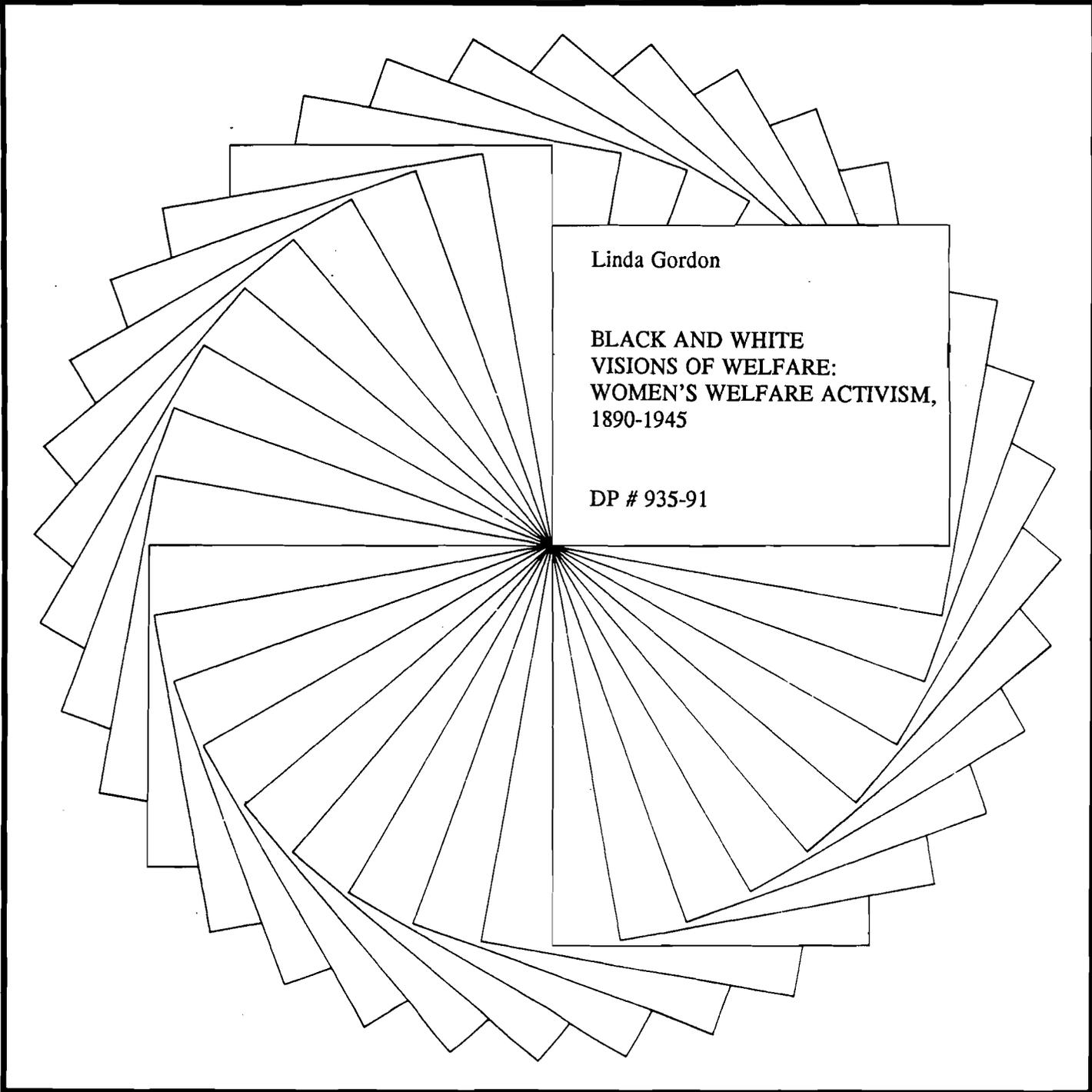




# Institute for Research on Poverty

## Discussion Papers



Linda Gordon

**BLACK AND WHITE  
VISIONS OF WELFARE:  
WOMEN'S WELFARE ACTIVISM,  
1890-1945**

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**Black and White Visions of Welfare:  
Women's Welfare Activism, 1890-1945**

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## Abstract

Recently, women's historians have begun to identify the important role played by women welfare reformers in the first half of the twentieth century and their significant influence on the construction of some contemporary welfare problems, such as AFDC. The reformers now recognized as welfare advocates have remained mainly white, however, and the programs advocated by Black women activists have not been incorporated into welfare history. This study compares Black and white women's welfare thinking between 1890 and 1945 and finds considerable differences. The white women were among the earliest advocates of public provision. They also supported means-testing, distinguishing the "deserving" from the "undeserving" poor, and moral and financial supervision of female welfare recipients; they encouraged women's economic dependence on men and discouraged married women's employment; and they failed to criticize men's exploitive sexual behavior, concentrating instead on circumscribing women in their own self-defense. Black women, although they shared in many elitist attitudes, concentrated on building private institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and settlements, because they were widely disenfranchised and thus had no influence on the state; they preferred universal to means-tested provision, supported women's employment, and were outspoken in their critique of male sexual aggression. The Black women's approach to welfare was in several ways more progressive than the white approach and, while it had negligible influence on policy during the period studied, might be a beneficial influence today if incorporated into policy discussion.

**Black and White Visions of Welfare:  
Women's Welfare Activism, 1890-1945<sup>1</sup>**

One of the pleasures of historical scholarship is that it may lead into unexpected paths, and what begins as a frustration--say, from an apparent shortage of sources--may end as a new opening. This essay began as an attempt to examine gender differences in strategies and visions of public welfare among reformers.<sup>2</sup> Having compiled material about women welfare activists who were mainly white, I realized that it was impossible to distinguish what was female in their perspective from what was white. Indeed, for many white historians such as myself, the racial characteristics of the white people we studied were invisible until we began to learn from minority historians to ask the right questions. Benefitting from this instruction I set up a comparison between Black and white women welfare activists. This was not easily done, because the contributions of minority women have been excluded from most welfare history, even that by feminists, despite the fact that several historians believe Black women were proportionally more active than white women.<sup>3</sup> How many discussions of settlement houses include Victoria Earle Matthews's <sup>4</sup> White Rose Home of New York City, established in 1897, or the several Black settlements in Washington, D.C., at the turn of the century?<sup>5</sup> The task was easier than it would have been five years ago, however, because of much new scholarship by historians of Black women. In examining this work from a welfare-history perspective, I came to understand how the standard welfare histories had been white-centered by definition. It was possible to make the widespread welfare reform activity of minority women visible only by changing the definition of the topic and its periodization.

The white experience has defined the very boundaries of what we mean by welfare. White men were by 1890 campaigning for government programs of cash relief designed to substitute for lost or interrupted wages, such as workmen's compensation. White women, who had been active in

private provision for the poor throughout the nineteenth century, began also to campaign for public provision, but they tried also to help those who were never primarily wage earners; they supported not only programs of material relief, such as mothers' aid, but also regulatory programs such as the Pure Food and Drug Act and anti-child-labor laws. These welfare programs had racial content, not only in the perspectives of the reformers--white--but also in the identification of their objects--largely the immigrant working class, which, while "white," was perceived as racially different by turn-of-the-century reformers. The programs also had class content, visible, for example, in their rejection of traditional working-class cooperative "benevolent societies." Moreover, because of these orientations, welfare in the late nineteenth century was increasingly becoming conceived of as an urban reform activity.

By contrast African-Americans, still concentrated in the South and in rural communities, had been largely disfranchised by this time, and even in the North had much less power than whites, certainly less than elite whites, to influence government. Southern states had smaller administrative capacities and were slow and more paltry in their provision of public services even to whites. African-Americans did campaign for government programs, and had some success; at the federal level they won an Office of Negro Health Work in the Public Health Service, and received resources from the extension programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Nevertheless, Black welfare activity, especially before the New Deal, consisted to a great extent of building private institutions. Black women welfare reformers created schools, old people's homes, medical services, and community centers. Attempting to provide for their people what the white state would not, they even raised private money for public institutions. For example, an Atlanta University study of 1901 found that in at least three southern states (Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia) the private contribution to the Negro public schools was greater than that from tax moneys.<sup>6</sup> For example, an appeal for funds from a teacher in Lowndes County, Alabama, in 1912:

Where I am now working there are 27,000 colored people ... In my school district there are nearly 400 children. I carry on this work eight months in the year and receive for it \$290, out of which I pay three teachers and two extra teachers. The State provides for three months' schooling ... I have been trying desperately to put up an adequate school building for the hundreds of children clamoring to get an education. To complete it ... I need about \$800.<sup>7</sup>

Thus a large proportion of their political energy went to raising money, and under the most difficult circumstances--trying to collect from the poor and the limited middle class to help the poor.<sup>8</sup> White women raised money of course, but they also lobbied aldermen and congressmen, attended White House conferences, and corresponded with Supreme Court justices; Black women had less access to such powerful men and spent proportionally more of their time organizing bake sales, rummage sales, and church dinners. One detailed example may illustrate this: the Gate City Kindergartens, established in Atlanta in 1905.

Another method of raising funds was through working circles throughout the city.... From Bazaars held at Thanksgiving time, lasting as long as a week, when every circle was responsible for a day, one day of which a turkey dinner was served. Money was made by sales in items of fancy work, aprons, etc., canned fruit, cakes and whatever could be begged. The association realized as much as \$250.00 at a Bazaar. From track meets sponsored by colleges, and participated in by the children of the public school, \$100.00 gate receipts were cleared. Food and cake sales brought at times \$50.00. April sales brought \$50.00, and one time the women realized as much as \$100.00 from the sale of aprons. Sales of papers, magazines and tin foil brought as much as \$50.00. A baby contest brought \$50.00. Intercollegiate contest [sic] brought \$100. Post-season baseball games realized as much as \$25.00. Sale of soap wrappers, soap powder wrappers, saved and collected from housewives, and baking powder coupons brought \$25.00.... [the list is twice this long]

It cost \$1200 in cash per year to maintain the kindergartens; in addition, donations in kind were vital: all five kindergartens were housed in donated locations; clothes were constantly solicited for the needy children; for several years Procter & Gamble gave five boxes of Ivory soap annually.<sup>9</sup> Some Black welfare activists were adept at raising white money, which was sometimes offered with galling strings attached, and even the most successful tried to shift their economic dependence to their own people.<sup>10</sup> No doubt some of these money-raising activities were also pleasurable and community-building social occasions, but often they were just drudgery, and those doing the work hated it. Jane

Hunter, a Cleveland Black activist, wrote that "this money getting business destroys so much of ones real self, that we cannot do our best ..."<sup>11</sup>

This essay, then, uses a limited comparison--between Black and white women reformers--to do several things: to alter somewhat our understanding of what welfare is, and to bring into better visibility gender and race (and class) influences on welfare thinking. The essay uses two kinds of data: written and oral-history records of the thought of these activists, and a rudimentary collective biography of 145 Black and white women who were leaders in campaigns for public welfare between 1890 and 1945.<sup>12</sup> This method emerges from a premise expressed by the feminist slogan, "the personal is political": that political views and activities reflect not only people's macroeconomic and social conditions but also the personal circumstances of their lives--their family experiences and occupational histories, for example.

I used a rather wide definition of welfare in identifying the activists I studied.<sup>13</sup> I included regulatory laws, such as the Pure Food and Drug Act, compulsory education, and anti-child-labor regulations. I did not include reformers who worked mainly on labor relations, civil rights, women's rights, or a myriad of other reform issues not centrally related to welfare.<sup>14</sup> In categorizing many different activists I had to ignore many differences in order to make generalization possible at a broader level. I did not form a representative sample through a standard technique, e.g., through searching biographical dictionaries. Instead I identified members of my sample gradually as I ran across their activities during several years of research on welfare campaigns, then tracked down biographical information; the process is a historian's form of snowball sampling, because often tracking down one activist produces references to another. Naturally there are many bits of missing information because biographical facts are difficult to find for many women, especially minority women. I make no claim to having created a representative sample or an exhaustive list. But, on the

traditional historians' principle of saturation, I doubt that my generalizations would be much altered by the addition of more individuals.

In order to bound my sample I included only those who were national leaders--often, officers of national organizations campaigning for welfare provision and, at other times, builders of nationally important institutions, such as hospitals, schools, and asylums. (For more on the sample, see the appendix.) These activists were not typical; more typical were those who worked locally, and their personal profiles might be quite different, as we shall see. But it would be hard to deny that these national leaders had a great deal of influence on the thinking of other women. I began in 1890 because it was in that decade that some important national organizations began, such as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), and that white women welfare activists began a marked emphasis on public provision. I followed welfare activism until 1945 because I wanted to look at broad patterns of ideas across a long period of policy debate; I ended in 1945 because after this there was a marked decline in the level of such agitation among white women and a shift in emphasis among Blacks to civil rights in the modern meaning of that term.

My approach obscures, of course, fascinating individual personalities. Substantial generational as well as individual differences among women had to be put aside. For example, the early Black activists were, on average, more focused on "race uplift" (a standard phrase of the time) and the later more on integration; during this period a mass migration of Blacks northwards shifted reformers' concerns not only away from the South but also increasingly toward urban problems. The white women of the 1890s tended to divide between charity-organization devotees and settlement advocates, while by the 1930s they were more united in focusing on professionalism in public assistance. Nevertheless I am convinced that there are enough continuities to justify this periodization, continuities which will emerge in the discussion below.

