

**The reinvention of the American Welfare State:
Nixon's Family Assistance Plan**

Thesis MA History: Politics, Culture and National Identities

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List of abbreviations used in the text

ADC:	Aid to Dependent Children
AFDC:	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AFDC-UP:	Aid to Families with Dependent Children of Unemployed Parents
AFL:	American Federation of Labor
AFL-CIO:	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
CED:	Committee for Economic Development of the Conference Board
CORE:	Congress of Racial Equality
EEOC:	Equal Employment Opportunities Commission
EITC:	Earned Income Tax Credit
FAP:	Family Assistance Plan
FSS:	Family Security System
GAI:	Guaranteed Annual Income
GJOP:	Guaranteed Jobs Opportunity Program
HEW:	The Department of Health, Education and Welfare
NAACP:	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NAM:	National Association of Manufacturers
NIT:	Negative Income Tax
NORC:	Non-partisan and Objective Research Organization
NWRO:	National Welfare Rights Organization
OEO:	Office of Economic Opportunity
PBJI:	Program for Better Jobs and Income
SSI:	Supplemental Security Income
UAC:	Urban Affairs Council
WIN:	Work Incentive Program

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1. Introduction

The 1960's in the United States were a time of great protest. It was the period of civil rights movements, anti-Vietnam protests and as such, it was a time of great political turmoil. With Presidents John F. Kennedy (1961-1963) and Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1968), the US had two Democrat leaders who, in these roaring Sixties, turned their attention towards civil rights and welfare. With the approval of the Civil Rights Act, Fair Housing Act and the Voting Rights Act, Johnson and his predecessor underlined their goal to move towards a more equal society.¹ During Kennedy's and Johnson's terms, the number of recipients that were eligible for welfare in general and for the biggest welfare program: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), expanded considerably.² However, during the course of the Sixties, welfare had come under fire by the media and politicians, who considered it to be too expensive. AFDC was seen as cost inefficient and a failure.³ Thus during the presidential campaign in 1968, welfare inevitably became one of the most debated subjects. Candidates had to have an idea about welfare reform if they wanted to become President.⁴ Richard Nixon (1969-1974) was no exception. However, when elected, the Conservative Republican surprised everyone with his proposal in 1969 to let go of AFDC and replace it with something completely new: The Family Assistance Plan (FAP).⁵ A plan that was seen as a revolutionary approach to re-organize welfare.

The substance of the plan was a form of a guaranteed minimum income, something that was already discussed within the administration during Kennedy and Johnson's terms.⁶ The idea was an income that everyone would receive if people earned less than a certain amount. Instead of paying taxes, they would receive money from the government in the form of a direct payment. This method was called a Negative Income Tax. In the proposal, adults would receive \$500 yearly and children would receive \$300, making the income of what was seen as the ideal family (two parents and two children) \$1600.⁷ This income was below the poverty line, but it was much better than what most people received from the government through AFDC. It was positively received at first, but it soon turned into a very tough debated

¹ Eva Bertram, *The workfare state: public assistance politics from the New Deal to the new Democrats*. American governance: politics, policy, and public law (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2015),40.

² Ibid. 37.

³ Ibid. 56.

⁴ Ibid. 43.

⁵ Franklin D. Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", (1985) C14-77-163A. Kennedy School of Government, 1.

⁶ Bertram, *The workfare state*, 47.

⁷ Raines *The Family Assistance Plan abridged*, 1.

subject in Congress and especially the Senate. This was perhaps not surprising due to the fact that it broke with a lot of American traditions of welfare. It gave poor people a minimum income on a federal level purely based on their need instead of being in a certain category, this was never done before. Although approved by Congress, FAP was eventually turned down in the Senate.⁸ The controversial plan did however come close to realization.

