, administration of welfare payments as cumbersome as possible, and information about the rights of welfare recipients as incomplete as possible, in order to cut down on the number of applicants for welfare payments.²¹

The CWC insisted the best approach for helping recipients improve their circumstances was by treating them with dignity and respect.²² They believed recipients would "respond positively to such treatment." If the department ignored this principle, welfare would continue failing to help people to become "independent and self-supporting."²³ The CWC acknowledged the futility and impracticability of public assistance in its attempt to enforce moral standards on recipients.²⁴ They concluded that welfare

¹⁹ "Services to Clients" In *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 9, (my emphasis).

²¹ *Poverty in Canada*, 86-7.

²² "The Purpose of the Department," In *Canadian Welfare Council Study*, 7-9.

²³ "Public Welfare Principles," In *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁴ "The Purpose of the Department," In *Ibid.*, 7-8.

Departments were established to serve the community. Thus anyone who required assistance had the “right to apply for help, and should be treated with consideration and courtesy.”

The 1958 Annual Report of the Department of Health and Public Welfare contains a description of the administration of the Mothers’ Allowance program for the Greater Winnipeg area. Miss E. Thompson, Supervisor of the Winnipeg Mothers’ Allowance and Special Assistance Branch carefully explains the logistics of the office. There were at that time four social workers, and four clerical assistants who functioned together under a branch supervisor “in the granting of allowance and the provision of caseworker service.”²⁵

Each social worker is responsible for an area of the total Greater Winnipeg district which comprises the Cities of Winnipeg, St. James, St. Boniface and East Kildonan and the adjoining towns and municipalities. With caseloads of approximately 105 families, our workers are busy persons. A worker will handle from five to ten applications in a month, as well as being responsible for service to families on continuing allowance.²⁶

According to the 1958 provincial statistics there were 1,321 families receiving Mothers’ Allowance and municipalities had been reimbursed for 819 family units and 137 “single transient men.”²⁷ The difference in the reported numbers of recipients could mean one of two things. Either the provincial and municipal departments were not working in cooperation with each other, or the Mothers’ Allowance supervisor was trying to downplay the seriousness of the overworked administration. Despite the statistical contradictions between the two departments, this meant that each worker would have been responsible for between 239 and 330 recipients/families, not 105.

²⁵ (Miss) E. Thompson, *Department of Health and Public Welfare Annual Report*, 1958, 233.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

²⁷ “Financial Assistance Case Load September 30, 1958, and 1959,” In *Department of Health and Public Welfare, Annual Report*, 1960, 5.

Regardless, the four social workers were very busy people indeed as indicated by their job description. For each case load the worker was responsible for interviews, home visits, assessing the family's eligibility for assistance, determining the basic budget each month, and for initiating the use of special grants as provided in the "program to meet additional needs which arise in any family from time to time."²⁸ The worker was also responsible for assessing the "broader needs of the family unit...for a major goal of our program is to extend financial help in such a way and together with casework help and the use of community resources as indicated, to help the family to restore, retain and sustain its highest degree of self-dependence, self-respect and happiness." Since the caseworkers were over-worked, adjustments were made to the department to improve services for families in need of assistance. In 1959 the department added one social worker to help lessen the load. This fifth person was relegated to Intake so that only one person was responsible for all new enquiries and enrollments. She was also in charge of "a small caseload of families requiring intensive help for a period of time."²⁹ By this time there were 1,368 Mothers' Allowance recipients, with the province reimbursing the municipalities for 1,032. Even though intake was relegated to the new worker, this meant that the other four social workers were still responsible for between 258 and 342 families each.³⁰ Increasing staff levels to handle the increase of caseloads indicates the department recognized that employees were over-worked and quite possibly overwhelmed. It is possible that the negativity and abuse discovered by the CWC was due to anxiety in the over-worked staff.

²⁸ "Mothers' Allowance and Social Assistance Branch," In the *Department of Health and Public Welfare Annual Report, 1958, 233-34*. Some of the community resources included "voluntary agencies" such as the Salvation Army, the Jewish Child and Family Service and the Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg who were also there to help those who were not "eligible for assistance from any...agencies." *Social Services Audit, 136*.

²⁹ "Mothers' Allowance and Social Assistance Branch," In the *Department of Health and Public Welfare Annual Report, 1958, 159*.

³⁰ "Financial Assistance Case Load September 30, 1958 and 1959," In the *Department of Health and Public Welfare Annual Report, 1959, 5*. In 1956, the average caseload for the Ontario social worker was supposed to be seventy-five but was as high as 200 per month, Struthers, *Limits of Affluence, 151*.

The Department acknowledged that some workers may “on occasion feel an element of doubt in dealing with new cases.”³¹ This doubt, however, was not necessarily because of the anxieties of the over-worked employee. Instead it was seen as a reaction to the attitude of the new recipient. “One of the outstanding problems to be encountered in early contact is apathy or outright resistance, apathy simply being another form of resistance.” In response to the applicant’s behaviour, the worker, feeling unwanted or unappreciated, protected himself by deciding the case was “beyond help.” Administrators therefore recognized that in “terms of treatment, *some* of the problem is with the worker.”³² To overcome this attitude, the worker was encouraged to “try to develop a feeling of confidence,” to acknowledge his work was important and a “necessary function to carry out, that he has the capacity to do an effective job.” The worker had to accept that it was his responsibility to serve all that came for help; “those who seem to refuse help as much as people who welcome it.”

This commentary demonstrates two things. Firstly, the reports from potential recipients of being treated poorly were not necessarily imaginary. If the worker were feeling apprehensive towards the applicant, it would take great restraint not to visibly show disdain for the individual. Perhaps this is where some of the unofficially documented confrontations originated. Secondly, if the worker felt that because of his attitude the applicant was beyond help, then quite likely he would have been refused assistance. These actions would have been in contradiction to the Welfare Department’s mandate. “Above all, effective administration must always reflect the conviction that people in need are entitled to the same respect which is the right of people anywhere.”³³ Therefore, if employees allowed personal prejudices to affect their relationship with new applicants, the mandate of the Department would have been seriously compromised.

³¹ “Social Services,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 3.

³² *Workers’ Handbook*, 3 (my emphasis).

³³ “Introduction Public Assistance,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 1.

A study conducted by graduate students from the University of Manitoba Social Work Department address the concerns of how social workers respond to their clients. Their goal was to determine if social workers did in fact have preconceived classifications for welfare applicants and recipients. There were two basic assumptions for examining the “one-to-one transaction” between the social worker and the client.

A. That all people need to love and to be loved; that they continuously strive to meet this need in their relationships with people and things; that not all people relate themselves to the world around them in exactly the same way.

B. That social workers somehow acknowledge this aspect of human need in their valuing of dignity and worth and in their attempting to operationalize this basic tenant; that they view people in these terms; that they relate themselves both in terms of their own individual needs (from a personal standpoint) and in terms of how other people need them to relate (from a professional standpoint).³⁴

The basis of this study was “to ascertain the extent of agreement among social workers in the way they categorize clients when given a particular classification system.”³⁵ Classification systems are important to Social Work since one of the “distinguishing marks of any helping profession is in its ability to systematize and classify knowledge that can be useful in the helping process.”³⁶ For each defined “client-type,” an “effective treatment mode” would be developed. This development “can have a number of advantages for social work and casework in particular” as it would “help social workers to convey their professional knowledge more effectively to others...”³⁷

They further theorized that “social work is a culture in and of itself with learned ways of perception and procedure.” Among social workers, “there is a collective intelligence in casework

³⁴ Barry Corrin et al., “A Research Study of the Way in Which Social Workers Classify Client Types Given a Particular Classification System,” MSW thesis, University of Manitoba, 1970, 2.

³⁵ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 5.

³⁶ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 3.

³⁷ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 4.

practice, and that social work knowledge is communicable.”³⁸ The authors acknowledged that their methodology, although sound, was not necessarily adequate in quantifying the question of preconceived judgements. The number of case study samples and “judges” were too small, and the case summaries provided for the participants were inadequate. More importantly, a “number of the judges demonstrated a noticeable degree of hostility and/or uncomfortableness with the idea of typing people.”³⁹

Their final conclusions are tentative in that they did determine “a very faint impression” that “there is some kind of tendency in workers to form ‘diagnostic’ judgements about their clients.”⁴⁰ This could mean that “the professional perceptions of workers themselves is very weak, that is, that workers themselves find it hard to recognize the need to love and to be loved in the people they ‘treat’.” This conclusion, however, is “largely speculative as both the phenomena of social work practice was apparently not too well represented and the theory of relatedness itself was found to be extremely hard to operationalize.”⁴¹

In 1963, a questionnaire was administered to the employees of the City of Winnipeg Welfare Department. Designed by Mitchell C. Neiman, M.S.W., the survey was designed to determine the effectiveness of the staff and their interaction with clients. The results suggested there might be a “problem in the orientation of staff members to Department philosophy.”⁴² The “pattern of responses” indicated there were “many different opinions about the nature of the caseload and the societal factors which produce it.” If “the ‘causes’ of dependency are poorly understood, can the individual caseworker feel conviction about desirable objectives for his clientele to work toward or about the methods he

³⁸ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 5.

³⁹ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 26.

⁴⁰ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 31-32.

⁴¹ Corrin et al., “Research Study,” 32.

⁴² Mitchell C. Neiman, M.S.W., “An Investigation into Public Assistance Costs in Winnipeg,” In *Winnipeg Public Welfare Department*, 1963, 11.

employs to help his clients towards these objectives?”⁴³ Accordingly, these differences of opinion would affect the “approaches used in the counseling portion of the caseworkers’ responsibilities.”