The result is two groups which are in many ways not parallel. For example, the white women were mainly from the Northeast or Midwest, and there were few southern white women-- 16 percent of the group were either born or active in the South, while a majority of the Black women were born in the South. Many of the Black women were educators by occupation, while white women who were educators were few. But these nonparallelisms are part of what I am trying to identify, part of the differences in Black and white women's perspectives. Among whites, northerners contributed more to national welfare models than did southerners.<sup>15</sup> And education had particular meanings for African-Americans and was integrated into campaigns for the welfare of the race in a way that it was not for whites.<sup>16</sup> Generalizing among a variety of women of several generations, the comparison naturally eclipses some important distinctions, but it does so in order to illuminate others which are also important.

### **I. The Black Women's Network**

I identified 69 Black women who were nationally influential. Separating the white activists from the Black was not my decision: the activist networks themselves were almost completely segregated. First, the national women's organizations that included Blacks, such as the YWCA, had separate white and Black locals. Second, since Black women rarely held government positions, they seldom interacted with white women, at least officially. Third, the national network of white women reformers usually excluded Blacks even when they could have done otherwise. The barring of Black women from white women's clubs, and the ignoring or trivializing of life-and-death Black issues such as lynching, have been amply documented.<sup>17</sup> To cite but one example, Mary McLeod Bethune, one of the most important women in the New Deal, was not a part of the tight, if informal, caucus that the white New Deal women formed. Yet it must be emphasized that the white reformers in my

sample were not more racist, and often less so, than the men engaged in similar activities. Eight were among the founding members of the NAACP: Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Julia Lathrop, Sophonisba Breckinridge, Mary McDowell, Lillian Wald, and Grace and Edith Abbott. Some were praised by Black leaders for their work on behalf of African-Americans. W. E. B. Du Bois and Butler R. Wilson, at Florence Kelley's funeral, spoke both of the limitations of white reformers and of Kelley's personal overcoming of her initial fears: when at first the NAACP's journal The Crisis called for social, as well as economic and political, equality between the races, Kelley "was aghast" and considered resigning from her honorific position on the board; but she persevered and later, in Du Bois's words, "acknowledged that this was a plain and temperate statement of a perfectly obvious truth."<sup>18</sup> Segregation and racism were indeed endemic in the United States and that these women did not usually see beyond their prejudices must be attributed to the racist attitudes prevalent at the time.

There were important counterexamples, interracial efforts of significant impact, especially on the local level. In Chicago, for instance, white settlement and charity workers joined Black reformers in campaigning for public services for dependent children, establishing the Chicago Urban League, and responding to the 1919 race riot.<sup>19</sup> In the South interracial efforts arose from evangelical religious activity. Some white members of this sample group worked with the Commission of Interracial Cooperation, forming a Women's Council within it which had 805 county-level groups by 1929.<sup>20</sup> The national YWCA became a forum for communication between Black and white women. But these efforts were marked by serious and sometimes crippling white prejudice, and the core networks of women remained segregated.

While the Black group was created in part by white racism, it was also created from the inside, so to speak, by personal friendships.<sup>21</sup> Often these relationships were born in schools and colleges and continued thereafter, strengthened by the development of Black sororities after 1908.<sup>22</sup>

The women's mobility extended relationships across regional boundaries. Friendships could be intense; Black women early in the twentieth century, like white women, sometimes spoke openly of their strong emotional bonds. Thus Darlene Clark Hine quotes Jane Hunter writing Nannie Burroughs, "It was so nice to see you and to know your real sweet self. Surely we will ... cultivate a lasting friendship. I want to be your devoted sister in kindred thought and love.'" Hunter spoke just as frankly to Burroughs of her loneliness "for want of a friend."<sup>23</sup> Mutual support was strong. When in the 1930s the President and trustees of Howard University, led by Abraham Flexner, tried to force Howard's Dean of Women Lucy Slowe to live on campus with her girls (something the Dean of Men was not, of course, required to do with his boys), and she refused to comply, a whole network of women interceded on her behalf. A group of five asked for a meeting with Abraham Flexner, which he refused.<sup>24</sup> Another group of women interviewed trustees in New York and reported to Slowe their perceptions of the situation.<sup>25</sup> Mary McLeod Bethune urged her to be "steadfast" and campaigned for her position among sympathetic Howard faculty.<sup>26</sup> The network was divided by cliques and encompassed conflicts and even feuds. Yet it had a "bottom line" of loyalty. Even those who criticized Bethune for insufficient militancy understood her to be absolutely committed to increasing the number of Blacks, and particularly Black women, in important positions.<sup>27</sup>

The Black women's network was made more coherent by its members' sharing an experience as educators and builders of educational institutions. Education was the single most important area of activism for these Black women. Most of them taught at one time or another and 38 percent were educators by profession.<sup>28</sup> For many, reform activism centered around establishing schools, from kindergartens through colleges: Nannie Burroughs worked from 1901 to 1909 to establish the National Training School for Girls; Lucy Laney established the Haines Institute in Augusta; Arenia Mallory moved from Jacksonville, Illinois, to settle in Mississippi and build the Saints Industrial and Literary Training School. In his 1907 report on economic cooperation among Negro Americans, Du

Bois counted 151 church-connected, and another 161 nonsectarian, private Negro schools.<sup>29</sup>

Although he did not discuss the labor of founding and maintaining these institutions, we can guess that women contributed disproportionately.

Another Black welfare priority was the establishment of old people's homes, considered by Du Bois the "most characteristic Negro charity." These too, according to Du Bois' early findings, were predominantly organized by women.<sup>30</sup> But if we were to take the period 1890-1945 as a whole, the cause second to education was health. Black hospitals, while primarily founded by Black and white men, depended on crucial support from Black women. Between 1890 and 1930, African-Americans created approximately 200 hospitals and nurse-training schools, and women often took charge in organizing the community and raising funds.<sup>31</sup> Over time Black women's health work changed its emphasis, from providing for the sick in the 1890s to preventive health projects after about 1910.<sup>32</sup> Yet already in the first decade of the century Du Bois found that most locations with a considerable Black population had beneficial and insurance societies which paid sickness as well as burial benefits;<sup>33</sup> these can be traced back even a century before Du Bois studied them.<sup>34</sup> In several cities, the societies also paid for medicines and actually created their own "HMO's." With the dues of their members they hired physicians, annually or on a quarterly basis, to minister to the entire group.<sup>35</sup>

Many women's clubs made health work their priority. Washington's Colored YWCA built a program around visiting the sick.<sup>36</sup> The Indianapolis Woman's Improvement Club aided tuberculosis patients, attempting to redress the exclusion of Blacks from the services of the Indianapolis Board of Health, the City Hospital, and the county Tuberculosis Society.<sup>37</sup> The preventive health emphasis was stimulated in part by concern for the current condition of Black schools. For example, Atlanta's Neighborhood Union surveyed conditions in the Black schools in 1912 and 1913, revealing major health problems; this led the NU to establish a clinic in 1916 which offered both health education and

free medical treatment.<sup>38</sup> Possibly the most extraordinary individual in this public health work was Modjeska Simkins, who used her position as director of Negro work for the Anti-tuberculosis Association of South Carolina to inaugurate a program dealing with the entire range of Black health problems, including maternal and infant mortality, VD and malnutrition, and TB.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the most ingenious women's program was Alpha Kappa Alpha's Mississippi Health Project. Members of this Black sorority brought health care to sharecroppers in Holmes County, Mississippi, for several weeks every summer from 1935 to 1942. Unable to rent space for a clinic because of plantation owners' opposition, they turned their cars into mobile health vans, immunizing over 15,000 children and providing services such as dentistry and treatment for malaria and VD for 2500 to 4000 people each summer.<sup>40</sup>

These reformers were united also through their churches, which were centers of networking and activism, in the North as well as the South. Indeed, the more rank-and-file, less elite Black women activists were probably even more connected to churches; the national reform leadership was during this period moving toward more secular organization, although it remained very church-centered compared with the white leadership.<sup>41</sup> Black churches played a large role in money-raising, especially as a pulpit from which to appeal for white money through missionary projects.<sup>42</sup>

The independent Black women's movement became national in the 1890s, particularly with the establishment of the National Association of Colored Women. Victoria Matthews's Black Rose Home helped persuade the YWCA, through its leader Grace Dodge, to hire Black women onto its staff,<sup>43</sup> which brought together Black activist women from different parts of the United States and promoted their leadership. Forty-four percent of the Black women in this study worked for the YWCA.<sup>44</sup> When Fannie Barrier Williams spoke in Memphis in 1896, she had never been in the South before, having been raised in upstate New York and settled in Chicago.<sup>45</sup> More and more the women began to travel widely, despite the difficult and humiliating conditions of travel for Black

women. Most were born in one region and later lived in another. At least 57 percent were born in the South.<sup>46</sup> More important, perhaps, two-thirds of these migrated to the Northeast, Midwest, and mid-Atlantic, thus expanding their network as they fled Jim Crow and sought wider opportunities. (A total of 53 percent were active in New England and the mid-Atlantic states and 23 percent in the Midwest.)<sup>47</sup>

Most members of this network were married--81 percent--and only 20 percent were widowed, divorced, or separated. Many were married to extremely prominent men--at least 19, or 24 percent--and their marriages sometimes promoted their leadership positions.<sup>48</sup> Lugenia Burns Hope was the wife of John Hope, first Black president of Atlanta University; Irene Gaines was married to an Illinois state legislator. Ida Wells-Barnett's husband published Chicago's leading Black newspaper. George Edmund Haynes, husband of Elizabeth, was a Columbia Ph.D., professor at Fisk, Assistant to the Secretary of Labor from 1918 to 1921, and a founder of the Urban League. George Ruffin, husband of Josephine, was a Harvard Law graduate, member of the Boston City Council, and Boston's first Black judge.<sup>49</sup> Most women, however, had been activists before marriage, and many led lives quite independent of their husbands.

Their fertility pattern was probably related to their independence. Forty-three percent had no children, and 28 percent of the married women had no children (there were no unmarried mothers). By contrast, in the Black population in general, only 7 percent of all married Black women born between 1840 and 1859, the years between which the oldest women in my sample were born, were childless, as were 28 percent of those born between 1900 and 1919, the years between which the youngest were born.<sup>50</sup> (For comparison, 11 percent of the white married women in this sample were childless.) It thus seems likely that these women welfare activists used birth control, although being physically separated from their husbands for long periods may have contributed to their low fertility.<sup>51</sup> (Indeed, it is important to consider the actual contours of their marriages, not just their

legal status, a distinction to which we will return below.) In their contraceptive practices these women may have been more modern or more "feminist" than white women of comparable class position at this time.

For most African-American women during this period, a major reason for being in the public sphere after marriage was employment, owing to economic necessity; for this group of women activists, however, money was not usually a problem. A remarkable number had prosperous parents. Crystal Fauset's father, although born a slave, was principal of a Black academy in Maryland. Elizabeth Ross Haynes's father went from slavery to the ownership of a 1500-acre plantation. Addie Hunton's father was a prominent businessman and founder of the Negro Elks. Mary Church Terrell's mother and father were successful in business. Moreover, most had husbands who could support them; 51 percent of the married women had high-professional husbands--lawyers, physicians, ministers, and educators.

The women of this network were also often very class-conscious, and many of the clubs which built their collective identity were exclusive, such as the sororities, or the Chautauqua Circle and "The Twelve" in Atlanta.<sup>52</sup> That about 40 percent were born outside the South provides further evidence of their high status, since the evidence suggests that those who removed earlier to the North were the more wealthy and opportunistic.<sup>53</sup> Yet only a tiny minority--8 percent--were not employed.<sup>54</sup> To be sure, their economic situations were prosperous only when compared with the whole Black population; on average, the Black women's network was less wealthy than that of the white women. Even those who were born of middle-class status were usually newly middle-class, perhaps a generation away from slavery and without much cushion against economic misfortune. Still, among many whites the first and most important emblem of a woman's middle-class status was her domesticity. One can safely conclude that one meaning of the Black women's combining of public

and family lives was the greater acceptance among African-Americans, for many historical reasons, of the public life of married women.

The Black women's network was made more homogeneous by educational attainment, high social status, and a sense of superiority to the masses which brought with it obligations of service. In these respects the two networks were remarkably similar. Eighty-three percent of the Black women had higher education, a percentage comparable to that of the white women, and 35 percent had attended graduate school. Moreover, only 41 percent of the women in this sample attended Black colleges, while those colleges conferred 86 percent of all Black undergraduate degrees in the period 1914-36.<sup>55</sup> These figures may be surprising to those unfamiliar with the high professional achievement patterns of Black women between 1890 and 1945. The full meaning of these statistics emerges when one considers the average educational opportunities for Blacks in the United States at this time: for the earliest year for which we have figures (1940), only 1 percent of African-Americans, male and female, had four or more years of college.