Scholarly Framework

There has been some debate between historians and in other fields of research as to why this plan had been rejected by Congress, especially when most organizations and the public were fairly positive towards the plan.⁹ According to historian Eric Foner in his book 'Give me Liberty volume 2', the downfall of FAP was due to Liberals who were against it because the benefits people received would be too little, while the Republicans on the other hand found it too costly. It was therefore a plan that was stuck in the middle with too little support.¹⁰ Other scientists like political scientist Paul E. Peterson state the same. In his article, Peterson, similar to Foner, does not mention the role of class, gender and race at all.¹¹ Another example can be found in the article of economical and legal history professor Dennis Ventry Jr. He explains the role of class and undeserving poor, but ignores concepts such as gender and race.¹²

Other scientists however, have argued the cultural significance of discussions concerning FAP. In their work, not monetary implications, but cultural implications in the form of gender, race and the matter of the undeserving poor play a key role in the rejection of FAP. Examples of this view are the article of social scientist Jill Quadagno¹³ and the books of historians Michael Katz,¹⁴ Brian Steensland¹⁵ and Robin Kelley.¹⁶ The Family Assistance Plan was not merely a new welfare plan. It touched a lot of discussions about welfare and the

⁸ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 64.

⁹ *Ibid.* 55.

¹⁰ Eric Foner, *Give me liberty! \$ an American history. 2: From 1865* (Seagull 4. ed; New York: W.W. Norton & Company 2014), 1030.

¹¹ Paul E. Peterson, and Mark C. Rom, 'The Case for a National Welfare Standard', *The Brookings Review* 6 (1988) 24–32 <doi:10.2307/20080012>.

¹² Dennis J. Ventry, 'The Collision of Tax and Welfare Politics: The Political History of the Earned Income Tax Credit, 1969–99', *National Tax Journal* 53 (2000) 983–1026.

¹³ Jill Quadagno *Race, Class and Gender in the US welfare state: Nixon's failed Family Assistance Plan*.

¹⁴ Michael B. Katz, *The undeserving poor: from the war on poverty to the war on welfare* (1st ed; New York: Pantheon Books 1990).

¹⁵ Brian Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution: America's struggle over guaranteed income policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2008),

¹⁶ Robin D. G Kelley, *Yo' mama's disfunkcional!: fighting the culture wars in urban America* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press 2008).

view on the poor in general, for instance, an important reason AFDC was seen as a failure in this literature was arguably because a great number of recipients were single black mothers, a group of people that the public did not deem worthy for welfare, not money but cultural aversions seemed to influence the thinking about AFDC.¹⁷ Although some historians and other scientists have already focussed on racism and sexism on the subject of FAP, this thesis does comprehend some other areas of focus. First, this research also takes a closer look at social experiments on a Negative Income Tax that were conducted parallel to the discussions in Congress. The results from the experiments had effects on the decisions made in Congress. The results were too late for Nixon's proposal. However, President Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) had plans for a similar Guaranteed Annual Income proposal called the Program for Better Jobs and Income (PBJI) which used data from these experiments.¹⁸ The second aspect that I will focus on in greater extent are the debates in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Considering that these were the places where the decisions eventually made the difference in going through or not. Within these debates I will focus on arguments that have a sexist, racist or a poor-biased undertone. Arguments based on gender and race will not always be mentioned explicitly as they were seen as controversial, it is however important to look at how these concepts can be found implicitly as well. For this, the literature will play an important role. A historical view on these debates and experiments would be helpful, as these discussions need to be put in a perspective that is broader than only sociological or economical viewpoints, in which chronology is an important factor. A historical view therefore would fit best in this research.

The undeserving poor, gender and race

In this thesis, I want to analyse the forming, the proposal and the discussions about FAP through these three concepts. The concept of the undeserving poor is broadly mentioned in the book of Michael B. Katz uncoincidentally called "The Undeserving poor". This term is very broad and refers to a categorization between poor who are seen, by society as a whole, as deserving or undeserving of sympathy for being poor.¹⁹ This is in fact a moral division in which the deservingness of individuals or groups is valued in to what extent their poverty is a result of their own doing. This concept touches a broader discussion about poverty that has an

¹⁷ Quadagno, Jill, 'Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State: Nixon's Failed Family Assistance Plan', *American Sociological Review* 55 (1990) <doi:10.2307/2095700>.