The survey results did not convince Neiman that staff should be forced to “conform to a rigid interpretation of causal factors and techniques to be applied.”⁴⁴ The Department was experiencing “considerable staff turnover” making it difficult, if not impossible, for new employees to incorporate “Department philosophy.” Furthermore, the “orientation methods” for new staff members was insufficient in compensating for the shortcomings found in interpreting department policy, which was important for the “understanding and performance of caseworkers.” Perhaps, muses Neiman, some of these “shortcomings” could be repaired through the supervisory process, as had been inferred by the “long-service staff members.” Due to the large rate of turnover, however, this approach would be difficult. Even though the problem of policy interpretation was found mostly in new staff members, the study also determined that a lack of compassion was especially strongest in those without a professional education. These shortfalls could be addressed by hiring educated social workers.

As late as 1962, the Canadian Welfare Council’s advice to utilize the “increasing knowledge of human behaviour” in a positive manner was either being ignored or distorted in order to continue to place the blame of poverty upon the recipient. According to Gerard Meyers, then Director of Public Welfare for the City of Winnipeg:

There is utter folly in presuming that here is a city’s accumulation of unfortunates who have fallen victim to circumstances beyond their control. We have said that they are people too. By virtue of that fact, they have minds and hearts, and the *privilege of*

⁴³ Neiman, “An Investigation,” 11.

⁴⁴ Neiman, “An Investigation,” 11.

choice. They must bear some of the responsibility for their own plight, and there is no room for the *fungus-soft cry* that all this is society's fault.⁴⁵

It is clear the Director was experiencing difficulty in absolving the individual of personal failure. He acknowledges that the unfortunate should be recognized as human beings with feelings and choices and not just as society's failures, but we should not take the easy way out and blame society for failing them. Instead, the poor must be held accountable for their situation. Despite the rapid economical and bureaucratic changes of the era which often left the poor and the uneducated on the fringes, failure to participate was not to be blamed on society's shortcomings, but on individual choice.

The Director further hypothesizes that people were "becoming more prone to delegate responsibilities which once were accepted by the individual."⁴⁶ There was an uneasy feeling in the department that there was an increase in people who responded with "consternation and wrath when expected to assume responsibility for their own problems." These people were consciously searching for the path of least resistance. Unlike the experience of earlier decades, these individuals were becoming less willing to take responsibility for their decisions, and more likely to shift the blame to outside influence. Although blaming others is a common human behaviour, this suggests he recognized that changes in society were inevitable, but due to personal limitations, or perhaps defects, there were those who were unable to adjust. In accordance with the limitations of these people, he believed it was easy for them to slip into a mode of dependency while showing little interest in changing or improving their lives. As stated in the *Workers' Handbook*, "these are people who have literally given up, and who are moving toward a vegetable-like state."⁴⁷

⁴⁵ G.G. Meyers, *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department*, Annual Report for 1962, 1 (my emphasis).

⁴⁶ Meyers, "Major Problems," *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department* Annual Report for 1962, 18.

⁴⁷ "Social Service," In *Workers' Handbook*, 7.

According to Meyers, the city could accept the burden of the so-called “natural dependencies” as found in the young, the aged, the sick and the disabled.⁴⁸ This minority should not be blamed for their situation because their incapacity was not self-induced, but was a result of circumstances beyond their control. His main concern focused on the “man-made dependencies” of the incarcerated, the victims of “broken families,”⁴⁹ and the increased numbers of unemployed. He assures us these people were more than just faceless statistics. “Here are citizens who are weak, confused and angry with the exhausting intensity of ignorance.” But how did he define ignorance? Was it a lack of education, or was he referring to a character flaw so easily labeled upon welfare recipients?

To substantiate his claim that society was not responsible for personal failure, the Director defined his impression of what constitutes a society. One must view a city as made up of not just streets, utilities and “mill rates,” but instead as a conglomeration of the “strong and the weak, the proud and the humble.”⁵⁰ The success of a city was in the “achievements of the strong,” those who worked and supported themselves with “patient endurance” and who carried their burdens from “day to day without complaint.” The needs and demands of those who “lean upon others and contribute little or nothing of their own,” therefore threaten a city’s strength,

Who were those on relief in 1963? After being asked many times for a definition, presumably from the robust citizens of the city, the conclusion remained unresolved. They were “probably the same kind of people who were dependent in 1863 or 1063.”⁵¹ A statistical report in the 1963 City of

⁴⁸ Meyers, “Forward,” In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1962*, 1.

⁴⁹ Despite the altruism of the Director, this term represents the disapproval society held towards those whose marriages were unsuccessful, regardless of the reasons for desertion, separation or divorce.

⁵⁰ Meyers, *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵¹ “Part I, Facts and Figures,” In *City of Winnipeg, Public Welfare Department Annual report for 1963*,” 3.

Winnipeg's Annual Report supplied the public with an itemized breakdown of recipients.⁵² Meyers, however, felt the need to expand, since reports are good only for supplying "statistical reasons."⁵³ The recipients could be divided into three major groups. Making up only 5 per cent of the relief programs were those poor souls who were "temporarily on their uppers," due to illness or personal crises which affected the recipients' capacity to cope with the working world.⁵⁴ These men rarely stayed on relief for more than "four or six months," at which time they "returned to the land of the living." By the summer they would be able to find seasonal employment, lowering their representation to less than one percent. For these men, relief was a good option. Perhaps because they were so few in number, Meyers thought it was a "pity" that they made up only a small percentage of the unfortunate.

The next group of people Meyers categorized as those who were "able and weakly willing to work" but unable to find employment for more than a few months of the year.⁵⁵ Based on the fluctuations of the labour market, they were the last ones hired and the first to be fired, and were the most expendable of all employees. Given that they were perceived as being "in their forties, probably," and were married, among a "number of other things," perhaps this is where our Canadian Citizen would have been slotted. Relying on generalizations, Meyers adds:

[T]hese people expect little for themselves, and therefore, they are not noticeably energetic in a remedial sense. Relief is less uncomfortable than the frustrations and heartbreak of repeated failure. If they are left alone they tend to sit and vegetate.⁵⁶

The largest statistical group consisted of women. These women included unmarried mothers, deserted wives, wives whose husbands were in jail or other institutions and were "ostensibly dependent"

⁵² See Schedule 3, "Facts and Figures," In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1963*, 3.

⁵³ G.G. Meyers, "Relief go Home," In *Canadian Welfare*, January – February 1967, Vol. 43, no 1, p 21.

⁵⁴ Meyers, *Relief*, 20 – 21.

⁵⁵ Meyers, *Relief*, 21.

⁵⁶ Meyers, *Relief*, 21.

due to the absence of a breadwinner. This category of unemployable females under the age of 25, made up an “ominous” 55 percent of the welfare payroll.⁵⁷ Meyers describes these women as “young deserted wives, with one or more dependent children, who married in haste and now are more or less repentant at the expense of the taxpayer.”⁵⁸ These women were to be held accountable for not taking responsibility for planning for their future.

Interestingly, Meyers found it easier to forgive men for their transgression and irresponsibility than he did women. When faced with prolonged unemployment, a man could not help but develop a “failure image” of himself.⁵⁹ Unable to fulfil the role of the breadwinner, a man in “extreme situations” acquires the attributes of the “pariah,” and the “swelling phenomena of desertion” supports “this contention.” There were few men who deserted their families “because of a desire for freedom.” It is obvious that this “strange freedom” rarely involved “objective choice.” Instead a man who chose to leave his family was not reacting to marital difficulties, only to his inability to support them.

Welfare mothers’ reluctance to work remained a sore spot for Meyers. He believed these women felt comfortable and secure within the welfare culture. Not only did they not want to be productive citizens, they believed they could use their so-called feminine wiles to survive.

It involves an agglomeration of women whose limited social aspirations have been weakened by a basic threat to the only asset they possess – *their sex*. They cling to relief for a combination of three reasons: it constitutes the only security they have ever had, it provides an opportunity for subsidized *serial monogamy*, and carries the satisfaction of the pound of flesh for the indignity and insult of desertions.⁶⁰

Perhaps because of their anger at men they felt they could use the welfare system, and any men they

⁵⁷ Meyers, *Relief*, 21.

⁵⁸ “Part I, Facts and Figures,” In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1963*, 4.

⁵⁹ “Unemployment” In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1962*, 20.

⁶⁰ Meyers, *Relief*, 21 (my emphasis).

encountered, to make up for the lack of a secure marriage. Since they were angry at being deserted, or because they recognized they could use their bodies to entice a series of men, they refused to accept responsibility for their situation. Thus, according to the Director, these women were content to remain indefinitely dependent on welfare.

Meyers' failed to acknowledge the domestic training so highly valued in the post-war society. From a young age girls were convinced they would not have to support themselves as adults. Instead they were expected to marry, raise a family, and live happily ever after. Generally speaking it was difficult for women to receive appropriate training to support themselves in the predominately-male world. Girls emulated their mothers and were encouraged to be nurturers, either at home or in the female-dominated services such as nursing and teaching. This is demonstrated by the domestic skills that were pervasive in a girl's education, in the middle-school setting, and in universities. As for his claims these women were quite content to spend their lives in a series of monogamous relationships, perhaps they were merely trying to find a dependable man who was capable of bearing the load of the breadwinner, as per society's standards. For Meyers, it is clear that the welfare system was designed as a replacement husband for lone parent mothers, who were incapable of financially supporting themselves and their family. "Just as their husbands had financially supported them in return for sexual monogamy, the state struck a similar bargain."⁶¹

R.H.C. Hooper, Supervisor of Social Services reports that there were some men who continue to mystify administrators. There were instances where the man, though dependent, appeared to be "quite free of disabling problems. Observation indicates that he *chooses* idleness."⁶² As with Meyers, Hooper

⁶¹ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 57.