Only in adulthood did several women in this sample who were born into the middle class learn for the first time of the conditions of poverty in which most African-Americans lived--an ignorance characteristic of prosperous whites but not always noted among Blacks. Alfreda Duster, the daughter of Ida Wells-Barnett, admitted that "... it was difficult for me to really empathize with people who had come from nothing, where they had lived in cottages, huts in the South, with no floor and no windows and had suffered the consequences of the discrimination and the hardships of the South."<sup>56</sup> Many Black women joined Du Bois in emphasizing the importance of building an intellectual and professional elite, calling upon the "leading" or "intelligent" or "better class of" Negroes to take initiatives for their people.<sup>57</sup> Class and status inequalities, measured by such markers as money, occupation, and skin color, created tensions among this network, as among the white.<sup>58</sup> Some thought of their obligations to their race in the eugenical terms that were so

fashionable in the first three decades of this study. "I was going to multiply my ability and my husband's by six," Duster said in describing her decision to have six children.<sup>59</sup> Such thinking had somewhat different meanings for Blacks than for whites, however, reflecting their awareness that race prejudice made it difficult for educated, prosperous Blacks to escape the discrimination and pejorative stereotyping that held back all African-Americans.<sup>60</sup> As Ferdinand Barnett, later to become the husband of Ida B. Wells, had put it in 1879, "One vicious, ignorant Negro is readily conceded to be a type of all the rest, but a Negro educated and refined is said to be an exception. We must labor to reverse this rule; education and moral excellence must become general and characteristic, with ignorance and depravity the exception."<sup>61</sup>

Indeed, the high social status and prosperity common in this group should not lead us to forget the discrimination and humiliation that they nonetheless faced. Their high levels of skills and education were frustrated by a lack of career opportunities. Sadie Alexander, from one of the most prominent Black families in the United States, was the first Black woman Ph.D. (her degrees were from the University of Pennsylvania), but could not get an appropriate job because of her color and was forced to work as an assistant actuary for a Black insurance company.<sup>62</sup> Anna Arnold Hedgeman, one of the youngest women in this sample and from a small Minnesota town where she had attended integrated schools and churches, graduated from Hamline University in St. Paul only to discover that she could not get a teaching job in any white institution. Instead she went to work in Holly Springs, Mississippi, until she found Jim Crow intolerable.<sup>63</sup> Despite Washington's relatively large Black middle class, most women there could not get clerical jobs with the federal government until the 1940s.<sup>64</sup>

Moreover, this Black activism was born in an era in which conditions for most African-American women radically worsened, while those for white women improved. The older women in the Black network had felt segregation intensify during their adulthood; there was widespread

immiserization and a denial of what political power they had accumulated after emancipation. Their experiences, however, so rarely understood by whites, only reinforced their mutual bonds.

## **II. The White Women's Network**

The white group includes 76 women who held substantial federal, state, or local offices with responsibility for welfare programs, or who were leaders of the major civic organizations lobbying for such reforms, or both. The white reformers, like the Black, constituted a coherent network. Most of them knew each other, and their compatibility was cemented by a homogeneous class, religious, and ethnic base. Most had prosperous, many even prominent, parents; virtually all were of Northern European, Protestant backgrounds, from the Northeast or Midwest. The nine Jewish members were hardly representative of Jewish immigrants: five had wealthy German-Jewish parents (Elizabeth Brandeis, Hannah Einstein, Josephine and Pauline Goldmark, and Lillian Wald). There were three Catholics (Josephine Brown, Jane Hoey, and Agnes Regan) but hardly typical U.S. Catholics of the period: they were all born in America of prosperous parents. The shared Protestantism among the others was more a sign of their similar ethnic background than avid religious commitment, for few practiced their faith and churches did not organize their welfare-reform activities.

As with the Black women, the great majority (86 percent) were college-educated, and 66 percent had attended graduate school. By contrast, in 1920 less than 1 percent of all American women held college degrees. It is worth recalling, however, that 83 percent of the Black women were college-educated, and their disproportion to the Black population as a whole was even greater. The white women, of course, had attended more expensive, elite schools. Thirty-seven percent had graduated from one of the New England women's colleges.

A greater percentage of the white women worked in the same field than did Blacks. Seventy-seven percent were social workers.<sup>65</sup> (Thirty-five percent of the Blacks were social workers.) To understand what social work meant to these women, one must note that prior to the Progressive era, social work did not refer to a profession but to a range of helping and reform activities (the word "social" originally emphasized reform rather than charity).<sup>66</sup> The early twentieth-century professionalization of social work has often been conceptualized as creating a rather sharp break both with amateur friendly visiting and political activism. But the experience of the women I am studying suggests otherwise: well into the 1930s they considered casework, charity, and reform politics as "social work."<sup>67</sup> In contrast with the African-American women, only twelve (16 percent) were educators, suggesting that creating new educational institutions was no longer a reform priority of the white women and that other professional jobs, especially those with the government, were open to them.

The whites had at least as much geographical togetherness as the Black women. Sixty-eight percent worked primarily in the New England and mid-Atlantic states--hardly surprising, since the national headquarters of the organizations they worked for were usually located there. Moreover, 55 percent worked in New York City during the Progressive era or the 1920s. This is not surprising, since New York was national headquarters for a number of influential organizations. In addition, New York City played a vanguard role in the development of public services and regulation in the public interest.<sup>68</sup> In 1917 the Women's City Club of New York City opened a maternity center in Hell's Kitchen, where they provided prenatal nursing care and education and housekeeping services for new mothers. Expanded to ten locations in Manhattan, this effort served as a model for the bill which eventually became the Sheppard-Towner Act.<sup>69</sup> New York City settlement houses specialized in demonstration projects, beginning programs on a small, private scale and then getting them publicly funded. They initiated vocational guidance programs, later adopted by the public schools;

they initiated the use of public schools for after-hours recreation programs and visiting public-health nursing; and Lillian Wald, head of the Henry St. Settlement, coordinated the city's response to the 1919 influenza epidemic. The settlements lobbied for municipal legislation regulating tenements and landlord-tenant relations and milk purity and prices.<sup>70</sup> The Women's City Club provided an important meeting place, and can serve as an indicator of its members' prosperity: members had to pay substantial dues and an initiation fee, and the club purchased a mansion on 35th and Park for \$160,000 in 1917.<sup>71</sup> By contrast, several cities played important roles in the building of the Black women's network, notably Atlanta, New York, and Washington, and many more of the Black activists continued to live and work primarily in rural locations where there were important schools, such as Tuskegee Institute in eastern Alabama.<sup>72</sup>

Some of these white women had been active in party politics even before they had the vote. Some had been members of the Socialist Party and many participated in the 1912 Progressive Party campaign.<sup>73</sup> Over the course of the 55-year period, they became even more active in political parties and transferred their allegiances from the Republican to the Democratic. Here, too, New York was important, because the political figure who most attracted these women to the Democrats was Franklin Roosevelt, first as governor and then as president. Several women who had been active in reform in New York, including notably Belle Moskowitz, Rose Schneiderman, and Eleanor Roosevelt, took on statewide roles. The Al Smith campaign of 1928 promoted more division than unity, however, because most women "social workers" were critical of his "wet" positions and his association with machine politics. But the reassuring presence of his aide, Moskowitz, and then Franklin Roosevelt's "aide," Eleanor Roosevelt, was critical in bringing their network into the Democratic Party.

The Black network also underwent a political realignment from Republican to Democrat, but for different reasons, largely associated with their migration northwards, because of the southern

Democratic Party's being essentially closed to blacks. Ironically, this realignment was also in part effectuated by Eleanor Roosevelt, who became the symbol of those few white political leaders willing to take stands on racial equality.<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, Eleanor Roosevelt did not create an integrated network, nor was she able to swing the white network to support the leading Black demand during the Roosevelt administration: a federal antilynching law.

Women in both networks taught, served as mentors for, even self-consciously trained each other. Among Blacks this occurred in colleges and sororities, in white-run organizations such as the YWCA, in Black organizations such as the NACW, and in many local groups. A higher proportion of the white women than of the Black worked in settlement houses--probably partly because so many of the white women were single--and relationships that were intergenerational and intimate developed as the younger or newer volunteers actually lived with their elders, seeing them in action.<sup>75</sup> In the civic organizations, leaders groomed, protected, and promoted their proteges: Jane Addams did this with Alice Hamilton, Lillian Wald, and Florence Kelley; Sophonisba Breckinridge launched her student Grace Abbott's career by placing her at the head of the newly formed Immigrant's Protective League; the whole network campaigned for Abbott and then for Perkins for Secretary of Labor.<sup>76</sup> Such involvements continued when network members became federal or state officials, with other members as their employees. The chiefs of the Children's and Women's Bureaus--the two key federal agencies run by women--became extraordinarily involved in the personal lives of their employees. Mary Anderson, for example, head of the Women's Bureau, corresponded frequently with her employees in other parts of the country about their family lives, advising them, for example, about the care of aging parents.<sup>77</sup>

It is quite possible that the Black women's personal and professional support networks were just as strong; there is less evidence because, as several African-American women's historians have suggested, Black women left fewer private papers than did white.<sup>78</sup> Given this caveat, the white

women's network does appear to differ in one measure of mutual dependence. The great majority of its members were single—only 34 percent had ever been married, and only 18 percent remained married during the peak of their political activity (42 percent of those married were separated, divorced, or widowed); only 29 percent of all the white women had children.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, 28 percent were in relationships with other women that might have been called "Boston marriages" a few decades before;<sup>80</sup> indeed, if we consider only the subgroup of those with predominantly national as opposed to state responsibilities, then more were in relationships with women than with men, 32 percent as opposed to 28 percent. (I might add that my figure is a conservative one, since I counted only those women for whom I could identify a specific partner. It does not include women like Edith Rockwood who lived, until she died in 1953, with Marjorie Heseltine of the Children's Bureau and Louise Griffith of the Social Security Agency, and who built and owned a summer house with Marion Crane of the Children's Bureau.)<sup>81</sup> At the time, these relationships were mainly not named at all, although Molly Dewson referred to her mate as "partner." Contemporaries usually perceived them as celibate.<sup>82</sup> Today, some of these women might be called lesbian, but there is a great deal of controversy among historians as to whether it is ahistorical to apply this word to this generation, a controversy I wish to avoid here since it is not relevant to my argument. What is relevant is not their sexual activity but their dependence on other women economically, for jobs, for care in times of grief, illness, and old age, for companionship on vacations, and for every other conceivable kind of help. Despite being single, their efforts were very much directed to family and child welfare. It is remarkable to contemplate that so many women who became symbols of matronly respectability and asexual "social motherhood" led such unconventional private lives.

Moreover, they turned this mutual dependency into a political caucus. When lesbian history was first being written, these relationships with other women were first seen in exclusively private and individual terms, and second, as a lifestyle that isolated them from the heterosexual social and

cultural mainstream. Recently, Estelle Freedman and Blanche Wiesen Cook have helped change that paradigm.<sup>83</sup> The women's female bonding did not disadvantage them but brought them political power, and they got it without making the sacrifices of personal intimacy that men perhaps often do. Privileged women that they were, several of them had country homes, and groups would often weekend together; we can be sure that their conversation erased distinctions between the personal and the political, between gossip and tactics.

In truth we do not know how different these white women's relationships were from those of the Black women. Many Black married women lived apart from their husbands, such as Bethune and Charlotte Hawkins Brown (but so did several white women counted here as married, such as Perkins); a few, such as Dean Lucy Slowe of Howard, lived in "Boston marriages."<sup>84</sup> Many Blacks in this sample spoke critically not only of men but also of marriage, and feared its potential to demobilize women. Dorothy Height lamented that the "over-emphasis on marriage has destroyed so many people ..."<sup>85</sup> Both white and Black women, if single, experienced a sense of betrayal when a friend married, and, if about to marry, feared telling their single comrades.<sup>86</sup> As time passed, particularly noticeably from the 1930s on, the idea shared by many white women that marriage and public-sphere activities were incompatible diminished, and more white married activists appeared.<sup>87</sup> This change, however, only makes it the more evident that Black women had a greater willingness or an ability or both throughout this time period to combine marriage and public activism through coping strategies that may have included informal marital separations.

The friendships among the more prominent white women were the most visible, since many worked together at jobs that were well in the public eye. Their friendships transcended boundaries between the public and private sectors, between government and civic organizations. In this way they created what several historians have begun calling a "women's political culture"--but again we must remember that this concept has referred primarily to white women. The powerful settlement houses,

Hull House and the Henry St. Settlement for example, virtually became a part of the municipal government and were able to command the use of tax money when necessary. When women gained government positions there was as much interagency as intra-agency consultation and direction. A few examples: In its first project, collecting data on infant mortality, the Children's Bureau used hundreds of volunteers from this organizational network to help. In 1920, Florence Kelley of the National Consumers' League (NCL) listed investigations the Women's Bureau should undertake, and these were done; Mary Anderson of the Women's Bureau commented on a bill for the protection of female employees which she had arranged for the NCL to draft for the state of Indiana. In 1922 Anderson wrote Mary Dewson of the NCL, asking her to tone down her critical language about the National Woman's Party, and Dewson complied; in 1923 Dewson asked Anderson to help her draft a response to the National Woman's Party that was to appear in the Nation under Dewson's name.<sup>88</sup> This kind of cooperation continued through the New Deal. Another good example was the Women's Charter, an attempt made in 1936 in response to the increased intensity of the ERA campaign to negotiate a settlement between the two sides of the women's movement. An initial meeting was attended by representatives of the usual white women's network civic organizations--the YWCA, the League of Women Voters, the National Women's Trade Union League, the American Association of University Women, the Federation of Business and Professional Women--and by several state and federal government women. The first draft of the charter was written by Mary Anderson, still head of the Women's Bureau; Frieda Miller, then head of the women's section of New York state's DOL; and Rose Schneiderman, formerly of the National Recovery Administration (until the Supreme Court overruled it) and soon to become head of the entire New York state DOL, along with Mary Van Kleeck.<sup>89</sup> (The writing of the charter exemplifies two of my points: the importance of New York and the predominance of single women.)