¹⁸ Bertram, *The workfare State*, 92.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 10.

incredibly long history. Katz refers to a speech in 1834 of Reverend Charles Burroughs, who said the following when opening a poorhouse:

*“In speaking of poverty, let us not forget that there is a distinction between this and pauperism. The former is an unavoidable evil, to which many are brought from necessity and in the wise and gracious Providence of God. It is the result, not of our faults, but of our misfortunes. Pauperism is the consequence of wilful error, of shameful indolence, of vicious habits. It is a misery of human creation, the pernicious work of man, the lamentable consequence of bad principals and morals.”*²⁰

It is broadly accepted by society that there are groups of people that cannot help being poor and have little perspective to independently work their way out of poverty, these categories of people are considered as the blind, aged and handicapped, the group of which Burroughs simply refers to as the poor. With paupers, Burroughs means the people who do not belong to this group but are still poor. This is in its essence, the division between the deserving and undeserving poor that came to dominate the American society. It is important to notice the factor of misfortune: The deserving poor are considered unlucky whilst the undeserving poor have purely themselves, through their indolent and lazy behaviour to blame.²¹ Brian Steensland describes the idea of the deserving and undeserving poor as very strict in the US, Americans have very strong believes in who is deserving and who is not, this might also be linked with the strong work ethic in the US, wherein work is seen as an essential aspect of someone’s life.²²

A very important theory of the 20th century which is strongly linked with this idea of deserving and undeserving poor is the Culture of Poverty. This theory became popular especially in the Sixties under scholars, politicians and throughout society.²³ In its essence, as described by Katz the culture of poverty means: “people placed in a class, those whose behaviours and values converted their poverty into an enclosed and self-perpetuating world of dependence”.²⁴ Harrington, underlined in his book “The Other America” the thinking about the Culture of Poverty. “Poverty in the United States, is a way of life, the family structure of the poor is different from that of the rest of society. There is a language of the poor, a psychology of the poor and a world view of the poor”.²⁵ Its premise is therefore quite

²⁰ Katz, The undeserving poor, 13.

²¹ Idem.

²² Brian Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 86.

²³ Katz, The undeserving poor, 16.

²⁴ Idem.

²⁵ Ibid. 20.

deterministic and superficial as it looks upon groups of people and their behaviour, and not at one's individual situation. In political terms, this group can also be seen as a very inflexible group. It is more difficult to change someone's behaviour instead of someone's monetary situation.²⁶ Although the theory implicated research on special behaviour that was typical for poor people, results on this behaviour have never been conclusive.²⁷ The theory however, especially sparked the idea that there were groups of people who were more likely to end up in poverty than others, which could be purely explained because their culture and their state of mind, instead of other factors like bad education, the loss of a job and lesser chances in general. The division was not only made between aged, handicapped, blind and other poor people, but also between men and women, mothers or fathers, families or singles and black or white people. This made the American welfare debates loaded with prejudices that leaned towards a very subjective understanding in who was deserving or not. According to Brown, historically what has distinguished the deserving from the undeserving poor was work, but the idea of work is also clearly linked to other factors like gender and race, whilst not everyone had the same opportunities at work.²⁸ This focus on the work ethic had consequences for different groups of people in the US concerning welfare and poverty. It made way for a preferred idea of an American white family with a father, a mother and with children in the societal status quo.²⁹ Everyone who did not fit in this framework could count on prejudices and lower welfare benefits, they were also seen as "undeserving". In this thesis I want to focus on two of these groups of "undeserving" poor, namely African Americans, and women. These groups were structurally excluded from work and were the subject of racism and sexism, two concepts strongly linked with the idea of the undeserving poor.

One of the groups that was the main target of prejudice in American welfare are African Americans.³⁰ The US has quite an extensive history of slavery. It was abolished in 1865 but consequently has made a deep impact in American culture which resulted in big racial divisions in schools, housing, work and other places. Racism was very dominant in American society, but also in the political and judicial institutions of the US in the 20th century. The responsibility to tackle racism was often explicitly made very political by presidents like Truman and Roosevelt.³¹ Welfare in itself was loaded with racial connotations.

²⁶ Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 17.

²⁷ Kelley, *Yo mama's disfunkcional*, 18-19.

²⁸ Brown, Michael K., *Race, money, and the American welfare state* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1999), 17.

²⁹ Quadagno, 'Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State', 12.