⁶² "Legal Procedures" In Report of the Supervisor of Social Services, *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1964, 24 (my emphasis).

found it difficult to accept that someone would “consciously choose to be dependent, when we are so sensitive to the pervasive value of employment.” These particular individuals chose dependency as a “function of volition rather than handicap or environment.”⁶³ Administrators were at a loss in classifying these enigmas. Since they were not on relief due to physical limitations, or because of obvious factors in the home, one option was to deny them financial assistance. Denying assistance, however, was rarely used because “this kind of treatment seems to be more painful to the dependents of the *drone*, than the man himself.” He would not be denied welfare because “public assistance” was available for people who were “victims rather than engineers of circumstances.” Nonetheless, on the “grounds that if a person chooses to be idle, then he, as a free responsible citizen, is obliged to live with the implications of his choice.”

The Department was also concerned about a “small, significantly important group of people in receipt of assistance...who are functioning at a profoundly low social level.”⁶⁴ These people were part of small group of inter-generational welfare recipients. They “utilize an unduly large proportion of the Department’s social service resources, and are a major concern to other health, welfare, educational and law enforcement institutions in the community.” Constant exposure to “chronic alcoholism, marital strife, frequent desertions, early teen-age pregnancies, malnutrition, physical neglect, truancy and *non-existent housekeeping standards*” were all indicators of their inability “to cope with even the simplest realities of modern urban living.”⁶⁵ The Department was most “disturbed about the predicament of these families because of the feelings of degradation and the suffering they must experience,” and

⁶³ Since environment is not defined, it may be assumed through the content of the material that the term refers to the home of the individual, either where he grew up or where he presently resided.

⁶⁴ R.H.C. Cooper, “Socially Malfunctioning Families,” In *City of Winnipeg, Public Welfare Department Annual Report, 1965*, 17.

⁶⁵ Cooper, *Ibid.*, No matter what problems a recipient may be experiencing, poor housekeeping continued to be seen by the Welfare Departments as a major character flaw (my emphasis).

because of “the distress” they caused within the community. More importantly, there was grave concern over “the tendency of some of the children to follow the example of their parents.”⁶⁶ Accordingly, some of these families were being studied “in close cooperation with other welfare agencies” with the desire to develop useful approaches for helping these poor souls.

This will require bold thinking and experimentation. If all else fails, we may be forced to concede the necessity of establishing some form of state guardianship *whereby these families can live in a protected environment*, where they will not be required to discharge responsibilities they can neither comprehend nor fulfil.”⁶⁷

Even though only a “relatively small group” of children “grow up in an atmosphere of failure,” it was hoped that these children would be able to escape social assistance dependency.⁶⁸ “It may still be true, after all, that the children of all these people cherish their dreams and aspirations through the experience of dependency, and react to opportunity when they can recognize it; or when someone bothers to give a little encouragement.” Out of concern for children of “public assistance families,” the Department set out to determine if, because of their home life, they may be “prohibited from taking full advantage of educational opportunities.”⁶⁹ The underlying hypothesis for this concern was based on certain “factors associated with public assistance status which create a self-perpetuating cycle of dependency.” The two main questions in the study were:

- a) How public assistance children compare with those of unassisted families in the same social stratum, both as to their school performance and their potential for it; and
- b) Whether public assistance families differ from unassisted families in the same stratum with respect to goals and values that have a bearing on educational attainment.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Cooper, *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶⁷ Cooper, *Ibid.*, 17 (my emphasis).

⁶⁸ “Facts and Figures,” In *City of Winnipeg, Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1963*, 5.

⁶⁹ “School Performance of Children in Families Receive Public Assistance in Canada,” In Research, *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report, 1966*, 32.

⁷⁰ “School Performance of Children in Families Receive Public Assistance in Canada,” In Research, *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report, 1966*, 32.

After studying the data provided by the schools, and by comparing the “experimental group” with a control group, the Department concluded that children on assistance do in fact perform poorly, and “boys do even worse than girls.”⁷¹ The study demonstrated that children from welfare homes “failed in their academic careers,” and often were further behind in their academic performance than was expected for their age groups. The study did not report on the attendance of the “experimental group” of children, but at least, in these instances, they were attending school where they would be properly socialized and taught work habits appropriate for future employment.

By 1964, there was a slight shift by the City Welfare Department in its attitude towards the less fortunate. Hooper states that in order for the Department to “administer an effective program designed to meet human need...we must be flexible enough to shift our resources to meet the variations in need that are bound to occur in a complex urban community where clients are under heavy social pressures.”⁷² The Department, under Hooper’s guidance, was willing to accept that perhaps the blame was not necessarily due to individual defects.

It is one thing for program administrators in their confident wisdom to devise unimaginative and stereotyped services to lessen the physical deprivation of the poor; but it is something quite different for the same administrators to identify a wider range of service demands that are designed to provide opportunity and foster a sense of dignity and worth. The former approach accepts destitution and dependency as a normal phenomenon and attempts to reduce the effect, while the latter seeks to help public assistance clients function to the limit of their abilities so that they may achieve more productive socially useful and satisfying lives.⁷³

⁷¹ “School Performance of Children in Families Receive Public Assistance in Canada,” In Research, *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1966, 33.

⁷² Cooper, “Social Malfunctioning Families,” 16.

⁷³ Cooper, *Ibid.*, 16.

This statement illustrates that administrators recognized a change in policy was necessary to help the needy. Previous policies had failed because of limitations that did not necessarily help the recipient to alter his perspective, but were designed only to change the home environment to more closely resemble that of mainstream society. This was a superficial solution and would do nothing to change the attitude of recipients. Programs had to be instituted to allow the individual to build on his abilities so that he may more easily fit in with the rapid changes in society. The Provincial Welfare Department was in agreement with this statement. “Today, and at an unprecedented pace, individuals, families and groups are exposed to and deeply affected by the earthquakes of change and while much that has existed will remain, much that we have known and lived by will disappear.”⁷⁴ Two approaches could be used to help the poor to adjust. A “necessary component” was a program that would pay attention to early signs of “family disintegration and social maladjustment as evidenced in delinquency, neglect, interrupted schooling, unemployment and other symptoms.” More importantly, the development of a “more selective and extensive use of up-grading, training, and re-training facilities” was required to build productive citizens.

Although education and upgrading had become the catch phrase by the middle of the 1960s, did the Department and its staff believe retraining would help welfare recipients? Perhaps Gerard Meyers sums it up best in his reflections upon the disadvantaged. He felt that no “employer in his right mind would dream of absorbing the people on relief because they are productively sub-marginal.”⁷⁵ To hire a welfare recipient did not make economic sense since it would mean, “higher production costs” which would “inflate production costs in essential or profit-making enterprises” and would offer “no end of

⁷⁴ S. McArton, Director, “Division of Welfare Services,” In *Department of Welfare*, Province of Manitoba Annual Report, 1965-66, 12.

⁷⁵ Meyers, *Relief*, 22.

difficulty in the market place.” It simply did not make sense to Meyers to “create artificial activity for a group of incompetents who do not belong in a high stress milieu.”⁷⁶

Education is not the answer to this problem either. The same factors which establish vocational inadequacy also decree unsuitability for remedial education or training. All the drop-outs didn’t drop out because of bad teachers, or emotional trauma. A goodly number dropped out because they just didn’t have the basic equipment to get past grade eight. The least energetic of these are now on relief.⁷⁷

It was not only welfare administrators and personnel who were ambivalent towards the poor. An editorial cartoon printed in the July 3, 1965 *Winnipeg Free Press* attempts a lighter look at poverty. A family of three, father, mother and son, are depicted in a typically urbanite leisure activity, roughing it at the local campground. Complete with the family station wagon loaded down with camping gear and the obligatory pop-up trailer, the family is shown as engaging in everyday activities. The mother is busy washing clothes while the father is attempting to prepare the meal over an open fire, as the young boy looks on, sand toys in hand. All is not well, however, as it appears dinner has been burnt. The father, depicted in a dramatic pose proclaims “If we had to live like this we’d be eligible for poverty aid.”⁷⁸



⁷⁶ All things considered, this could be seen as a positive in the sense that Meyers appears to be advocating against the argument for “work-fare,” which was as popular a notion back then as it is today.

⁷⁷ Meyers, *Relief*, 22.

⁷⁸ *Winnipeg Free Press*, July 3, 1965, 4.

A closer examination of the cartoon shows how this typical nuclear family could equate themselves to welfare recipients. As had been mentioned in Chapter Two, life in suburbia was somewhat isolating. As Veronica Strong-Boag states suburbia in the 1960s was seen as “a step up in terms of convenience, comfort, and security”⁷⁹ Strong-Boag refers to a questionnaire designed to determine the experience of suburbanites between 1945-1960. According to one Metro Toronto mother, “Suburbia tended to narrow our vision of the outside world... We knew little about the world of poverty, culture, crime and ethnic variety.”⁸⁰ Exposure to the home environment of the poor was limited, and in this particular cartoon, quite possibly romanticized. Thus the mother is bent over a tub complete with a washboard for scrubbing the clothes, looking quite unconcerned about the burnt meal. Although she was scrubbing clothes by hand the experience was not too far removed from domestic reality. The “new time-savers” such as “automatic clothes-washers and –dryers” had only been available since the end of the 1950s, and it was not until the middle of the 1960s that that these appliances were considered “a common aspect of middle-class life.”⁸¹ Additionally, many washers were still semi-manual so that the clothes had to be wrung out by hand by using the clothes wringer attached to the machine. The father’s comment about eligibility for relief is perhaps due to his frustration with dinner. We can assume that up until this moment they were happy with “roughing it,” without the luxury of modern conveniences. Once dinner had been ruined, however, he is questioning the wisdom of trying to survive without the comforts of home. Perhaps he cannot accept this minute failure and bemoans the fact that there is no one to help them out of this situation. After all, if they were poor they would be able to turn to welfare for relief.

⁷⁹ Veronica Strong-Boag, “Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-60.” In *Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 72, No. 4, 1991, 503.