### III. Black and White Visions of Welfare

With these group characteristics in mind, I want to examine the welfare ideas of these two networks.

One major difference in the orientation of the two groups was that the whites, well into the Depression, more strongly saw themselves as helping others--people who were "other" not only socially but often also ethnically and religiously. The perspective of the white network had particularly been affected by large-scale immigration, the reconstitution of the urban working class by people who were not anglo-saxon and Protestant in origin, and residential segregation which grouped these immigrants in ghettos not often seen by the white middle class. Much has been written about the arrogance and condescension shown by these privileged "social workers" toward their immigrant "clients." Little has been studied about the impact of the immigrant population on the reformers' own ideas. The Black/white comparison suggests that ethnic differences between the white poor and the white reformers not only hampered the reformers' identification with the poor but also slowed their development of a more structural understanding of the origins of poverty ("structural" as opposed to one which blamed individual character defects, however environmentally caused). Thus to the very end of this time period the great majority of the white women in this sample supported welfare programs that were not only means-tested but also "morals-tested," continuing a distinction between the worthy and the unworthy poor. They believed that aid, whether in cash or in services, should always be accompanied by expert supervision and rehabilitation so as to inculcate into the poor work habits and morals which they so often (or so the reformers argued) lacked. (And, one might add, they did not mind the fact that this set up a sexual double standard in which women aid recipients would be treated differently from and more severely than those who were men.)<sup>90</sup>

In comparison, Black women were more focused on their own kind. Despite the relative privilege of most of them (and there was criticism from Blacks of the snobbery of some of these network members), there was less distance between helper and helped than there was among white reformers. There was less chronological distance, for all their privileges were so recent and so tenuous. There was less geographical distance, because residential segregation did not allow the Black middle class much insulation from the Black poor. Concentrating their efforts more on education and health, and proportionally less on charity or relief, meant that they were dealing more often with universal needs than with the misfortunes particular to a single individual and seeking to provide universal, non-means-tested services. These were differences of degree, however, and should not be overemphasized. Most of the white women in this sample favored environmental analyses of the sources of poverty. On the other hand, many Black women's groups engaged in classic charity activities.<sup>91</sup> In the 1890s Black women in Washington, D.C., volunteered to work with Associated Charities in its "stamp work," a program designed to inculcate thrift and saving among the poor. In the depression of 1893 these relatively prosperous Black "friendly visitors" donated supplies of coal and food staples.<sup>92</sup> But these programs operated in a context in which the needy were far more numerous, and the prosperous far fewer, than among whites.

This does not mean that there was no condescension among Black women. Black leaders shared with white ones the conviction that the poor needed not only skills training but also increased moral and spiritual capacities. Mary Church Terrell could sound remarkably like a white clubwoman: "To our poor, benighted sisters in the Black Belt of Alabama we have gone and we have been both a comfort and a help to these women, through the darkness of whose ignorance of everything that makes life sweet or worth the living, no ray of light would have penetrated but for us. We have taught them the A B C [sic] of living by showing them how to make their huts more habitable and decent with the small means at their command and how to care for themselves and their families

..."<sup>93</sup> Like the Progressive-era white female reformers, the Blacks emphasized the need to improve the sexual morals of their people.<sup>94</sup> Fannie Barrier Williams declared that the colored people's greatest need was a better and purer home life; that slavery had destroyed home ties, the sanctity of marriage, and the instincts of motherhood.<sup>95</sup>

Concern for sexual respectability by no means represented one class or stratum imposing its values on another; for Black women as for white it grew also from a feminist, or "womanist," desire to protect women from exploitation, a desire shared across class lines. But this priority had profoundly different meanings for Black women reformers. Not only were Black women more severely sexually victimized, but combatting sexual exploitation was for Blacks inseparable from race uplift in general, as white sexual assaults against Black women had long been a fundamental part of slavery and racial oppression.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Black activists were far in advance of white feminists in their campaigns against rape and their identification of that crime as part of a system of power relations,<sup>97</sup> and they did not assume that only white men were sexual aggressors. Historian Darlene Clark Hine suggests that efforts to build recreational programs for boys may also have reflected women's strategies for protecting girls from assault.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, given the difficulties of affecting change in the aggressors, many Black welfare reformers focused on protecting potential victims through organizations such as the National League for the Protection of Colored Women.<sup>99</sup> Jane Hunter, a child of sharecroppers who arrived in Cleveland in 1905 with \$1.75 in her pocket, was unable to find a nursing job because of discrimination, and consequently directed her first energies to protecting young working girls alone in the city from prostitution and other moral threats.<sup>100</sup>

Just as efforts to protect women and girls among white welfare reformers contained condescending and victim-blaming aspects, particularly inasmuch as they were different social groups (i.e., immigrants, the poor), victim-blaming was present in the analysis of Black reformers, too. The

problem of sexual exploitation could not be removed from the intraracial class differences that left some Black women much more vulnerable than others, not only to assault but also to having their reputations smeared; black women as did white, defined their middle-classness in part by their sexual respectability.<sup>101</sup> But their efforts to protect themselves from several exploitation were so connected with the idea of uplift for the whole race (without which the reformers could not enjoy any class privileges) that victim-blaming was a smaller part of their message than it was for whites.

Moreover, despite the sense of superiority among some, the Black women reformers could not easily separate their welfare from their civil-rights agitation.<sup>102</sup> As Deborah White puts it, "the race problem ... inherently included the problems of poverty ..."<sup>103</sup> Race uplift work was usually welfare work by definition, and was always conceived of as a path to racial equality. And Black poverty could not be ameliorated without challenges to white domination. A nice example: in 1894 Gertrude Mossell, in her early tribute to the efforts of Black women in attempting to uplift their race, referred to Ida Wells's antilynching campaign as "philanthropy."<sup>104</sup> Several of these women, notably Mary Church Terrell and Anna J. Cooper, were among the first to rebel against Booker T. Washington's domination because of their attraction to academic educational goals for their people and their desire to challenge segregation.<sup>105</sup> Those who considered themselves women's-rights activists, such as Burroughs, Terrell, and Cooper, particularly protested the hypocrisy between the white feminists' language of sisterhood and their practice of excluding Blacks, protests such as Terrell's principled struggle, as an elderly woman, to gain admission to the Washington, D.C., chapter of the American Association of University Women.

To be sure, there was a shift in emphasis from race uplift and thus building institutions in the first part of this long period of study, to antisegregation activity in the second. But the shift was only visible in overview, because many women activists had been challenging racism even early on in their careers. Fannie Barrier Williams, for example, as early as in 1896, insisted that white women needed

to learn from Blacks.<sup>106</sup> YWCA women such as Eva Bowles, Lugenia Burns Hope, and Addie Hunton struggled against discrimination in the YWCA soon after the first colored branch opened in 1911.<sup>107</sup> Charlotte Hawkins Brown, who was noted and sometimes criticized for her snobbery and insistence on "respectability," nevertheless "made it a practice, whenever insulted in a train or forced to leave a pullman coach and enter the Jim Crow car, to bring suit." At least one lawyer, in 1921, tried to get Brown to accept a small settlement, but she made it clear that her goal was not financial compensation but justice.<sup>108</sup> Anna J. Cooper, whose flowery and sentimental prose style might lead one to mistake her for a "soft," accommodating spirit, rarely let a slur against Negroes go unprotested. She wrote to the Oberlin Committee against Al Smith in 1928 that she could not "warm up very enthusiastically with religious fervor for Bible 'fundamentalists' who have nothing to say about lynching Negroes or reducing whole sections of them to a state of peonage ..."<sup>109</sup>

The many black women who had always challenged racism made a smooth transition to the fight for civil rights in their welfare work. Nannie Burroughs, noted for her work as an educator promoting Christianity and vocational skills, urged a boycott of Washington's segregated transportation system in 1915.<sup>110</sup> In the 1930s she denounced the Baptist leadership and resisted its control so strongly that that church almost cut off financial support for the National Training School for Girls in Washington, D.C., she had worked so hard and long to build. "'Don't wait for deliverers,' Burroughs admonished her listeners.... 'There are no deliverers. They're all dead.... The Negro must serve notice ... that he is ready to die for justice.'"<sup>111</sup> The Baptists relented, but Burroughs was still provoking white churchmen a decade later. In 1941 she canceled an engagement to speak for the National Christian Mission because the hierarchy insisted on bowdlerizing her speech.<sup>112</sup> "The Negro is oppressed not because he is a Negro--but because he'll take it," Burroughs declared.<sup>113</sup> Mary McLeod Bethune, who began her career as founder of a Black college and was criticized by some for her apologies for segregated New Deal programs, was walking a picketline in

1939 in front of Peoples Drugs in Washington, demanding jobs for colored youth, even while still at the National Youth Administration (NYA).<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, the greater emphasis on civil rights never eclipsed uplift strategies. From the New Deal on, Black government leaders were simultaneously trying to get more Black women hired, protesting the passing over of qualified Black applicants, and working to improve the qualifications and performance of Black individuals. In 1943 Corinne Robinson of the Federal Public Housing Authority organized a skit, entitled "Lazy Daisy," which admonished Black government workers to shed slothful habits.<sup>115</sup> Nannie Burroughs in 1950 complained that the average Negro "... gets up on the installment plan--never gets dressed fully until night, and by then he is completely disorganized." But that is because, she explained, "he really has nothing to get up to."<sup>116</sup> To repeat: there was for these women no inherent contradiction between race uplift and antidiscrimination thinking.

These Black welfare activists were also militant in their critique of male supremacy, this, too, arising from their work for the welfare of the race. Deborah White has argued that the Black women's clubs, more than the white, claimed leadership of the race for women.<sup>117</sup> Charlotte Hawkins Brown declared her own work and thoughts were just as important as Booker T. Washington's.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, their ambitions were just as great as those of the white women: African-Americans spoke of uplifting their race; white women described themselves as promoting the general welfare, but only because their focus on their own race was silent and understood. Whether or not these women should be called feminists (and they certainly did not call themselves that), they share some of the characteristics of the white group that has been called "social feminists" in that their activism arose from efforts to advance the welfare of the whole public, not just women, in a context in which they believed men did not or could not deal adequately with the needs.<sup>119</sup>

Black and white women welfare reformers also differed in their thinking about women's economic role. The white women, with few exceptions, tended to view married women's economic dependence on men as desirable, and their employment as a misfortune; they accepted the family-wage system and rarely even expressed doubts about its effectiveness, let alone its justice. The many unmarried women among the network viewed their own "singleness" as a class privilege and a natural condition for women active in the public sphere, and felt that remaining childless was an acceptable price to pay (although a few made themselves single mothers by adopting children).<sup>120</sup> They were convinced that single-motherhood and employment among poor women and mothers meant danger. This view was, of course, much stronger in the 1890s and even in 1920 than in 1930, when more married professional women became politically active and kept jobs. Nevertheless, throughout this period in welfare policies they supported a male breadwinner/unemployed woman norm as the family structure to be promoted. They feared any relief to single mothers that was offered without counseling, or employment offered to mothers other than temporarily, because they resisted establishing single-mother families as durable institutions.<sup>121</sup>

This is where the social-work legacy is felt. The white reformers were accustomed to, and felt comfortable with, supervising recipients of aid. Long after Jane Addams, with her environmentalist, democratic orientation, became their hero, they continued to identify with the Charity Organization's fear of "pauperizing" aid recipients by making it too easy for them and destroying their work incentive--and they feared that too much help to deserted women, for example, would do just this--let men off the hook. They did not share the perspective of many contemporary European socialists that aid to single mothers should be matters of rights, of entitlement. Even Florence Kelley, herself a product of a European socialist education, defended the family wage as the appropriate goal of reform legislation: she lauded "the American tradition [sic] that men support their families, the wives throughout life," and lamented the "retrograde movement" that made the man no

longer the breadwinner.<sup>122</sup> The U.S. supporters of mothers' pensions envisioned aid as a gift to the deserving and felt an unshakable responsibility to supervise single mothers and restore marriages and a wife's dependency on her husband whenever possible.<sup>123</sup> A troubling question is unavoidable here: Did these elite white women accept the notion that independence was a privilege of wealth to which poor women ought not to aspire?

The Black women reformers also held up breadwinning husbands and unemployed wives as an ideal; Black and white women spoke very similarly about the appropriate "spheres" of the two sexes, equally emphasizing motherhood.<sup>124</sup> Their two positions on this issue are not diametric. Lucy D. Slowe, Dean of Women at Howard, believed that working mothers caused urban juvenile delinquency, and called for campaigns to "build up public sentiment for paying heads of families wages sufficient to reduce the number of Negro women who must be employed away from home to the detriment of their children and the community in general."<sup>125</sup> Personally, many of the married Black activists had trouble prevailing upon their husbands to accept their activities, and some were persuaded to stay home. Ardie Halyard, recollecting the year 1920, described the process:

Interviewer: How did your husband feel about you working?

