# Financial Fetters:

# Mothers, Lone Parents

# And

# Welfare Reform, Winnipeg in the 1960s

By

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# FINANCIAL FETTERS: MOTHERS, LONE PARENTS AND WELFARE REFORM, WINNIPEG IN THE 1960'S

**BY**

**SARI FIELDS**

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree**

**of**

**Master of Arts**

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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

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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

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[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 Owram, *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 Ebeneezer 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

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4 Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving 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 dependance 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

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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.