⁸⁰ Strong-Boag, “Home Dreams,” op cit., 503.

⁸¹ Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time*, 74.

This cartoon demonstrates the ambiguity felt by many towards welfare recipients. It is obvious that there is little understanding, or perhaps interest, in the day to day survival techniques of the poor. Although the family in this cartoon has chosen to escape the city by *temporarily* living without running water, electricity and flush toilets, there was an underlying belief that the poor choose to live as they do. As was demonstrated throughout this chapter, as late as the middle of the 1960s departmental officials were still having difficulty separating individual choice from cultural restraint. Perhaps this father's lament was not very different from how the majority of tax paying citizens felt. Facing the day-to-day pressures of full-time work, providing for your family, and running a household can take its toll on even the strongest individual. Thus his cry for "poverty aid" emanated out of resentment at how simple life appears for welfare families, and from an odd sense of jealousy that the poor do not have to work to provide food and shelter.

For Welfare Departments to find a suitable approach for helping the destitute remained as much of a dilemma at the end of the 1960s, as it did in the 1950s. Despite the early warning from the Canadian Welfare Council, it is apparent that over the decade difficulties remained in reformulating welfare workers attitudes toward recipients from negative to positive. Although it was not discussed in an open forum, the City and Provincial Welfare Departments did allude to deficiencies in how their over-worked staff handled the clients, and the feeling of uselessness felt by some when trying to help the more vocal applicants. More importantly, uncertainty continued in trying to evaluate why an individual may or may not be able to fit in with the mainstream society. Administrators had difficulty in letting go of the notion of poverty as a personal imperfection. They often ignored the fact that failure could result from of a lack of education required to keep pace with changing technology in the business world. We can be grateful that the era being studied was not known for its political correctness, otherwise we may not have had the opportunity to explore how the poor were really viewed by those in control of their

lives. Accordingly, as demonstrated by the language used to describe the poor, we have seen that the Manitoba welfare departments and support staff experienced great difficulty in altering their perception of poverty, and thus remained captive of the persuasive cultural perspective of poverty.

Chapter Four

Give and Take

Today, and at an unprecedented pace, individuals, families and groups are exposed to and deeply affected by the earthquakes of change and while much that has existed will remain, much that we have known and lived by will disappear.... A more selective and extensive use of up-grading, training and re-training facilities will be a necessary component...¹

¹ S. McArton, Director, "Division of Welfare Services," in *Department of Welfare, Province of Manitoba Annual Report, 1965-1966*, 12.

There has been an enormous amount of energy put into helping the poor to improve their lives, their standing in the community, and in the protection of their children. It appears, however, that there were no easy answers for helping these people. Despite many attempts at social engineering, altering the lifestyle of the poor has not yet been concluded in a satisfactory manner. Many approaches to improve their situation have been tried and failed, and debates continue even today over issues such as the level of financial allowances, special emergency funding and methods for improving their poor housekeeping skills. Discussions over the amount of monthly allowances, however, continued to impede governments throughout the 1960s in determining a healthy level of assistance for those in need. Was it better to keep payments below poverty level to discourage people from relying on the system, or should programs be designed to allow for more generous amounts in order to provide a healthier environment, and thus a healthier individual? It was argued that keeping welfare allowances at subsistence levels, or lower, would deter potential applicants and encourage recipients to more quickly contribute to the economy. Even at less than subsistence levels the welfare roles continued to expand throughout the 1960s. Accordingly, any increase or decrease in monthly allowances did not have any negligible affect on welfare expenditures.

This chapter examines the *City of Winnipeg's Department of Public Welfare Workers' Handbook* (the *Workers' Handbook*), published in 1962. Developed by the City Welfare department, the *Workers' Handbook* is a compilation of policies and procedures for use by welfare workers. Designed as a manual, it includes policies currently in effect, suggestions for deciphering them and instructions covering every contingency that could occur when meeting with applicants and recipients. Studying this guide will help to put into perspective how administrative biases were institutionalized and put into practice. Additionally, examining the

changes in policy, and the level of control over the poor through welfare programs will demonstrate that over a period of less than a decade, emphasis began to move away from monitoring the lifestyles of the poor to redefining recipients' futures. Underlying the reforms in policy was a growing emphasis on training recipients to enter, or re-enter, the workforce. Accordingly, welfare departments were under increasing pressure to encourage recipients to value participation in the market economy. This chapter will argue that welfare administrators instituted policy changes during the 1960s to reflect the growing needs of employers.

By 1961 the Winnipeg Welfare Department recognized a reversal in the ratio of employable to unemployable people. "Until the last few years, public assistance caseloads had been made up mainly of the sick, disabled, mothers of dependent children who had been deserted, and those rendered unsuitable for work because of advancing years, with a few employable persons temporarily or seasonably unable to locate themselves...."² As has been noted in earlier chapters, at least two variables contributed to the increase in the welfare roles: unemployment levels had increased and the criteria for eligibility had been expanded. It was inevitable then that there would be a change in the type of individual applying for assistance. These changes forced welfare departments to alter policies and procedures from assistance as a means of financial support to a more successful method of self-improvement.

Piven and Cloward argue that in western societies, the market system that has evolved utilizes welfare as a mechanism for maintaining "the larger economic and political order."³ All societies require "most of their members" to work in some capacity to produce goods and

² G.G. Meyers, "Introduction," In City of Winnipeg, *Public Welfare Department Annual Report for 1962*, 2 and *Department of Welfare*, Province of Manitoba Annual Report 1965-1966, 17.

³ Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971) pxiii.

services to help sustain the community.⁴ Just as all societies define the type of work and the conditions under which it is conducted, the “authority to compel and define” is sometimes seeped in tradition, other times in the “bureaucratic agencies of a central government.” Under capitalism, the mechanisms of a market offers “the promise of financial rewards or penalties” and motivates citizens to “work and to hold them to their occupational tasks.” Due to inherent fluctuations in the market system, or in other words supply and demand, unemployment has become a “permanent feature of the economy.”⁵ When high unemployment occurs, it is a result of one of two “catastrophic changes” inherent in the labor market; economic depression and rapid modernization. Governments react by instituting either “expansive relief policies ... designed to mute civil disorder, or restrictive ones to reinforce work norms.”⁶ Under this model, it can be argued that during the 1930s federal assistance to the provinces and their various municipalities was in response to calming the masses, to “mute civil disorder.” Conversely, the post-war era, which was more affluent, experienced substantial growth in employment, specifically in white- and pink-collar office jobs. Therefore by the 1960s welfare administrators recognized that the increase in unemployment was due to changes in industries which required more academic and technical education.

By the middle of the 1950s, public assistance programs across North America had been undergoing fundamental changes in administrative policy. Manitoba welfare officials acknowledged that an effort had to be made to break away from the original “policy-focused” programs to a more comprehensive “client-focused” mandate.⁷ The older, policy-focused

⁴ Piven and Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, 4.

⁵ Piven and Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, 5.

⁶ Piven and Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, xiii.

⁷ Mitchell C. Neiman, M.S.W., “An Investigation Into Public Assistance Costs in Winnipeg,” In *Winnipeg Public Welfare Department*, 1963, 12.

program, although considerably less expensive to run, was deemed unsuccessful in rehabilitating recipients. Since departmental philosophy had been developed in the early years of welfare reform, workers remained reluctant in altering old assumptions surrounding poverty, both in policy and in the delivery of assistance. Part of this unwillingness to change was blamed on the employment of the “less expensive social worker without much formal training” whose “primary orientation” was in the “precise interpretation of existing regulations.” During the early years of social welfare, this type of worker was appropriate, as she tended to follow policy with very little flexibility. Without a formal education, however, it has been demonstrated that the worker may have been easily influenced by others to blame the recipients for their situation and tended to favour more punitive measures.

Since approximately 1958, the City of Winnipeg had been in the process of transforming the Department into a “client-focused” program.⁸ This meant hiring more “products of post-graduate level schools of social work.” One of the benefits of this modification was the flexibility found in an educated staff who brought with them the theories necessary to help rehabilitate recipients. “Agency policies are most important, to be sure, but not so sacred that they cannot be questioned and amended in the interests of rehabilitation of the client.” Unlike the former uneducated worker, those who specialized in social work were more expensive, both in salary and in “the policies and practices which he influences an agency to adopt.” Nonetheless, the extra cost incurred in hiring educated staff was acceptable because this type of employee would be able to handle more cases, thus increasing the efficiency of the Department. Although the “corporate method ... may and does mean more superficial treatment...we try to

⁸ Mitchell, *Ibid.*, 12.

compensate for this...to achieve greater net gain, by investing heavier staff resources in specialized functions where priorities of service are frankly endorsed.”⁹

The Canadian Welfare Council (CWC) recognized the stringency of social welfare programs and the tendency these programs had in causing deprivation to those who relied on them. Given that the “object of our society is to provide conditions which will enable everyone to contribute to the general welfare and to share in its benefits – a society is weakened to the extent that some of its members suffer deprivation and want.”¹⁰ The CWC believed the basic principle of “public welfare philosophy is that of the essential worth and dignity of each individual.” Society had an obligation “to help everyone attain a minimum but decent standard of living.” As was demonstrated in Chapter One the strict guidelines developed for the application procedure meant that many people who applied were not eligible for assistance from the government, for many reasons. They may not have been destitute long enough, did not meet requirements such as residency status, or because they did not have enough children.

The emerging change in welfare policy was reflected in the *Workers’ Handbook*, which states that public assistance programs “should be founded on a belief in the worth and dignity of the individual.”¹¹ Possibly, in response to the CWC, the City Welfare Department claims that this “handbook embodies instructions issued by *Council* through the *Committee on Public Health and Welfare* over the years and which continue to be pertinent to the current scene.”¹² Since

⁹ “Comment on Organization,” In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1966, Introduction.