Halyard: At first, he thought it was very necessary. But afterwards, when he became able to support us, it was day in and day out, 'When are you going to quit?' ...<sup>126</sup>

Dorothy Ferebee's husband could not tolerate her higher professional status.<sup>127</sup> Inabel Lindsay promised her husband not to work for a year, and then slid into a lifelong career by taking a job that she promised was only temporary.<sup>128</sup>

Mixed as it was, Black acceptance of married women's employment as a long-term and widespread necessity was much greater than it was among whites. Fanny Jackson Coppin had argued since the 1860s for women's economic independence from men, and women were active in creating employment bureaus. We see the greater Black acknowledgement of the existence of single mothers

particularly in the high priority they gave to organizing kindergartens, usually called day nurseries then.<sup>129</sup> In Chicago, Cleveland, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and many other locations, daytime child care facilities were among the earliest projects of women's groups.<sup>130</sup> Mary Church Terrell called it her primary goal, and her first publication was the printing of a speech she delivered at a National American Woman Suffrage Association convention which she sold for 25 cents a copy to help fund a kindergarten.<sup>131</sup> In poor, urban, white neighborhoods the need for child care may have been nearly as great, and some white activists did create kindergartens, but proportionally far fewer. Virtually no northern white welfare reformers endorsed such programs as long-term or permanent services until much later in this time period (1930s and 1940s); until then, even the most progressive, such as Florence Kelley, opposed them even as temporary solutions, fearing they would encourage the exploitation of women through low-wage labor.<sup>132</sup>

Black women descried the effects of the "double day" on poor women as much as did white reformers. They were outspoken in their criticism of men who failed to support families. Nannie Burroughs wrote, "Black men sing too much 'I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby.'"<sup>133</sup> But their solutions were different. From the beginning of her career, Nannie Burroughs understood that the great majority of Black women would work all their lives, and she had to struggle against a continuing resistance in accepting this fact in order to get her National Training School funded.<sup>134</sup> And most Black women activists projected a favorable view of working women and women's professional aspirations. Elizabeth Ross Haynes wrote with praise in 1922 of "the hope of an economic independence that will some day enable them [Negro women] to take their places in the ranks with other working women."<sup>135</sup> Sadie Alexander directly attacked the view that domesticity should be a married woman's ideal. She saw that in an industrial society the work of the housewife would be increasingly seen as "valueless consumption" and that women should "place themselves again among the producers of the world."<sup>136</sup>

This high regard for women's economic independence is also reflected in the important and respected role played by businesswomen in Black welfare activity. One of the most well-known and revered women of this network was Maggie Lena Walker, the first woman bank president in the United States. Beginning at age 14 in the Independent Order of Saint Luke, a mutual benefit society in Richmond, Va., providing illness and burial insurance as well as social activities for Blacks, she established the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank in 1903. Walker became a very wealthy woman. She devoted a great deal of her money and energy to welfare activity, working for the NAACP, the National Association of Wage Earners, and local Richmond groups. In the context of African-American experience, Walker's business was itself a civil-rights and community-welfare activity; many reformers, including prominently Bethune and Du Bois, believed that economic power was key to Black progress. The St. Luke enterprises stimulated Black ownership and employment, opening a Black-owned department store in Richmond and thus threatening white economic power, and met intense opposition from white businessmen; indeed a white Retail Dealers' Association was formed to crush the store.<sup>137</sup> Several noteworthy businesswomen-activists got rich from manufacturing cosmetics for Blacks, such as the mother-daughter team, C.J. Walker and A'Lelia Walker (not related to Maggie Walker), of Pittsburgh and Indianapolis, and Annie Turnbo Malone of St. Louis.<sup>138</sup> Reformer Jane Hunter was respected not only because of her welfare contributions but also because, once penniless, she left an estate of over \$400,000 at her death, as was Sallie Wyatt Stewart, who left over \$100,000 in real estate.<sup>139</sup>

These factors allow us to identify considerable differences in orientation (among the numerous similarities) between white and Black women activists, although the preliminary stage of research on this topic requires us to consider such differences more as hypotheses than as conclusions. First, as we have suggested above, Black women claimed leadership in looking after the welfare of their whole people more so than whites did for their own. Because of this assumption of race responsibility, and

because for Blacks welfare was so indistinguishable from equal rights, Black women emphasized programs for the unusually needy less, and universal provision more, than did white women. Perhaps in part because education was such an important part of the Black women's program, and because education developed for whites in the United States as a public service available to all, Blacks' vision of welfare provision followed that model. Among whites, a relatively large middle class encouraged reformers to focus their helping efforts on others and kept alive and relatively uncriticized the use of means- and morals-testing as a way of distributing help, thus continuing to distinguish the "deserving" from the "undeserving" poor. Among Blacks, despite their relatively elite position, welfare appeared more closely connected with legal entitlements that were not so different from the right to vote or to ride the public transportation system.<sup>140</sup> Had their ideas been integrated into the white women's thinking, one might ask, would means-testing and humiliating invasions of privacy have been so uniformly accepted in programs such as AFDC, over which the white women's network had substantial influence?

Another difference is the Black women's progressive attitude toward married women's employment. Most of the white women welfare reformers retained, until World War II, a distinctly head-in-the-sand and even somewhat contradictory position regarding it: it was a misfortune, not good for women, children, or men; helping working mothers too much would tend to encourage it. Thus they were more concerned to help--sometimes to force--single mothers to stay at home, rather than provide services that would help working mothers, such as child care or maternity leave. Black women were much more positive about women's employment. Despite agreeing that a male family wage was the most desirable arrangement, they doubted that married women's employment would soon disappear or that it could be discouraged by making women and children suffer for it. In relation to this race difference it is hard to avoid considering the somewhat different marital status of the majority of the women in both groups: most of the Black women themselves had had the

experience of combining public-sphere activism with marriage, if less often with children.<sup>141</sup> The fact that most of the white women had ended up, probably largely by choice, dispensing with marriage and family may have made them see the choice between family and work as an acceptable, mutually exclusive one, oblivious to the different conditions of that same choice for poorer women.

Third, Black and white welfare reformers differed considerably about how to protect women from sexual exploitation. Black welfare reformers were more concerned with combining the development of protective institutions for women with an antirape discourse. Among whites, rape was not an important item of discussion during this period, and in protective work for women and girls male sexuality was treated as natural and irrepressible. It is not clear how the Black activists would have translated antirape consciousness into welfare policy, had they had the power to do so, but it seems likely that they would have tried.

There were also substantial areas of shared emphases between white and Black women. Both groups oriented much of their welfarist thinking to children, rarely questioning the unique responsibility of women for children's welfare; neither group questioned sexual "purity" as an appropriate goal for unmarried women. Both groups used women's organizations as their main political and social channels; both emphasized the promotion of other women into positions of leadership and jobs, confident that increasing the number of women at the "top" would benefit the public welfare; and both believed that improving the status of women was essential to advancing the social community as a whole. At the same time, both groups, in the 1920s, were moving away from an explicitly feminist discourse and muted their public criticisms of men for what we would today call sexist behavior. Moreover, they shared many personal characteristics: low fertility, a relatively high economic and social status, and a very high educational attainment.

I approached this evidence as part of a general inquiry into U.S. welfare programs and welfare thinking in this century. In this project I found, as have several other women's historians,

that the white women's reform network--but not the Black--had some influence on welfare policy at the federal level, particularly in public assistance programs, and at the local level in a variety of relief and regulatory programs.<sup>142</sup> I have tried to show that their influence was as much colored by race as by gender. The legacy in our welfare programs of means-testing, of distinguishing the deserving from the undeserving, of moral supervision of female welfare recipients, of failing to criticize men's sexual behavior, and of discouraging women's employment were supported by this white women's influence. Black women's influence on federal welfare programs was negligible during this time; indeed, through 1935 the leading federal programs--old-age insurance, unemployment compensation, workman's compensation, and the various forms of public assistance such as AFDC--were expressly constructed so as to exclude Blacks.<sup>143</sup> It is not too late now, however, to benefit from a review of Black women's welfare thought as we reconsider the kind of welfare state we want.

### Appendix

Listed below are the women in my samples. The women were selected because they were the leaders of national organizations which lobbied for welfare programs (such as the National Consumers' League, the National Child Labor Committee, the National Association of Colored Women, and the National Council of Negro Women), or government officials responsible for welfare programs who were also important advocates of such programs, or builders of private welfare institutions. Those who were only the employees of welfare programs or institutions are not included. For the Blacks in particular, this sample of welfare activists overlaps extensively with a sample one might construct of clubwomen and political activists, but not exactly; for example, Ida Wells-Barnett is not here because she must be categorized as primarily a civil-rights, not a welfare, campaigner. Among the whites, this sample overlaps somewhat with "social feminists," but those who were primarily labor organizers, for example, are not included.

Some of what appears to be racial differences are differences of historical time and circumstance. Thus, for example, a study of women between, say, 1840 and 1890 would have produced more women educators (because in that period white women were working to build educational institutions as Black women were in the later period) and more white married women (because the dip in the marriage rate among college-educated white women occurred later). Regional differences are also produced by this definition of the samples: a focus on local or state as opposed to national activity would have produced more western and southern women, for example; women in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic were likely to have been drawn into national politics more often because New York and Washington, D.C., were so often the headquarters of national activities.

In order to simplify this list, only a single, general, major area of welfare activism is given for each woman. Because many women were active in several areas, the identifications given here do

not necessarily conform to some figures in the text, e.g., those for how many women were social workers or educators. The categories for the white and Black women are not the same. Among the whites I gave some more specific identifications as a way of indicating the importance of several key arenas, such as the National Consumers' League and the U.S. Children's Bureau. To do this among the Black women would have been uninformative, since virtually all were, for example, active in the NACW. Furthermore, a few Black women participated in such a variety of welfarist activity organized through the NACW, sororities, and other women's organizations that I could define their major sphere simply as club work.

A table is also included to aid the reader in comparing the two networks.

**Sample of 69 Nationally Influential Black Women**  
**Welfare Reformers, 1890-1945**

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<u>Name</u>		<u>Main Reform</u>
Sadie Tanner Mossell	ALEXANDER	Civil rights
Lucille	ANTHONY	Health
G. Elsie	AYER	Education
Margaret E.	BARNES	Education
Janie Porter	BARRETT	Education
Bessye	BEARDEN	Civil rights
Mary McLeod	BETHUNE	Education
Eva Del Vackia	BOWLES	Social work
Ruth Merrill	BRAWLEY	Social work
Charlotte Hawkins	BROWN	Education
Sue M.	BROWN	Education
Nannie Helen	BURROUGHS	Education
Myra Colson	CALLIS	Employment
Ezella	CARTER	Education
Alice Dugged	CARY	Child welfare
Coralie Franklin	COOK	Education
Anna Julia Haywood	COOPER	Education
Belle	DAVIS	Health
Elizabeth Lindsey	DAVIS	Club
Addie W.	DICKERSON	Club
Georgia M. DeBaptiste	FAULKNER	Social work
Crystal Bird	FAUSET	Civil rights
Dorothy Boulding	FEREBEE	Health
Irene McCoy	GAINES	Civil rights
Judia C. Jackson	HARRIS	Social work
Elizabeth Ross	HAYNES	Civil rights
Anna Arnold	HEDGEMAN	Civil rights
Dorothy I.	HEIGHT	Civil rights
Lugenia Burns	HOPE	Social work
Jane Edna Harris	HUNTER	Social work
Addie D. Waites	HUNTON	Civil rights
Juanita Elizabeth	JACKSON	Civil rights
Christina Armistead	JEFFRIES	Civil rights
Bertha La Branche	JOHNSON	Education
Kathryn Magnolia	JOHNSON	Civil rights
Verina Morton	JONES	Social work
Lucy Craft	LANEY	Education
Maria Coles Perkins	LAWTON	Education
Inabel Burns	LINDSAY	Education
Ethel Hedgeman	LYLE	Club
Arenia Cornelia	MALLORY	Education

Annie M. Turnbo	MALONE	Education
Vivian Osborne	MARSH	Club
Victoria Earle	MATTHEWS	Social work
Sadie Gray	MAYS	Social work
Mary Jackson	MCCROREY	Social work
G. Elsie Johnson	MCDUGALD	Education
Alice Woodby	MCKANE	Health
Emma Frances Grayson	MERRITT	Education
Alice Ruth Dunbar	NELSON	Social work
Minnie McAlpin	PICKENS	Civil rights
Florence	RANDOLPH	Club
Florida Ruffin	RIDLEY	Club
Josephine St. Pierre	RUFFIN	Club
Gertrude E.	RUSH	Social work
Juanita Jane	SADDLER	Civil rights
Joanna Cecilia	SNOWDEN	Social work
Sallie Wyatt	STEWART	Social work
Mary Barnett	TALBERT	Civil rights
Isabelle Rachel	TAYLOR	Social work
Mary Eliza Church	TERRELL	Civil rights
A'Lelia	WALKER	Social work
Maggie Lena	WALKER	Social work
Sadie	WARREN	Social work
Margaret Murray	WASHINGTON	Education
Eva Thornton	WELLS	Social work
Laura Frances	WHEATLEY	Education
Fannie Barrier	WILLIAMS	Social work
Mattie Dover	YOUNG	Social work

**Sample of 76 Nationally Influential White Women**  
**Welfare Reformers, 1890-1945**

<u>Name</u>		<u>Main reform</u>
Edith	ABBOTT	Social work
Grace	ABBOTT	Children's Bureau
Jane	ADDAMS	Settlement
Beulah Elizabeth	AMIDON	Social work
Mary	ANDERSON	Women's Bureau
Barbara Nachtrieb	ARMSTRONG	Social Security
Florence Arzelia	ARMSTRONG	Social Security
Clara Mortenson	BEYER	Children's Bureau
Emily Newell	BLAIR	Democratic Party
Cornelia Foster	BRADFORD	Settlement
Sophonisba Preston	BRECKINRIDGE	Social work
Josephine Chapin	BROWN	Social work
Eveline Mabel	BURNS	Social Security
Ida Maud	CANNON	Medical social work
Joanna	COLCORD	Social work
Grace Longwood	COYLE	Social work
Caroline Bartlett	CRANE	Sanitation reform
Neva Ruth	DEARDORFF	Social work
Mary W. (Molly)	DEWSON	Democratic party
Emily Wayland	DINWIDDIE	Housing reform
Helena Stuart	DUDLEY	Settlement
Loula Friend	DUNN	Social work
Crystal (Catherine)	EASTMAN	Industrial health
Hannah Bachman	EINSTEIN	Mothers' pensions
Martha May	ELIOT	Children's Bureau
Katherine Pollak	ELLICKSON	Social Security
Harriet Wiseman	ELLIOTT	Democratic party
Lavinia Margaret	ENGLE	Social Security
Elizabeth Glendower	EVANS	Consumers' League
Minnie Ursala	FULLER	Child welfare
Josephine Clara	GOLDMARK	Consumers' League
Pauline Dorothea	GOLDMARK	Consumers' League
Jean Margaret	GORDON	Consumers' League
Helen	HALL	Settlement
(Amy) Gordon	HAMILTON	Social work
Alice	HAMILTON	Industrial health
Jane Margueretta	HOEY	Social Security
Lucy Virginia Dorsey	IAMS	Housing reform
Helen	KELLER	Health reform
Florence Molthrop	KELLEY	Consumers' League
Frances (Alice)	KELLOR	Immigrant welfare

Julia Clifford  
 Katherine Frederica  
 Sophie Irene Simon  
 Emma Octavia  
 Amy  
 Lucy Randolph  
 Mary Eliza  
 Eleanor Laura  
 Frieda Segelke  
 Belle Israels  
 Pauline  
 Frances  
 Agnes L.  
 Mary Elizabeth  
 Jeannette Pickering  
 Elizabeth Brandeis  
 Agnes Gertrude  
 Mary Ellen  
 Josephine Aspinall  
 (Anna) Eleanor  
 Rose  
 Belle  
 Mary Kingsbury  
 Gertrude Hill  
 Mary Elizabeth  
 (Julia) Jessie  
 M. Carey  
 Charlotte Helen  
 Gertrude  
 Mary Abby  
 Lillian D.  
 Sue Shelton  
 Edith Elmer  
 Helen Laura Sumner  
 Ellen Sullivan

LATHROP  
 LENROOT  
 LOEB  
 LUNDBERG  
 MAHER  
 MASON  
 MCDOWELL  
 MCMAIN  
 MILLER  
 MOSKOWITZ  
 NEWMAN  
 PERKINS  
 PETERSON  
 PIDGEON  
 RANKIN  
 RAUSHENBUSH  
 REGAN  
 RICHMOND  
 ROCHE  
 ROOSEVELT  
 SCHNEIDERMAN  
 SHERWIN  
 SIMKHOVITCH  
 SPRINGER  
 SWITZER  
 TAFT  
 THOMAS  
 TOWLE  
 VAILE  
 VAN KLEECK  
 WALD  
 WHITE  
 WOOD  
 WOODBURY  
 WOODWARD

Children's Bureau  
 Children's Bureau  
 Mothers' pensions  
 Children's Bureau  
 Social Security  
 Consumers' League  
 Settlement  
 Settlement  
 Women's Bureau  
 Democratic Party  
 Women's Bureau  
 Social Security  
 Women's Bureau  
 Women's Bureau  
 Congresswoman  
 Unemployment  
 Social work  
 Social work  
 Consumers' League  
 Social work  
 Labor  
 Club  
 Settlement  
 Social work  
 Social work  
 Social work  
 Education  
 Social work (academic)  
 Social work  
 Women's Bureau  
 Settlement  
 Democratic Party  
 Housing reform  
 Children's Bureau  
 Social work

Comparison of Nationally Influential  
Black and White Women Welfare Reformers, 1890-1945

	<u>Black Women (N=69)</u>		<u>White Women (N=76)</u>	
	%	N	%	N
Education				
College	83	57	86	65
Black college	41	28	--	--
New England women's	0	0	37	28
Midwest university	12	8	26	20
Graduate school	35	24	66	50
Marriage and fertility				
Single	17	12	64	49
Married	81	56	34	26
Married, no children	28	19	11	8
Divorced, widowed, separated	20	14	14	11
"Boston marriage"	(No Information)		28	21
Childless	43	30	71	54
Class indicators				
Prosperous parents	22	15	64	49
Prosperous spouse	49	34	12	9
Major field of activism <sup>a</sup>				
Social work	30	21	68	52
Education	29	20	1	1
Civil rights	22	15	0	0
Health	(No Information)		7	5
Labor <sup>b</sup>	(No Information)		9	7
Democratic party	(No Information)		7	5
Other activities				
Suffrage	30	21	43	33
YWCA	10	7	(No Information)	
Held fed. or state job	6	4	76	58
Region of activity				
New England/mid-Atlantic	52	36	68	52
Midwest	23	16	17	13
South	20	14	11	8
West	1	1	3	2
Resident of New York City, 1910-1930	28	19	57	43

Note: Not all figures and categories are listed in the text.

<sup>a</sup>In these rows the reformers are classified by their single most important field of activism.

<sup>b</sup>These women were also extremely important in welfare activism.

## Notes

1. For critical readings of this article in draft I am indebted to Richard Blackett, Lisa D. Brush, Elizabeth Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Jacqueline D. Hall, Stanlie James, Judith Walzer Leavitt, Gerda Lerner, Adolph Reed, Jr., Anne Firor Scott, Kathryn Kish Sklar, Susan Smith, Susan Traverso, Bill Van Deburg, and Deborah Gray White. Several of these readers not only offered valuable insights but also saved me from some errors resulting from my venture into a new field, and I am extremely grateful.
2. For a critique of gender bias in existing welfare scholarship, and an explanation of the need for further research about the influence of gender, see the introduction to Women, the State, and Welfare, ed. Linda Gordon (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).
3. One of the subjects of this study, Inabel Burns Lindsay, former Dean of the Howard University School of Social Work, herself wrote a dissertation on this topic at the University of Pittsburgh in 1952, later published as "Some Contributions of Negroes to Welfare Services, 1865-1900," Journal of Negro Education 25, No. 1 (Winter 1956), pp. 15-24. Her publication did not spark others, however. Edyth L. Ross edited Black Heritage in Social Welfare 1860-1930 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1978), a valuable collection of documents. Neither publication considers the particular role of women. Anne Firor Scott in "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations," Journal of Southern History 56, No. 1 (February 1990), p. 5, and Ena L. Farley, "Caring and Sharing Since World War I: The League of Women for Community Service--a Black Volunteer Organization in Boston," Umoja: A Scholarly Journal of Black Studies 2, No. 2 (Summer 1977), reprinted in Black Women in American History: The Twentieth Century, ed. Darlene Clark Hine (New York: Carlson, 1990), 1, pp. 317-327, suggest that Black women participated more in organized activity than did white women.
4. Her name is also sometimes spelled "Mathews."
5. Some do, however. See, for example, Ralph E. Luker, "Missions, Institutional Churches, and Settlement Houses: The Black Experience, 1885-1910," Journal of Negro History 69, No. 3-4 (Summer-Fall 1984), pp. 101-113; Dorothy Salem, To Better Our World: Black Women in Organized Reform, 1890-1920 (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Carlson Publishing, 1990), pp. 44-45; Sharon Harley, "Beyond the Classroom: The Organizational Lives of Black Female Educators in the District of Columbia, 1890-1930," Journal of Negro Education 51, No.3, (1982), p. 262. Since the Black settlements were often called missions and were more religious than the typical white settlement, historians have not as clearly recognized the broad range of services they provided and the organizational/agitational centers they became.
6. Charles L. Coon, "Public Taxation and Negro Schools." Quoted in Efforts for Social Betterment among Negro Americans, W. E. B. DuBois, ed., Atlanta University Pub. No. 14 (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1909), p. 29. The tax money spent on black schools was, of course, proportionally and absolutely far less than that spent on white.
7. Quoted in Cynthia Neverdon-Morton, Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race, 1895-1925 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), p. 79.
8. Salem, To Better Our World, passim, e.g., p. 67.

9. Louie D. Shivery, "The History of the Gate City Free Kindergarten Association," from "The History of Organized Social Work among Atlanta Negroes, 1890-1935," unpub. M.A. thesis, Atlanta Univ. (1936), pp. 4-11. Quoted in Ross, Black Heritage in Social Welfare, pp. 261-62.

10. Tera Hunter, "'The Correct Thing': Charlotte Hawkins Brown and the Palmer Institute," Southern Exposure 11 (Sept/Oct 1983): 37-43; Sandra N. Smith and Earle H. West, "Charlotte Hawkins Brown," Journal of Negro Education 51, No. 3 (1982): 191-206.

11. Darlene Clark Hine, "Communal Agency and Self-Reclamation: The Philanthropic Work of Black Women," paper presented at the Center for the Study of Philanthropy, June 1987, p. 13. I am indebted to Kathleen D. McCarthy for this reference.

12. In gathering and analyzing biographical data, I am indebted to Lisa Brush, Bob Buchanan, Nancy Isenberg, Nancy McLean, and Susan Traverso.

13. For discussions of this definition, see the introduction to Women, the State and Welfare; and Linda Gordon, "What Does Welfare Regulate?" Social Research 55, No. 4 (Winter 1988), pp. 609-630.

14. Child labor as an issue is both welfare and labor reform. I have included it here because, for so many women active in this cause, it seemed a logical, even inevitable, continuation of other child welfare activity; opposition to child labor was a much-used argument for mothers' pensions and AFDC.

15. Although my focus is welfare, a similar predominance of northern whites and southern Blacks occurred among all the national women's organizations. For example, Margaret (Mrs. Booker) Washington was the first southerner to be head of any national secular women's group--in her case, the NACW. See Darlene Rebecca Roth, "Matronage: Patterns in Women's Organizations, Atlanta, Georgia, 1890-1940," Ph.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1978, p. 81.

16. See for example Elizabeth Higginbotham, Too Much to Ask: The Costs of Black Female Success, esp. chapter 3, "Socialized for Survival," forthcoming.

17. Neverdon-Morton, Afro-American Women of the South, chapters 10 and 11; Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, "Discrimination against Afro-American Women in the Woman's Movement, 1830-1920," in The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images, ed. Sharon Harley and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1978), chapter 2.

18. Butler R. Wilson, statement at Kelley's funeral, in Kelley Mss., folder 2, Schlesinger Library; see also "Du Bois on Florence Kelley," ed. Herbert Aptheker, Social Work No. 11 (Oct. 1966), p. 100; and Louis L. Athey, "Florence Kelley and the Quest for Negro Equality," Journal of Negro History 56, No. 4 (Oct. 1971), pp. 249-261.

19. Steven J. Diner, "Chicago Social Workers and Blacks in the Progressive Era," Social Service Review 44, No. 4 (Dec. 1970), pp. 393-410; Sandra M. Stehno, "Public Responsibility for Dependent Black Children: The Advocacy of Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge," Social Service Review 62, No. 3 (Sept. 1988), pp. 485-503.

20. Gerda Lerner, Black Women in White America: A Documentary History (New York: Pantheon, 1972), p. 459; Salem, To Better Our World, pp. 248-50; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Revolt Against Chivalry:

Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign against Lynching (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 66 and passim.

21. Jacqueline Rouse, biographer of Lugenia Burns Hope of Atlanta, lists ten other Black activists who formed with Hope a close southern network by about 1910: Bethune in Florida, Nettie Napier and M. L. Crosthwait of Tennessee, Jennie Moton and Margaret Washington of Alabama, Maggie Lena Walker of Virginia, Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Mary Jackson McCrorey of North Carolina, and Lucy Laney and Florence Hunt also in Georgia. See Jacqueline Anne Rouse, Lugenia Burns Hope: Black Southern Reformer (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1989), p. 5. Rouse also identifies an overlapping group of black southern educators--Hope, Hunt, McCrorey, Washington, Moton, and Bethune, with the addition of Marion B. Wilkinson of South Carolina State College; Julia A. Fountain of Morris Brown College in Atlanta; and A. Vera Davage of Clark College in Atlanta (Rouse, p. 55).

22. Paula Giddings, In Search of Sisterhood: Delta Sigma Theta and the Challenge of the Black Sorority Movement (New York: Morrow, 1988). Roth, in "Matronage," found that Black clubwomen retained closer ties with their schools than did white clubwomen (p. 183).

23. Hine, "Communal Agency," pp. 12-13.

24. Slowe Mss., Moorland-Spingarn Research Collection, Howard University, box 90-3, folder 59. Howard was notorious for its discriminatory treatment of women, egregious even in relation to other colleges at the time. On Howard see Giddings, In Search of Sisterhood, p. 43.

25. Slowe Mss., box 90-4, folder 100, esp. 6-9-33 to Slowe from a group of six women alumnae and 8-23-33 to Slowe from Clayda J. Williams in New York City.