¹⁰ Canadian Welfare Council, “The Purpose of the Department: Winnipeg Public Welfare Department,” In *Canadian Welfare Council Study of the Winnipeg Public Welfare Department* (Ottawa: November 1955), 6.

¹¹ “Orientation: Some Basic Considerations for a Public Assistance Program,” In Department of Public Welfare City of Winnipeg *Workers’ Handbook of Policy and Procedures*, April, 1962, 1.

¹² Manitoba Department of Public Welfare, *Workers’ Handbook Policy and Procedures*, 1962, Forward.

ideologies concerning the poor are constantly in flux, it was suggested the manual be read “as a beginning endeavor to find coherence and a sense of direction, not as a completed outline limiting the Department of the scope of service thus defined.” Furthermore, “constant revision is expected, as an index of a will to maintain this Department on a flexible basis, sensitive to the ebb and flow of changing circumstances.”

The *Workers' Handbook* further states that the welfare of a community is based on the health of its individual members. Since members of society are dependent upon each other, then the “purpose of a public assistance program” should be to ensure a minimum level of health and decency for “needy people.”¹³ In order to help recipients, departmental policy states that it is imperative that the recipient’s “capacity for self-dependence and that of his family is maintained, strengthened or restored.” In order to carry out this mandate, investigations into the applicant’s finances, and personal life could not be avoided.

After first determining if the applicant qualified as a resident of the City of Winnipeg, the next step of investigation involved completion of the “much maligned Means Test, or Form E.”¹⁴ When properly filled out, the intake worker was then able to calculate the applicant’s resources to determine the amount of assistance required, based on a predefined budget. During this intake process, an applicant had to demonstrate he had made an “adequate effort to support himself and to explore alternatives.”¹⁵ He had to also prove that total family income was less than “the budget for the family in question,” and that he was not “engaged in business for himself.”¹⁶

¹³ “Some Basic Considerations for a Public Assistance Program,” In *Workers' Handbook*, 1.

¹⁴ “Eligibility,” In *Workers' Handbook*, 3.

¹⁵ “Conditions of Eligibility; Categorical Assistance – General,” In *Worker's Handbook*, 2.

¹⁶ “Organization and Structure,” In *Canadian Welfare Council Study*, 17.

Once it was determined that the client had no “means of obtaining the necessities of life,” then an application would be considered for approval.

During this phase, it was imperative the worker be aware that the application procedure would become the “focus of all the feelings which an applicant has accumulated in the process of making the decision to apply; failure is common, fear of the future frequent, guilt is usually in the background, and the hostility based upon expectation is present in one of its many forms.” This procedure was an essential part of the process in order to ensure that the application was filled out “frankly, directly, and with as much sharing by the client as possible.” Administrators expected that “some people” might resent this procedure and withhold vital information, as they would perceive this step as an “invasion of privacy.” Others may be offended by the impersonal nature of the bureaucratic formula contained within the “detailed form.” Accordingly, the *Workers Handbook* emphasizes that during the Intake process, a Worker must “maintain an attitude of helpfulness.”

In addition to proven financial destitution the welfare department required an explanation for any “transfer or disposal of available assets” prior to the applicant’s first visit.¹⁷ While this can be viewed as a way of insuring applicants were not hiding assets in order to take advantage of the welfare system, it also demonstrates the inherent distrust of the poor imbedded in welfare policy. Normally assistance was “provided in cash,” but exceptions were made when “objective evidence and proper inquiry” show that the recipient is “incapable of managing his own affairs because of illness, other incapacity, or proven mismanagement.”¹⁸ Because social

¹⁷ “Organization and Structure,” In *Canadian Welfare Council Study*, 17.

¹⁸ “Some Basic Considerations for a Public Assistance Program,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 1.

welfare had been designed specifically to help not only the destitute but also those incapable of caring for themselves, these particular qualifications can be considered reasonable. However, since workers' personal biases often affected the treatment of recipients and the awarding of allowances, was this level of discretionary control beneficial for applicants?

Further attempts to ensure that certain resources were exempted from the needs test continued well into the 1960s. The *Workers' Handbook* states that it was no longer "mandatory that real property be liquidated, that the value of insurance policies be realized, that automobiles be sold."¹⁹ Apparently, these exemptions were established in order to help alleviate some of the mental anguish felt by applicants. Allowing individuals to retain some of their assets would help "maintain part of an achievement level gained prior to dependency in order to avoid some of the negative effects of assistance based upon literal destitution." In contradiction to this statement, however, the *Workers' Handbook* maintains that if an applicant possessed a "motor vehicle, the Department requires that the license plates be turned in to the Department for the duration of aid, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise."²⁰ This procedure was designed based on concern for the applicant's well-being. Because the level of the assistance budget did not allow for the "operation and maintenance of a vehicle... submission of the plates constitutes a protection for the client" against his allocating food or clothing funds to keep up his automobile. Exceptions were allowed if the applicant lived too far from the public transit system, or if the car was needed for medical reasons. In these cases the onus was on the individual to prove the necessity of retaining the use of a vehicle. Due to a lack of available statistics it is impossible to determine how many recipients argued for the right to keep their vehicle on the road, nor how

¹⁹ "Conditions of Eligibility; Categorical Assistance – General," In *Worker's Handbook*, 2.

²⁰ "Vehicles Owned (Surrender of License); Procedure, in *Workers' Handbook*, 23.

many were granted full use.

Besides financial assistance for those in need, the health and well being of a recipient, or “client,” was an ongoing concern for welfare administrators. It was mandated that “no person in Manitoba” should lack the basic goods and services essential for a healthy population. According to the Manitoba Department of Welfare, the Social Allowance program provided for “food, clothing, shelter, essential surgical, medical, optical, dental and other remedial treatment, care and attention, and an adequate funeral on his death.”²¹ These services must have been minimal because it was not until January 1, 1964 that medical care was extended to include “in-hospital care *by the doctor of the recipient’s choice*, diagnostic tests, ex-rays, periodic check-ups and immunizations.”²²

Manitoba’s welfare policies were somewhat more generous than the City of Winnipeg’s. Unlike the provincial program, adult recipients and out-of-school dependents did not have access to “an adequate program of dental service.”²³ Instead, when necessary, these individuals could obtain help through the Dental Clinic of the City Health Department’s Out-Patient Clinic, but only for “extractions and dentures.” For those trying to make ends meet on City Welfare allowances, obtaining regular dental maintenance or fillings required alternative methods. Teaching hospitals were one available option, but many “women of low income prefer to suffer bad eyesight, bad teeth, the worry of nagging pains, etc, rather than suffer the indignity” of becoming teaching material.²⁴

²¹ Manitoba Department of Welfare Annual Report Fiscal Year 1962-63, 9.

²² My emphasis.

²³ “Dental Care,” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 5.

²⁴ *Report of the Manitoba Volunteer Committee on the Status of Women* (Winnipeg: March 1968), 58.

Winnipeg's welfare department also advocated the importance of preserving self-respect in welfare recipients. A closer look at the department's policy demonstrates there is a fine line between rhetoric and reality. More importantly, policy guidelines demonstrate a high level of paternalism embedded in departmental directives.

.... paternalism means social policies aimed at the poor that attempt to reduce poverty and other social problems by directive and supervisory means. Programs based on these policies help the needy but also require that they meet certain behavioral requirements, which the program enforces through close supervision. These measures assume that the people concerned need assistance but that they also need direction if they are to live constructively.²⁵

One example of paternalistic policies is found in the systematic procedures designed for transforming an individual from an applicant to a recipient.

Upon completion of the application process the "newly opened case" was transferred from "Intake to Field," and the recipient then became the "*responsibility* of a Field Worker."²⁶ Unlike the field worker, the intake worker remained within the physical confines of the welfare department acting as a front-line defense to both fraudulent and genuine submissions. The field worker, on the other hand, was involved with the recipients on a more personal and intrusive level. As per departmental policy, field workers were granted *carte blanche* permission for "visiting people in their own homes."²⁷ Home visits were not a new idea, but as the *Workers' Handbook* explains, this was a valid approach when working with the destitute. Departmental officials viewed this method as "generally more effective than working with them in the artificial confines of the office."²⁸ In a typically cryptic voice the author of the *Workers' Handbook* states

²⁵ Lawrence M. Mead, "The Rise of Paternalism," In Lawrence M. Mead, ed., *The New Paternalism: Supervisory Approaches to Poverty* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 2.

²⁶ "Social Services," In *Workers' Handbook*, 2 (my emphasis).

²⁷ "Social Services," In *Workers' Handbook*, 2 (my emphasis).

²⁸ "Social Services," In *Workers' Handbook*, 2.

that “work is generally *circumscribed* within established hours.”²⁹ It is unclear how working during normal office hours within the environment of governmental offices would restrict the efficiency of the worker. Nonetheless, the author continues by stating that “if the needs of the situation demand extended effort, responsibilities require that action be taken without regard for hours or inconvenience....” It is not clearly defined what sort of situation would prompt a home visit, who would be inconvenienced by attending to a call outside of regular working hours, or if the intended visitee was made aware of the impending visit. But it was during “this first major incursion into the realm of public assistance,”³⁰ that administration began the process of molding an individual into a healthy, productive worker.

Paternalism was also evident in the discretionary power of welfare employees involved in a “client’s” decision to change residences.³¹ The “Field Worker will discuss the plan, where possible, with the client to establish the reason for the move and whether it is economically sound and socially desirable....” If the move was considered unreasonable, the field worker was instructed to encourage the “client” to reconsider. There is not, however, any further instruction for dissuading a “client” from an unacceptable move, or placating a recipient who would more than likely resent this intrusion. Therefore differentiating a bad move from a good move was left to the discretion of the Field Worker because it was believed that recipients were incapable of making sound judgements concerning their personal lives,

Apprehension of the home environment was not a new development, as shown by the following statement.