26. Slowe Mss., Bethune to Slowe, 11-23-33, box 90-2, folder 28.

27. For example, remarks made about Bethune at the 1938 NCNW White House Conference for not being satisfied being the token black but struggling to increase black participation. NCNW Mss., Bethune Museum and Archives, series 4, Box 1, folder 4, pp. 27-28.

28. Tullia Brown Hamilton also found a predominant focus on education; see her "The National Association of Colored Women, 1896-1920," Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1978, pp. 45-46. Similarly, Roth, in "Matronage," found that even among Atlanta's most elite organization of black women, the Chautauqua Circle, all who had been employed had been teachers (p. 181). Melinda Chateaufort found that women graduates (who outnumbered males by 2:1 around 1910) of Washington, D.C.'s, elite, Black, Dunbar High School were overwhelmingly likely to go on to the District's free Miner Teacher's College to be trained as teachers. Melinda Chateaufort, "The Third Step: Anna Julia Cooper and Black Education in the District of Columbia." In Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women (Student Supplement 1988): 7-13. Carol O. Perkins draws the same conclusion in her "The Pragmatic Idealism of Mary McLeod Bethune," Sage 5, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 30-36.

29. Economic Cooperation among Negro Americans, W.E.B. Du Bois, ed., Atlanta University Pub. No. 12 (Atlanta: Atlanta Univ. Press, 1907), pp. 80-88.

30. Du Bois, Efforts for Social Betterment, pp. 65-77. See also, for a northern local example, Russell H. Davis, Black Americans in Cleveland: From George Peake to Carl B. Stokes, 1796-1969 (Cleveland:

Associated Publishers, for the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1972), p. 192.

31. Darlene Clark Hine, Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession, 1890-1950 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. xvii; Edward H. Beardsley, A History of Neglect: Health Care for Blacks and Mill Workers in the Twentieth-century South (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), pp. 101 ff.; Susan L. Smith, "The Black Women's Club Movement: Self-improvement and Sisterhood, 1890-1915," M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1986; idem., "Black Activism in Health Care, 1890-1950," paper for the Black Health Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, April 1990; Salem, To Better Our World, pp. 74 ff.

32. Salem, To Better Our World, p. 78.

33. Du Bois, Economic Cooperation, pp. 92-103; Du Bois, Efforts for Social Betterment, pp. 17-22.

34. Scott, "Most Invisible of All," p. 6.

35. Claude F. Jacobs, "Benevolent Societies of New Orleans Blacks During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," Louisiana History 29, No. 1 (Winter 1988): 21-33; Kathleen C. Berkeley, "'Colored Ladies Also Contributed': Black Women's Activities from Benevolence to Social Welfare, 1866-1896." In The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family and Education, ed. Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders, Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), pp. 181-203.

36. Colored YWCA, Fifth and Sixth Years Report, May 1909-May 1911 (Washington, D.C.: pamphlet), pp. 10-11, in the Wisconsin State Historical Society Library. I am indebted to Bob Buchanan for this reference.

37. Earline Rae Ferguson, "The Woman's Improvement Club of Indianapolis: Black Women Pioneers in Tuberculosis Work, 1903-1938," Indiana Magazine of History 84 (September 1988): 237-61; Darlene Clark Hine, When the Truth Is Told: A History of Black Women's Culture and Community in Indiana, 1875-1950 (Indianapolis: National Council of Negro Women, 1981), chap. 3. The Atlanta Neighborhood Union also worked against TB; see Cynthia Neverdon-Morton, "Self-Help Programs as Educative Activities of Black Women in the South, 1895-1925: Focus on Four Key Areas," Journal of Negro Education 51, No. 3 (Summer 1982), pp. 207-21; and Walter R. Chivers, "Neighborhood Union: An Effort of Community Organization," Opportunity (June 1925), pp. 178-79.

38. Beardsley, A History of Neglect, pp. 104-05.

39. Simkins' work is briefly summarized in Beardsley, A History of Neglect, pp. 108-12.

40. Susan Smith, "The Black Women's Club Movement: Self-improvement and Sisterhood, 1890-1915," and "Black Activism in Health Care, 1890-1950."

41. Fannie Barrier Williams, "Social Bonds in the 'Black Belt' of Chicago: Negro Organizations and the New Spirit Pervading Them," Charities 15, No. 1, (Oct. 7, 1905), pp. 40-44.

42. Scott, "Most Invisible," p. 8.

43. Salem, To Better Our World, p. 46.

44. The YWCA was segregated and these activists fought that segregation. Nevertheless, as Dorothy Height points out forcefully in her interview, "it was unmatched by any other major group drawn from the major white population" in the opportunities it offered to Black women (p. 173). See also descriptions of YWCA opportunities by Frankie V. Adams, Interview April 26 and 28, 1977, Black Women Oral History Project, Schlesinger Library, p. 9.

45. Fannie Barrier Williams, "Opportunities and Responsibilities of Colored Women." In Afro-American Encyclopedia; or, the Thoughts, Doings, and Sayings of the Race ..., ed. James T. Haley (Nashville: Haley & Florida, 1896), pp. 146-61.

46. We could not identify birth places for all the women, and those with missing information include some likely to have been southern-born.

47. On migration, see also Hamilton, "The National Association of Colored Women"; and Berkeley, "'Colored Ladies Also Contributed.'"

48. Others have made similar conclusions. For example, Marilyn Dell Brady, "Kansas Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, 1900-1930," Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains 9, No. 1 (Spring 1986), 19-30; Linda Marie Perkins, "Black Feminism and 'Race Uplift,' 1890-1900," Bunting Institute Working Paper, 1981, p.4.

49. On the influence of prominent husbands, also see Salem, To Better Our World, p. 67 and passim.

50. I am indebted to Lisa Brush for this research. Figures from Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970, Part I (Washington: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975), p. 53.

51. It is true that Black women's overall fertility was declining rapidly in this period, falling by one-third between 1880 and 1910; that southern Black women had fewer children than southern white women; and that some of this low fertility was attributable to poor health and nutrition. Moreover, the women in this network were virtually all urban, and urban Blacks' fertility was only half that of rural Blacks. See Jacqueline Jones, Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present (New York: Basic Books, 1985), pp. 122-123. However, the fertility among this network was so low that it seems likely to have resulted at least in part from voluntary action. I am indebted to Stanlie James for comments on this fertility question.

52. For a personal description of class distinctions among African-Americans, see, for one example, Anna Arnold Hedgeman, The Trumpet Sounds: A Memoir of Negro Leadership (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), pp. 25, 74. On Boston snobbishness, see Farley, "Caring and Sharing Since World War I," pp. 317-327.

53. For corroboration on this point see Hamilton, "The National Association of Colored Women," pp. 41 ff; Paula Giddings, When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America (New York: Wm. Morrow, 1984), p. 108; Berkeley, "'Colored Ladies Also Contributed,'" pp. 185-186.

54. For corroboration on the employment of well-to-do Black women, see Roth, "Matronage," p. 180-181; on Black women's socialization towards employment, see Inabel Burns Lindsay, Interview by Marcia

Greenlee, May 20-June 7, 1977, in Black Women Oral History Project, pp. 4, 40.

55. Charles S. Johnson, The Negro College Graduate (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938), pp. 18-20; Bureau of the Census, The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States: An Historical View, 1790-1978, Current Population Reports, Special Studies Series P-23, No. 80 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1979), p. 93.

56. Alfreda Duster, Interview by Marcia Greenlee, March 8-9, 1978, Black Women Oral History Project, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, p. 9; Hedgeman, The Trumpet Sounds, chapters 1 and 2.

57. For one example see Williams, "Social Bonds."

58. On Black discrimination against darker-skinned women, see, e.g., Nannie Burroughs, "Not Color But Character," The Voice of the Negro: An Illustrated Monthly (Atlanta), No. 1 (July 1904), pp. 277-279; Alfreda Duster interview, p. 52; Paula Giddings, Sisterhood, p. 105; Linda Perkins, "Black Feminism," p. 4; Nancy Weiss, Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 139. Kathleen Berkeley argues against the importance of class differences in the NACW in her "'Colored Ladies Also Contributed,'" but I found them important nonetheless. On class development among Blacks in this period see August Meier and David Lewis, "History of the Negro Upper Class in Atlanta, Georgia, 1890-1958," Journal of Negro Education 28 (Spring 1959), pp. 128-39.

59. Duster interview, p. 37. See also interview with Inabel Burns Lindsay, p. 49.

60. In formulating these comments on the class attitudes of Black women welfare reformers I am mainly indebted to the interpretations of Deborah Gray White, especially those in her "Fettered Sisterhood: Class and Classism in Early Twentieth Century Black Women's History," paper presented at the American Studies Association, 1989.

61. "Race Unity," speech by Barnett delivered at the National Conference of Colored Men of the United States, Nashville, Tennessee, May 6-9, 1879. In The Voice of Black America: Major Speeches by Negroes in the United States 1797-1971, ed. Philip S. Foner (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 462.

62. Paula Giddings, In Search of Sisterhood.

63. Hedgeman, The Trumpet Sounds, chapters 1 and 2.

64. Chateauvert, "The Third Step"; Dorothy Height interview, p. 40; Caroline Ware, interview by Susan Ware, from Women in Federal Government Oral Histories, Schlesinger Library, pp. 94 ff.

65. I checked to see if the social-work background could have been characteristic of the less prominent women, but this was not the case. An even higher percentage of the most prominent two-thirds of the group were social workers--84 percent.

66. Consider some of the uses of "social work" in the 1930s: U.S. Representative Fred Vinson, complaining about Frances Perkins and her Department of Labor staff, insisted "No damned social workers are going to come into my State to tell our people whom they shall hire." Quoted in George Martin, Madame Secretary: Frances Perkins (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), p. 355. When Lavinia

Engle was asked to work for the Social Security Board, her first response was that because she wasn't a social worker, she wasn't qualified. See her interview in the Columbia University Oral History Collection, p. 29. Frances Perkins continued to use "social work" in this broad way in her oral history, also in the Columbia Collection, written decades later.

67. The 1931 Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, in an article by Edward Lindeman, makes the following distinction: "Organized welfare, or social, work, as conducted under the auspices of privately controlled philanthropic agencies, is distinguished from public welfare, which may be called public social work." Vol. 12, p. 687. For other examples of the continuing broad use of the term "social work," see the Columbia University Oral History Collection, interview with Frances Perkins, pp. 21, 58-9, 65-67, 185, 443.

68. William W. Bremer, Depression Winters: New York Social Workers and the New Deal (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

69. Martin, Madame Secretary, pp. 134-35.

70. Lillian Wald, Windows on Henry Street (Boston: Little, Brown, 1934); Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, Neighborhood: My Story of Greenwich House (New York: Norton, 1938).

71. Elizabeth Israels Perry, "Training for Public Life: ER and Women's Political Networks in the 1920s." In Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, ed., Without Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 30.

72. Nevertheless, it is possible that at a later period, in the Depression, New York City also came to play an important role for Black welfare activists. Several worked for the YWCA or various welfare programs in the city, and Dorothy Height's interview offers evidence of the importance of welfare jobs for Black women, which permitted a degree of socioeconomic advancement that was unavailable from which other sources elsewhere. See Height interview, pp. 9 ff.

73. Elizabeth Israels Perry, Belle Moskowitz: Feminine Politics and the Exercise of Power in the Age of Alfred E. Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 76-77; Walter Trattner, "Theodore Roosevelt, Social Workers, and the Election of 1912: A Note," Mid-America 50 (Jan. 1968): 64-69.

74. Thanks to Anne Firor Scott for pointing out this similarity to me.

75. On settlement relationships, see Virginia Kemp Fish, "The Hull House Circle: Women's Friendships and Achievements," in Gender, Ideology, and Action: Historical Perspectives on Women's Public Lives, ed. Janet Sharistianian (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986); Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Hull House in the 1890s: A Community of Women Reformers," Signs 10, No. 4 (Summer 1985), pp. 658-77.

76. Lela B. Costin, Two Sisters for Social Justice: A Biography of Grace and Edith Abbott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), pp. 38-40; Martin, Madame Secretary, pp. 233 ff.

77. See Ethel Erickson to Anderson 7-14-38 and Anderson to Erickson 8-4-38, and Erickson to Anderson 7-29-42 and Anderson to Erickson 8-1-42, in Women's Bureau papers, National Archives, Box 1263.

78. Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West: Preliminary Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance." In Unequal Sisters: A Multi-cultural Reader in U.S.

Women's History, ed. Ellen Carol DuBois and Vicki L. Ruiz (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 292-97; Deborah Gray White, "Mining the Forgotten: Manuscript Sources for Black Women's History," Journal of American History 74 (June 1987): 237-42; idem, private communication; Elsa Barkley Brown, comment at Berkshire Conference of Women's Historians, June 1990.

79. Their "singleness" was characteristic of other women of their race, class, and education in this period. In 1890, for example, over half of all women doctors were single; of those earning Ph.D.'s between 1877 and 1924, three-fourths remained single. As late as 1920 only 12 percent of all professional women were married. See, for example, Carl Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present (New York: Oxford, 1980), p. 385. Roth, in "Matronage," p. 182, corroborates the idea that marital breaks in the lives of activists were significant, finding that civil-minded white women in Atlanta in this period were more likely to be widows.

80. On "Boston marriages" see Micaela di Leonardo, "Warrior Virgins and Boston Marriages: Spinsterhood in History and Culture," Feminist Issues (Fall 1985), pp. 47-68.

81. Memoir by Mrs. Tilden Frank Phillips (sister of Edith Rockwood), written Feb. 22 and Feb. 26, 1953, folder 22; and the will of Edith Rockwood, folder 20; in Edith Rockwood Mss., Schlesinger Library.

82. Blanche Wiesen Cook, "The Historical Denial of Lesbianism," Radical History Review 20 (Spring/Summer 1979), pp. 60-65; for quotations from a (hostile) contemporary source, see James Johnson, "The Role of Women in the Founding of the United States Children's Bureau," in Carol V. R. George, ed., "Remember the Ladies": New Perspectives on Women in American History (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1975), p. 191.

83. Cook, "Historical Denial"; Cook, "Female Support Networks and Political Activism: Lillian Wald, Crystal Eastman, Emma Goldman." In A Heritage of Her Own, ed. Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Pleck (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), pp. 412-444; Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy," Feminist Studies 5, No. 3 (Fall 1979), 512-29.

84. Slowe lived with Mary Burrill, who is treated as a partner in letters to and from Slowe and after Slowe's death in 1937; Slowe Mss., box 90-1.

85. Dorothy Height, interview, p. 52.

86. Alreda Duster interview, regarding Ida Wells's marriage, p. 11; on white women's anxieties, see Wendy Beth Posner, "Charlotte Towle: A Biography," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, 1986, pp. 47, 77-78.

87. Mary Dewson to Clara Beyer, 10-12-31, in Beyer Mss., Box 2, folder 40, Schlesinger Library; Caroline Ware, interview by Susan Ware, Women in Federal Government Oral History Project, Schlesinger Library, pp. 40-42; Janice Andrews, "Role of Female Social Workers in the Second Generation: Leaders or Followers," typescript, 1989. The possibility of combining marriage and career had been debated intensely starting in the 1920s, but it was in the following decade that the change began to be evident. See Lois Scharf, To Work and to Wed: Female Employment, Feminism, and the Great Depression (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980).

88. Florence Kelley to Mary Anderson, 6-28-20, Anderson to Mary Dewson 8-23-20, Anderson to Dewson 10-23-22, Dewson to Anderson 6-1-23, Women's Bureau papers, Box 843.
89. Landon Storrs, "The National Consumers League 1932-1937," MA thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison (1989), pp. 57-58 and note 86.
90. Gordon, "What Does Welfare Regulate?"; Barbara Nelson, "The Origins of the Two-Channel Welfare State: Workmen's Compensation and Mothers' Aid." In Gordon, ed., Women, the State, and Welfare, pp. 123-57.
91. Neverdon-Morton, Afro-American Women of the South and "Self-Help Programs as Educative Activities"; Brady, on the activities of the Kansas Federation of Colored women's Clubs; Farley on the Boston League of Women for Community Service.
92. Inabel Burns Lindsay, "Some Contributions of Negroes to Welfare Services, 1865-1900," Journal of Negro Education 25, No. 1 (Winter 1956), pp. 15-24.
93. Terrell, "Club Work Among Women," The New York Age, Jan. 4, 1900, p. 1, from Terrell Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, Box 102-4, folder 132. Although this speech was given in 1900, another given in 1928 uses virtually the same rhetoric: "Progress and Problems of Colored Women," in Boston Evening Transcript, Dec. 15, 1928, loc. cit.
94. For just a few examples: Elise Johnson McDougald, "The Task of Negro Womanhood," in Alain Locke, ed., The New Negro: An Interpretation (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925), pp. 369-84; Mary Church Terrell, "Up-To-Date" (a column she wrote regularly for several newspapers), the Norfolk Journal and Guide, Nov. 3, 1927, in Terrell Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, box 102-2, folder W; Fannie Barrier Williams, "Opportunities and Responsibilities"; Lucy Slowe in many speeches, Slowe Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, box 90-6, passim. See Perkins, "Black Feminism."
95. Williams, "Opportunities and Responsibilities," p. 150.
96. My discussion of the black women's campaign against sexual abuse is mainly indebted to Deborah White's interpretation in her "Fettered Sisterhood."
97. Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women." White reformers' rhetoric about protecting women named prostitution, not rape, as the problem. See Ellen DuBois and Linda Gordon, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield: Nineteenth-century Feminist Views of Sexuality," Feminist Studies 9, No. 1 (Spring 1983), pp. 7-25; Lillian Wald, National Conference on Charities and Corrections (NCCC), Proceedings, 1909, p. 264.
98. Hine, "Communal Agency," p. 10.
99. Salem, To Better Our World, pp. 44-46; Scott, "Most Invisible of All," p. 15. On such protective work, also see Monroe N. Work, "Problems of Negro Urban Welfare," The Southern Workman, Jan. 1924, reprinted in Ross, Black Heritage in Social Welfare, pp. 383-84; and Bulletin of National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, Report 1912-13, "Foreword," reprinted in *ibid.*, p. 241.

100. Hine, "Communal Agency," pp. 4-7, from Jane Edna Hunter, A Nickel and a Prayer (Cleveland: Elli Kani, 1940).
101. White, "Fettered Sisterhood."
102. The best exemplification of this connection is in Evelyn Brooks, "Religion, Politics, and Gender: The Leadership of Nannie Helen Burroughs," Journal of Religious Thought 44 (Winter/Spring 1988): 7-22.
103. White, "Fettered Sisterhood," p. 5.
104. Mrs. N. F. Mossell, The Work of the Afro-American Woman (1894; Reprint. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), p. 32.
105. Ida Wells-Barnett is of course the woman most associated with this challenge, but she was not included in this sample because I had to define her as primarily a civil-rights, rather than a welfare, activist. On Cooper see Sharon Harley, "Anna J. Cooper: A Voice for Black Women," in The Afro-American Woman, pp. 87-96; Louise Daniel Hutchinson, Anna J. Cooper: A Voice from the South (Washington: Smithsonian Inst., 1981). On Terrell see Dorothy Sterling, Black Foremothers (New York: Feminist Press, 1979); Elliott Rudwick, W.E.B. Du Bois: Voice of the Black Protest Movement (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982, orig. 1960), pp. 129-30.
106. Williams, "Opportunities and Responsibilities," p. 157.
107. Lerner, Black Women, pp. 477-97.
108. Story told in Lerner, Black Women, pp. 375-76. On the complexity of Brown's attitudes, see Hunter, "The Correct Thing," and Smith and West, "Charlotte Hawkins Brown."
109. Cooper to A. G. Comings, 10-1-28, Cooper Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, Box 32-1, folder 5. Cooper was another one of those figures who tirelessly challenged racism even in its apparently "small" or accidental varieties. For example, she wrote to the Atlantic Monthly complaining about an article mentioning a poor Negro with lice; Atlantic editors (no name signed) to Cooper, 1-31-35, Cooper Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, Box 23-1, folder 5.
110. Evelyn Brooks Barnett, "Nannie Burroughs and the Education of Black Women," in The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images, ed. Sharon Harley and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1978), pp. 97-108.
111. Burroughs, speech before 2000 at Bethel AME Church in Baltimore, reported in clipping, n.d.; and "Baptists May Oust Nannie H. Burroughs," Chicago Defender 9/9/39. Both in Burroughs Vertical File, Moorland-Spingarn, Howard.
112. "Nannie Burroughs Refuses to Speak on National Christian Mission," Pittsburgh Courier Feb. 1, 1941, in *ibid.*
113. Burroughs in Louisiana Weekly, Dec. 23, 1943, quoted in Lerner, Black Women, p. 552. The best discussion of Burroughs is in Brooks, "Religion, Politics, and Gender."

114. On criticism of Bethune see B. Joyce Ross, "Mary McLeod Bethune and the National Youth Administration: A Case Study of Power Relationships in the Black Cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt," The Journal of Negro History 60, No. 1 (Jan. 1975): 1-28; on her defense of the New Deal, see her "'I'll Never Turn Back No More!'" in Opportunity 16 (1938), pp. 324-26; or "Mrs. Bethune Praises NYA Courses as 'Bright Ray of Hope for Rural Negroes,'" Black Dispatch 5-1-37, or "Mrs. Bethune Hails Achievements of the New Deal," Washington Tribune 11-12-35, or "55,000 Aided by the NYA Program, Says Dr. Bethune," Washington Tribune 4-23-38, in Bethune Vertical File, Moorland-Spingarn, Howard; on her picketing, see photo and caption "Give U.S. More Jobs," Washington Afro-American 8-12-39, Bethune Vertical File, Moorland-Spingarn, Howard.

115. Robinson to Jeanetta Welch Brown, Exec. Sec. of NCNW, 9-22-43 enclosing typescript of the script of "Lazy Daisy," NCNW Mss., Bethune Museum and Archives, series 5, box 17, folder 274.

116. Era Bell Thompson, "A Message from a Mahogany Blond," Negro Digest (July 1950), p. 31.

117. White, "Fettered Sisterhood."

118. Smith and West, "Charlotte Hawkins Brown," p. 199.

119. I am in sympathy with Nancy Cott's critique of the use of the concept "social feminism," in Journal of American History 76 (December 1989) pp. 809-829, but, as a concept, "social feminism" remains descriptive of a widely understood phenomenon and we have as yet no term to substitute for it.

120. These were women in partnerships with other women who adopted children: Frieda Miller and Pauline Newman, and Jessie Taft and Virginia Robinson.

121. Linda Gordon, Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston, 1880-1960 (New York: Viking/Penguin, 1988), chapter 4; idem, "A History of AFDC," forthcoming.

122. Florence Kelley, "Minimum-Wage Laws," Journal of Political Economy 20, No. 10 (December 1912), p. 1003.

123. Roy Lubove, The Struggle for Social Security 1900-1935 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), chapter 5, is aware of this but does not discuss it in terms of gender.

124. See Roth, "Matronage," p. 87; Brady, "Kansas Federation"; and Brady, "Organizing Afro-American Girls' Clubs in Kansas in the 1920s," Frontiers 9, No. 2 (1987): 69-73, for examples.

125. Slowe, "Some Problems of Colored Women and Girls in the Urban Process," Slowe Mss., Moorland-Spingarn, Howard, handwritten draft ms, n.d., but probably 1930's, Box 90-6, folder 143.

126. Ardie Clark Halyard, Interview by Marcia Greenlee, 1978, Black Women Oral History Project, Schlesinger Library, p. 15.

127. Dorothy Boulding Ferebee interview, Black Women Oral History Project, Schlesinger Library, p. 9.

128. Lindsay interview, pp. 4-5.

129. Helen A. Cook, "The Work of the Woman's League, Washington, D.C.," in Du Bois, Some Efforts (1898), p. 57; Du Bois, Efforts for Social Betterment (1909), pp. 119-120, 126-27; Giddings, When and Where I Enter, pp. 100-01; Hine, When the Truth Is Told, pp. 52-54; Edyth Ross, Black Heritage in Social Welfare, pp. 233-4; Perkins, "Black Feminism," pp. 7-8.

130. Allan Spear, Black Chicago: The Making of a Ghetto 1890-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 102; Stehno, "Public Responsibility for Dependent Black Children"; Harley, "Beyond the Classroom"; Rouse, Lugenia Burns Hope, p. 28; Davis, Black Americans in Cleveland, p. 195.

131. Mary Church Terrell, A Colored Woman in a White World (Washington, D.C.: Ransdell Inc. Pub., 1940), p. 153.

132. The white reformers in the first decades of the twentieth century were campaigning hard for mothers' pensions and feared that day child care would be presented as an alternative, making it possible for mothers to take on jobs that would undoubtedly be unattractive. But they also continued to see mothers' employment as a misfortune. For example, Florence Kelley in 1909 argued that day nurseries should be acceptable only for temporary emergencies, that the social cost of mothers' employment was always too high. "A friend of mine has conceived the monstrous idea of having a night nursery to which women so employed might send their children. And this idea was seriously described in so modern [sic] a publication as Charities and the Commons ... without a word of editorial denunciation." Florence Kelley, "The Family and the Woman's Wage," 1909 NCCC Proceedings, pp. 118-21.

133. Quoted in Giddings, When and Where I Enter, p. 205.

134. Brooks Barnett, "Nannie Burroughs."

135. Haynes, "Two Million Negro Women at Work," The Southern Workman 51 No. 2 (Feb. 1922), pp. 64-72; quoted in Lerner, Black Women, p. 260.

136. Quoted in Giddings, When and Where I Enter, p. 196. This view incidentally was generally supported by W. E. B. Du Bois.

137. My discussion of Walker is indebted to Elsa Barkley Brown's excellent article "Womanist Consciousness: Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of Saint Luke," Signs 14, No. 3 (Spring 1989), pp. 610-33. On the significance of Black banks and other businesses, see also Du Bois, Economic Cooperation, pp. 103-181.

138. Hedgeman, pp. 47-48; Who's Who in Colored America (1927), p. 209.

139. Hine, "Communal Agency," p. 15; Hine, When the Truth Is Told, p. 51.

140. This orientation was evident despite the southern states governments' relatively small sizes, and it casts some doubt on "state capacity" explanations for reformers' strategies.

141. A qualification must be repeated here: while a high proportion of the African-American women leaders were legally married, it does not necessarily follow that their daily lives were lived in close partnerships with their husbands or carried a great deal of domestic responsibilities.

142. Blanche D. Coll, "Public Assistance: Reviving the Original Comprehensive Concept of Social Security." In Social Security: The First Half Century, ed. Gerald D. Nash et al. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), pp. 221-41.

143. Linda Gordon, "What Does Welfare Regulate?"