²⁹ “Social Services,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 2 (my emphasis).

³⁰ “Eligibility,” In *Workers’ Handbook*, 3.

³¹ “Transportation (for Clients),” In *Worker’s Handbook*, 10 (a).

...we reached the conclusion that we should make some practical attempt to improve the quality of housing typically used by people on welfare. This conclusion came about in spite of the reality that there are many people on welfare who are either so inured to bad housing, or whose sensibilities are so dulled by prolonged exposure to denial, that they neither want nor [sic] appreciate a decent place to live. The point is that you cannot help a man to find respect until it is given with no strings attached. There are also dwellings where no human being should live regardless of how irresponsible or evil they might be.³²

Unfortunately, altruism does not always support reality. It was not just welfare recipients who were consigned to sub-standard living conditions. In 1961, 12.3 percent of Winnipeg's population resided in the inner city. Of this number, 8.8 percent had exclusive use of a flush toilet, and 8.2 percent a bath or shower.³³ Ten percent owned a refrigerator, while 2.9 percent owned a home freezer. Since the cost of rental housing normally ranged from \$65 to \$110 per month³⁴ choice of residential location would have been severely limited. Of even greater importance was the availability of rental accommodations. Between 1963 and 1970 the apartment vacancy rate in Winnipeg was on average 3.25 percent, dropping as low as 1.6 percent for 1968 and 1969.³⁵ Accordingly, recipients as well as many low-income earners were forced to live in rooming houses or in deteriorated housing offering only the bare minimum of protection and privacy.

The inconsistency in determining a client's ability to retain an automobile or in choosing a home was not because of an oversight in the *Workers' Handbook*. The manual was designed specifically to allow welfare workers the means for developing the required skills for interpreting departmental policies and procedures. It represented an attempt to define in more general terms

³² "Housing," In City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1966, 27.

³³ "Demography," In City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1964, 14.

³⁴ See Chapter Two, 12.

³⁵ F.H. Leacy and M.C. Urquhart, eds., "Series S232-245. Apartment vacancy rates, by area and newly completed but unoccupied dwellings by type, 1957 to 1977," In *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd edition (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre Supply and Services Canada, 1983).

how “this Department *may* approach the broad range of human problems which are brought forward from time to time.”³⁶ Thus it was intended to serve as a guide “within which Workers *may* learn to develop initiative and responsibility consistent with the principles which have been set forth or implied.” The basic assumption for this publication was that the people who used the guide would do so altruistically, “through a sound integration of concern for people in trouble,” while at the same time remaining financially responsible to the “citizens of this City, who must bear the burden of cost.”

As was demonstrated in previous chapters, workers were not always compassionate when dealing with the less fortunate. Thus one has to ask was allowing welfare workers high levels of flexibility in determining policy a successful endeavor? Since social welfare had originally been designed to allow assistance only to those who were considered worthy of help, and given that the mandate has been altered over the years to not just assist, but alter the lives of those in need, was it logical to entrust life-changing decisions to individual interpretation? It has been shown that quite often, and quite possibly unwillingly, an overworked, frustrated employee’s biases could effect the services and the level of assistance awarded.

Welfare administrators admitted there was an increasing concern for the effect social assistance had on welfare recipients. “Re-organization of philosophy means largely a change in emphasis from a clinical concern for the client person, to a broader concern for that person in his relationship with his community, and the reciprocal responsibility which is involved in that relationship.”³⁷ It was no longer acceptable that there should be a “giving of aid, in cash or kind

³⁶ *Workers' Handbook*, Forward (my emphasis).

³⁷ Meyers, “Introduction,” 2.

without some recognizable contribution from the recipient;” this was a “poor solution at best.” Instead, “public assistance must be seen as a means to a more socially desirable end, not as an end in itself, or as an alternative to some kind of useful participation in the life of the community...”

This concern for an individual’s relationship to his community began in the home. In the case of a family where the mother had died or been disabled, the Manitoba Department of Welfare had an arrangement with the Family Bureau of Winnipeg to provide additional assistance in the upkeep of the home, when necessary.³⁸ In these cases the father was allocated a “Social Allowance supplement” to help pay for the “Home-maker Service.” This was preferable to the alternative of separating the family unit. Mothers, however, regardless of whether they were single or their husbands disabled, were not given any sort of assistance in the upkeep of their family home. Assisting a woman was considered only if she was “hospitalized or needed help during convalescence” This double standard was obviously predicated on the belief that a woman was fully responsible for the care of her home, while the man was responsible for providing financial support. Unfortunately providing homemakers was difficult, since resources at the Family Bureau of Winnipeg were severely limited.

The City of Winnipeg Welfare Department not only addressed this shortage, but also found a viable solution for recycling female recipients back into the work force. In 1964 the department reported they had developed a “limited experimental homemaker program”³⁹ to supply live-in domestic servants to “help hold the family together.”

³⁸ *Manitoba Department of Welfare Annual Report* fiscal year, 1963-64, 14-15.

³⁹ R.H.C. Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” In *City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department Annual Report* 1964, 19.

... we would endeavor to recruit suitable ladies from among the clients. Ladies currently on assistance were interviewed in a search for those who would be readily able to leave their own homes *for a week or two* at a time, were interested in working, and showed *aptitude* for this type of service. We looked for single women or ladies with pre-school children who could go to the placement with their mothers.⁴⁰

Once a woman was chosen as a likely candidate, she was required to attend an orientation course “of several days duration.”⁴¹ Administered by agency supervisors, the orientation provided the applicant with instructional content on the “responsibilities of a homemaker, specific job requirements, [and] how to prevent and cope with emergencies in the home.” When a placement was found, the homemaker was then responsible for caring for the family and for performing the “necessary household duties” to keep the family intact. This solution was clearly influenced by paternalistic policies and by the domestic ideology so prevalent in post war society.

Despite the number of female recipients, the welfare department was only able to secure the services of “seven ladies.”⁴² Although “none were employed long enough in any one month to become self-supporting, they were adequately reimbursed to ensure that an element of financial incentive was present.” Out of these seven women, six “proved to be competent homemakers and several gave excellent service;” four had since found full-time employment and were no longer collecting welfare. This experimental program was important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was proven that “ladies” recruited from the caseload could, if properly trained, perform a “valid service in helping to keep troubled families together.” Secondly, “a protected work experience within the security of the Department may be a logical first step in helping *some clients* into financial independence. Sheltered employment can be an intermediate

⁴⁰ Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” 19 (my emphasis).

⁴¹ Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” 19 (my emphasis).

⁴² Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” 20.

stage, softening the transition from a state of unemployment and financial dependency to one of full-employment and independence.”⁴³

Since the department was apprehensive of the ever-increasing welfare caseloads, and because only seven recipients were recruited for this workfare project, one has to question the success of the program. Based on 1963 statistics, there were 734 women on the Winnipeg welfare roles; 2 were single, 98 were unmarried, 21 were married, and the balance were without male support either through divorce, desertion, death or imprisonment of their spouse.⁴⁴ Consequently, only approximately one percent of available women participated in the homemaker program. Why was the number of participants so dismally low? Since women were expected to maintain the physical aspects of the home without any outside help, it is possible that lone-parent mothers were not overly enthusiastic about cleaning up after other people. Perhaps running a household under severe financial restraints left many women exhausted from worrying about how to feed and clothe their children. Or quite likely, those with pre-schoolers were reluctant to take their children into a work environment, as they would have to perform double-duty; maintaining constant vigilance over their children’s actions while trying to perform the duties of a homemaker. Regardless, the Winnipeg Welfare Department was pleased with the success of this “worthwhile” project, and promised that it would be repeated.⁴⁵

The attitude of lone-parent welfare mothers towards paid work continued to vex the administrators of welfare departments. In 1965 Director, R.H.C. Hooper reported that many of these women lacked self-confidence, and were “apprehensive about entering the employment

⁴³ Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” 20 (my emphasis) .

⁴⁴ Report of the Assistant Director, City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department* Annual Report 1962, 15.

⁴⁵ Hooper, “Report of the Supervisor of Social Services,” 20.

market.” As well, other reasons were becoming “apparent for the frequent resistance encountered, to the concept of employment.”⁴⁶ Hooper believed many of these women maintained an “attitude of hostility” because their husbands had deserted them. As a result they were “caused to suffer by the male partner in question.” This negative behavior manifested into the belief that “society must make amends by granting social assistance on unconditional terms.” This attitude, Hooper believed, was due to a cultural perception in the working class that places the mother in the home with the children, irrespective of all other considerations.⁴⁷ Furthermore, welfare mothers had been influenced by the community’s attitude wherein the “lower class” widow or deserted mother was expected to dedicate her life to household affairs, while her “middle class” counterpart was expected to maintain employment to help support her family. Hence, this generation of welfare mothers had not yet relinquished the post-war ideology of the nuclear family.

Acknowledging there was an increase of married, middle-class women in the job market was relatively new for welfare officials. Throughout the 1950s, welfare departments had encouraged welfare mothers to emulate the middle-class standards of the modern housewife. Emphasis was placed on training women in the art of successful housekeeping, rather than on education. By the early 1960s, during what could be referred to as the “Betty Friedan era,” an ever-increasing number of married women were entering the workforce to expand their experiences, escape from the drudgery of domestic chores, and to find a more meaningful existence outside of the home. It is clear that the Department recognized these changes as early as 1962.

⁴⁶ Hooper, “Female Head Families,” In City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1965, 16.

⁴⁷ Hooper, “Female Head Families,” 16.

The state of being unemployed means more than loss of income. The unemployed person is no longer able to identify *himself* as one who makes a useful contribution, and he has no response to the common question “and what do you do?” In addition to loss of identity, this person begins to develop a feeling of not being needed, and we have only to look at the perplexing dilemma of the *modern housewife* to recognize what this can mean.⁴⁸

Since it was becoming more acceptable for married middle-class women to work, the department was forced to alter the expectations for their welfare counterparts.

Administrators espoused that there were “some valid reasons” for a welfare mother to enter the workforce. The most important was the financial reward from working. “Employment will permit the family to live in independency free of the stigma of welfare, *often* at a higher standard of living than the welfare budget permits.”⁴⁹ Although it was true that full employment paid better than social assistance, for welfare mothers, who generally had a low level of education, paid work was not necessarily a more viable situation. As was demonstrated in Chapter Two there were many costs incurred when working, such as transportation, lunches and appropriate clothing. While these costs are incurred by all employees, given the fact that women were typically paid much less than their male counterparts, would they have been any further ahead financially?

A welfare mother, who had proven she was strong enough to raise children in a clean home environment and was able to budget effectively on a subsistence level allowance, was rewarded with the encouragement to work. Assuming there were no discernable problems indicating that it would be more desirable for her to remain in the home with her children, and

⁴⁸ “Unemployment,” In City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1962, 19 (my emphasis).

⁴⁹ Hooper, “Female Head Families,” 16 (my emphasis).

providing she could find “proper facilities for the care” of her children, she was expected to begin “training in preparation for employment.”⁵⁰ Welfare administrators believed work would enhance her sense of personal accomplishment. Working would force her to mingle with persons outside of her immediate environment and give her the opportunity to break the pattern of social isolation. Not only would this enhance her self-image and increase her self-esteem, her children would also benefit. They would be able to develop a more secure relationship because of their mother’s new sense of fulfillment. More importantly, for administrators, the probable exposure to a more satisfying and rewarding life-style would help to break the inter-generational dependency on welfare.⁵¹

A review of social welfare histories has uncovered very little evidence to support the premise that the mid to late 1960s was crucial for returning the lone-parent mother into the private sphere of the working world. Many authors do allude to and acknowledge the difficulty women faced if they wished to partake in full-time employment. For example, in dissecting the term “feminization of poverty” Struthers’ research shows that women’s “poverty is due to two causes...basically unique to females.”⁵² Firstly, when marriages dissolve the mother was more affected economically than the father, because the man returns to single status, whereas the woman becomes the main provider. As was noted in Chapter Two, it was difficult for a woman to obtain financial support from the absent father. Consequently, whether the woman was on welfare or working, her financial situation would have been less secure than her former partner’s.

⁵⁰ Hooper, “Female Head Families,” 16.

⁵¹ Hooper, “Female Head Families,” 16.

⁵² James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario 1920-1970*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 242.

Margaret Hillyard Little, on the other hand, has demonstrated that there was a modification in Ontario's welfare administration similar to that of Manitoba's. The introduction of the CAP in 1966, heralded in a "new era of federal and provincial welfare state expansion."⁵³

The decade 1965-75 marked the tail end of the Fordist postwar compromise, which was characterized by mass production, mass consumption, and a consistent pattern of bargaining between labour and capital. Corporations acknowledged the legitimacy of unions and implicitly recognized some obligation to workers and citizens. Simultaneously, labour accepted corporate control over production and investment and agreed to work within the limitations of a capitalist economy.⁵⁴

As a result of this "compromise" the assurance of a stable economy enabled politicians to promise new and improved welfare programs to more thoroughly provide for "those who fell through the cracks of this economic boom." Consequently, both the Ontario and Canadian governments were able to "expand their definitions of the deserving poor."⁵⁵ This did not necessarily insure that the stigma surrounding recipients was removed. Instead it developed new "hierarchies of deservedness" and new tools to distinguish between the unworthy and the worthy. Beginning in 1965 the Ontario government redeveloped welfare guidelines for lone-parent mothers to include retraining for possible future employment. "Whereas single mothers had been previously considered 'unemployable', they became increasingly redefined as potentially employable, given the right types of retraining and employment incentives."⁵⁶

⁵³ Margaret Jane Hillyard Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 139.

⁵⁴ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 139.

⁵⁵ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 140.

⁵⁶ Little, *No Car, No Radio*, 140.

There can be little disagreement that the Department's goal in assisting lone-parent mothers and others back into the work force was a legitimate move for improving the living standards of the poor. Since the middle of the 1950s, Manitoba's welfare departments had initiated considerable changes in organization and policy. With these changes was an increase in demand for educated social workers, people who could be more flexible in their dealings with the poor and in interpreting Department policy. It was believed that a shift towards more educated staff members would help to improve the lives of recipients, their association with social assistance programs and in rehabilitation. Despite the move to utilize trained professionals, the rehabilitation of welfare recipients remained relatively static, especially for welfare mothers. By the 1960s it was apparent that welfare departments were influenced by the increase in demand for workers emanating from an expanding business sector in Winnipeg. A merger between industrial standards and welfare reform culminated in the "corporate method."⁵⁷ It was hoped that this paradigm shift would create an increase in self-esteem and self-worth for welfare recipients, culminating in the creation of a positive work ethic. Where once lone parent mothers were discouraged from seeking work outside of the home, they were now being trained and encouraged to take up paid work. Ostensibly, this was to lower the number of people collecting assistance, but more importantly, it was hoped that the now-working parent would serve as a positive influence for the next generation of workers.

⁵⁷ "Comment on Organization," in City of Winnipeg *Public Welfare Department Annual Report*, 1966, Introduction.

Conclusion

By some estimates, 18 per cent of Canadians live in poverty, but many of their more affluent fellow citizens, far from feeling compassion for the down and out, openly resent them. Indeed, Lynne Toupin, executive-director of [the National Anti-Poverty Organization] NAPO, has felt it necessary to urge campaigning politicians not to indulge in “poor-bashing.” When did the War on Poverty become the War on the Poor?¹

I’m so tired of hearing from people that welfare doesn’t pay enough for families with children. I wish these people would understand there’s such a thing as birth control! If you can’t afford children, don’t have them!

There is no reason for anyone to sit around on welfare for years. I’ve heard a lot of cases where some women would have more kids just to get more money from welfare. People like that should be sterilized. I have just three words of advice: GET A JOB.²

¹ Harry Bruce, “The Poor Just Get Poorer: Predictions of Poverty’s End Missed Mark, Widely,” In *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 5, 1996, A13.

² Letter to Miss Lonelyhearts, signed by “Taxpayer, Tuxedo,” In *Winnipeg Sun*, October 10, 1997, 28.

Welfare policy continues to be a contentious issue. In 1997, Ontario Premier Mike Harris instituted a voluntary program for fingerprinting welfare recipients under the premise that it would eliminate fraudulent claims. Despite it being clearly discriminatory and quite probably non-constitutional, this program was expected to become mandatory by the following year.³ The same year saw the Winnipeg Welfare Department reduce welfare rates for children in order to match Manitoba's provincial social assistance levels.⁴ Even though the cost of feeding an infant was about \$179.00 per month, the allowance was clawed back to \$182.45 per month with the assumption that this would be sufficient to cover food, clothing and diapers. Administrators claimed that the city had been paying higher welfare rates than the province, but had to institute these cutbacks due to "reduced welfare funding from senior levels of government." Thirty years after the inception of the Canada Assistance Plan, welfare recipients were still being stigmatized based on prejudices established decades earlier and victimized because of insufficient funding.

The original plan for this thesis was to examine the effect that welfare has had on women, and more specifically on single mothers. To strengthen the findings, I decided to incorporate gender into my research. However, the primary sources spoke for themselves. Women were more often than not foremost in the minds of the administrators, and in the objectives of welfare policies. Throughout the post-war period they remained enigmatic to administrators. Since the prevailing belief of women as dependants was embedded in societal values, it was not surprising to discover that welfare has forced single mothers into dependency on either the state or on unreliable husbands. Keeping welfare allowances at below subsistence levels ensured their

³ Wendy McCann, "Fingerprinting Stirs Debate: Crackdown on Welfare Recipients ineffective, stigmatizing: critics," In *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 14, 1997, C6.

⁴ Kevin Connor, "City Report: Welfare Cut May Hurt Kids' Diet," In *Winnipeg Sun*, September 4, 1997, 5.

enslavement in poverty and guaranteed their compliance to regulations.

The Mothers' Allowance program, the precursor of today's social safety nets, was used by the provinces as a blueprint for developing many of the social assistance programs that were developed during the post-war period. Although Mothers' Allowances provided financial assistance only to worthy widows, later programs covered a wider portion of the population. As in the early relief programs, people who were eligible for assistance from either general welfare or Mothers' Allowance were closely monitored and highly stigmatized by welfare workers, administrators and the general public.

Evidence demonstrates a fully-realized social welfare system began in the 1960s. Except for a few exclusions, Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg's welfare programs provided assistance for those who required it. It was during this decade that policies were amended to transform the recipient from a societal burden to a productive citizen. Although welfare allowances during this decade were revised and increased, they remained well below subsistence levels ostensibly to deter potential applicants. Accordingly, administrators believed that low levels of welfare allowances would make even the lowest paying jobs more attractive than social assistance.

Depending on employer requirements, women have been shuffled back and forth between acceptance and rejection as employees. At the turn of the last century, when male unions were fighting for the rights to a family wage, their female counter-parts were openly viewed as a threat to a man's ability to earn a living wage. In response, laws were enacted to protect women in the work force, which forced them into low-paying, gender-specific jobs. At the same time based on the concept that the mother was the moral guardian of the home, the belief that the fairer sex

should remain at home to raise their children solidified. Until the beginning of the 1960s policy reflected this assumption.

By the middle of the sixties Manitoba's welfare departments were in the midst of realizing a paradigm shift in policy. In response to an increased demand for workers to fill the low-paying jobs, or possibly due to the influence of the women's movement, welfare mothers were redirected out of the home and into the work force. Under the guise of increasing self-esteem and self-worth single mothers were encouraged to participate in training programs in order to take up paid work. This was done despite the lack of available day care and institutionally stratified wages in the work force. I expected to find that the retraining of welfare mothers would have been due to the introduction of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) which offered the provinces extra funding for job training. Surprisingly, I did not find any evidence that CAP influenced either Manitoba or Winnipeg's welfare departments.

Mothers' Allowances and the later social welfare programs have been necessary to help ensure that the poorest of our society have support when they need it. Administrative and ministerial promises have historically stated that welfare was designed to maintain recipients' dignity, health and well being. It is clear that this was merely rhetorical. Social welfare is not an extension of liberalism; it was designed as an agent of control, a means for rehabilitating even the most recalcitrant objector. This can be seen even today, as arguments continue over establishing work-fare, recipient fingerprinting, welfare hotlines, and allowance claw-backs. There will always be a portion of the population that does not fit into mainstream society. There will also always be those who are unable to work because of bad health, family responsibilities or educational deficiencies. It is imperative that we continue to fight for a higher monthly allowance in order to

allow this vulnerable group a chance to survive with some level of dignity, and without the constant fear of being unable to provide for their families. Until these two conditions are met, no amount of training or retraining will successfully assist welfare recipients to participate in the market economy. Accordingly, even today the cultural perspective continues to permeate welfare policy. Although both men and women are affected similarly by current policies, I agree with the feminist welfare historians that social welfare programs have and continue to contribute to the feminization of poverty.

Appendixes

APPENDIX A
Number of Families Receiving Mothers Allowances, by Province*

Year	Canada	New-foundland	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia
1926	7,933	--	--	--	--	--	5,215	825	--	907	986
1927	8,463	--	--	--	--	--	5,540	855	--	968	1,100
1928	9,205	--	--	--	--	--	5,976	967	--	1,029	1,233
1929	11,151	--	--	--	--	--	6,411	1,062	1,214	1,094	1,370
1930	12,305	--	--	--	--	--	6,712	1,055	1,800	1,270	1,468
1931	12,980	--	--	1,030	--	--	7,157	1,042	2,183	--	1,568
1932	15,014	--	--	1,108	--	--	7,418	1,070	2,372	1,499	1,547
1933	15,589	--	--	1,158	--	--	7,633	1,078	2,511	1,675	1,514
1934	16,172	--	--	1,168	--	--	8,144	1,092	2,608	1,724	1,436
1935	16,272	--	--	1,239	--	--	7,875	1,110	2,826	1,812	1,410
1936	20,068	--	--	1,222	--	--	11,189	1,140	2,944	2,088	1,485
1937	22,101	--	--	1,260	--	--	12,856	1,141	2,958	2,319	1,567
1938	23,034	--	--	1,295	--	--	13,644	1,079	3,007	2,317	1,692
1939	23,409	--	--	1,291	--	--	13,937	1,055	3,071	2,304	1,751
1940	38,705	--	--	1,258	--	--	29,353	1,016	3,054	2,262	1,762
1941	36,271	--	--	1,221	--	--	27,203	946	2,958	2,246	1,697
1942	33,192	--	--	1,227	--	--	24,715	873	2,734	2,091	1,552
1943	26,584	--	--	--	--	--	20,932	--	2,468	1,990	1,194
1944	28,289	--	--	1,365	--	11,973	9,176	643	2,222	1,830	1,080
1945	27,818	--	--	1,441	918	13,057	7,083	600	2,078	1,701	940
1946	28,388	--	--	1,615	1,207	13,685	6,687	613	2,117	1,559	905
1947	29,540	--	--	1,787	1,396	14,312	6,587	685	2,349	1,561	863
1948	32,669	--	--	1,938	1,526	15,321	7,817	708	2,986	1,622	751
1949	31,194	--	--	1,725	1,611	15,714	6,815	701	2,555	1,392	681
1950	33,115	--	170	1,918	1,788	16,434	7,304	786	2,610	1,462	643
1951	37,155	3,129	230	2,043	1,814	16,915	7,382	880	2,690	1,503	569
1952	37,612	3,267	225	1,996	1,848	17,032	7,748	932	2,573	1,488	503
1953	39,038	3,017	256	2,405	2,066	18,250	7,621	1,005	2,424	1,524	470
1954	39,569	3,031	261	2,313	2,096	19,403	7,059	1,099	2,272	1,609	426
1955	40,580	3,152	237	2,077	2,087	20,024	7,292	1,202	2,397	1,719	393
1956	37,809	386	285	2,065	2,022	19,944	7,266	1,188	2,521	1,809	323
1957	36,960	--	238	2,107	2,151	19,397	7,418	1,128	2,390	1,847	284
1958	40,478	--	266	2,131	2,213	21,766	8,580	1,121	2,279	1,879	243
1959	49,937	3,770	276	2,196	2,235	22,403	9,433	823	2,222	2,093	--
1960	45,918	4,024	267	2,210	2,213	25,778	9,722	1,209	2,242	2,272	--
1961	45,472	4,211	256	2,658	2,212	20,309	10,149	1,350	2,316	2,457	--
1962	45,472	4,498	269	2,754	2,119	19,842	10,359	1,638	2,382	1,611	--
1963	45,247	4,836	293	2,760	2,165	19,531	10,182	1,811	2,459	1,210	--
1964	46,235	5,172	314	3,331	2,254	19,222	10,700	1,845	2,466	931	--
1965	44,389	5,382	314	3,436	2,284	15,785	12,073	1,975	2,461	679	--
1966	46,216	5,733	370	3,361	2,222	15,816	13,621	2,256	2,380	457	--

* Source: F.H. Leacy and M.C. Urquhart, eds., "Series E508-520. Mothers Allowances, number of families receiving allowances, for Canada and by province, fiscal years ending 31 March, 1926 to 1966," In *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd edition (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre Supply and Services Canada, 1983).

APPENDIX B

Mothers Allowances, Total Provincial-Municipal Cost-Shared Payments to Families by Province** (\$000)

Year	Canada	Newfoundland	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia
1926	3,433	--	--	--	--	--	1,877	402	322	314	518
1927	3,719	--	--	--	--	--	2,008	414	335	349	613
1928	4,112	--	--	--	--	--	2,190	531	398	365	628
1929	4,437	--	--	--	--	--	2,306	558	499	397	677
1930	4,925	--	--	311	--	--	2,377	485	525	467	760
1931	5,177	--	--	331	--	--	2,582	466	502	480	816
1932	5,188	--	--	342	--	--	2,690	472	403	439	842
1933	5,230	--	--	358	--	--	2,802	433	417	440	780
1934	5,361	--	--	356	--	--	3,026	439	456	462	622
1935	3,807	--	--	413	--	--	1,380	441	475	508	590
1936	6,355	--	--	364	--	--	3,947	445	474	508	617
1937	7,159	--	--	389	--	--	4,583	446	482	576	683
1938	8,460	--	--	413	--	910	4,852	427	496	614	748
1939	9,131	--	--	425	--	1,350	5,017	428	498	623	790
1940	9,506	--	--	418	--	1,970	4,741	431	501	634	811
1941	9,700	--	--	418	--	2,304	4,666	406	489	619	798
1942	9,643	--	--	443	--	2,707	4,319	368	459	595	752
1943	6,328	--	--	513	--	--	3,736	336	514	562	667
1944	10,056	--	--	631	--	3,698	3,751	319	520	555	582
1945	11,011	--	--	735	385	4,186	3,634	320	652	571	528
1946	11,740	--	--	847	488	4,664	3,451	354	868	569	499
1947	12,011	--	--	920	599	4,766	3,376	373	895	593	489
1948	12,805	--	--	1,005	681	5,138	3,485	384	1,026	644	442
1949	14,298	--	--	1,119	760	5,239	4,535	536	1,069	651	389
1950	15,897	--	27	1,377	844	5,455	5,346	606	1,083	792	367
1951	17,531	1,113	52	1,387	854	5,624	5,546	682	1,107	836	332
1952	18,188	1,262	60	1,390	859	5,503	6,038	783	1,111	896	286
1953	21,332	1,217	65	1,406	1,225	7,483	6,431	866	1,329	1,049	261
1954	21,437	1,228	66	1,445	1,274	7,621	6,219	1,007	1,217	1,113	247
1955	22,512	1,324	73	1,505	1,302	7,956	6,545	1,132	1,252	1,198	225
1956	23,015	1,418	79	1,525	1,250	7,825	6,761	1,149	1,508	1,315	185
1957	24,146	1,820	79	1,554	1,304	8,275	6,985	1,148	1,482	1,339	160
1958	33,237	2,355	89	1,577	1,336	14,612	8,947	1,092	1,573	1,513	143
1959	41,477	2,859	129	1,888	1,365	18,991	11,033	1,325	2,030	1,857	--
1960	44,885	3,225	131	1,920	1,378	20,156	12,140	1,900	1,950	2,085	--
1961	46,245	4,061	124	2,166	1,399	19,314	12,878	2,073	1,657	2,273	--
1962	48,105	4,309	131	2,259	1,356	19,480	13,650	2,361	2,680	1,879	--
1963	50,642	4,688	141	2,312	1,347	20,743	13,914	2,577	3,513	1,407	--
1964	55,426	5,101	212	2,533	2,031	22,539	15,554	2,777	3,669	1,010	--
1965	56,074	5,343	247	2,684	2,089	21,068	17,044	3,047	3,811	741	--
1966	61,776	5,660	255	2,659	2,046	20,882	22,530	3,397	3,844	503	--

** Source: F.H. Leacy and M.C. Urquhart, eds., "Series 521-533. Mothers Allowances, total provincial-municipal cost-shared payments to families, for Canada and by provinces, fiscal years ending 31 March, 1926 to 1966." In *Historical Statistics of Canada*.

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