³⁰ Kelley, *Yo mama's disfunkcional*, 18-19.

³¹ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 60.

It is seen by Soss, Schramm and Fording as “the pink elephant in the room”. It is a subject that is often avoided when talking about welfare in the US.³² However, there has always been a clear overrepresentation of black people in US welfare policy. The racial distinctions embedded in the US social policy is startling and has changed little between 1930 and 1990 according to Brown. As of 1986, 90.5 percent of non-means tested, and 63.4 percent of means-tested welfare payments went to white households. This difference was even relatively bigger for black women.³³ The involvement of civil rights groups advocating for black people’s rights in the Sixties underline the inequality of black people compared to white people in the US.³⁴ Quadagno explains this overrepresentation not only as a product of history but because of longstanding white dominance in American politics.³⁵ The exclusion of black Americans from the New Deal and the Social Security Act have reinforced racial inequalities according to Quadagno.³⁶ Other factors of this overrepresentation are the exclusion from union movements, that have expanded rights and income for workers of certain sectors.³⁷ But also the exclusion from welfare programs of ADC and high prison rates of black people are mentioned as factors that cause an overrepresentation of poor black people.³⁸ Another factor was that black people were not given the same chances as white people on the job market.³⁹

Women have experienced prejudices on the account of poverty as well. Just as Welfare was loaded with certain racial implications, so was someone’s sexuality. Women have been excluded in core social insurance policies in much the same way as black people according to Brown, and when they were included, it mostly supported a patriarchal system implicating a male head of house as a prerequisite.⁴⁰ There is also according to Brown an obvious overlap between gender and race. Meaning that black women suffer from two prejudices instead of one, namely racism and sexism.⁴¹ State benefits in the US have been very much based on sexuality and marital status, both were dominated by a white male status quo.⁴² Sparks argues that due to a very marginal access to participation for women and

³² Sanford Schram, Joe Soss and Richard C. Fording ed., *Race and the politics of welfare reform*: edited by Sanford F. Schram, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2003), 1.

³³ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 11.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 170.

³⁵ Quadagno, ‘Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State’, 15.

³⁶ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 12.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 165.

³⁸ Elizabeth Kai Hinton, *From the war on poverty to the war on crime: the making of mass incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2016), 12.

³⁹ Kelley, *Yo mama’s disfunkcional*, 91.

⁴⁰ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 12.

⁴¹ *Idem*

⁴² Quadagno, ‘Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State’, 14.

coloured people, debates in Congress can be typified as relatively sexist and racist.⁴³ Policy in general had a big focus on linking jobs with man, not women. This comes from a longstanding tradition of families and a male head of house. The husband should earn the money whilst the wife should stay at home and take care of the house and the children, this was the ideal. The children were also in policy terms seen as the responsibility of the mother. This dependent and subservient role was the dominant ideal for a big part of the 20th century. This tradition was not only important to Americans, it was however a very strong tradition that also had a deep impact on policymaking in the US.⁴⁴ The job component with women seen as secondary earners was not the only gender biased aspect, marital stability was another. The idea of the perfect family consisting of a husband and wife was rated highly in American culture. Not being married or being single was seen as a weakness that should not be rewarded in financial terms via welfare. Divorces, independent of the reason, were seen as negative.⁴⁵ For this reason, single mothers and single black mothers in particular were subject of very harsh prejudices and were labelled as undeserving poor by many in society and by politicians as well.

Research question and methodology

The research question of this thesis is therefore closely connected to these themes surrounding the general discussions about the Family Assistance Plan: *What was the influence of ideas about gender roles, race and the undeserving poor in the eventual rejection of the Family Assistance Plan by the government of the US in 1972?* Another aspect I want to analyse is the legacy of the Family Assistance Plan. Which ideas about a Guaranteed Annual Income were passed on after the rejection of FAP?

For this research I will use literature that looks towards subjects such as racism, sexism and the idea of the culture of poverty in US welfare politics. The most important books and articles that I will be using are from social scientists Brian Steensland and Melinda Cooper, political scientists Eva Bertram and Michael Brown and historians Michael Katz, Alice O'Connor, Elizabeth Hinton, Premilla Nadasen, and Robin Kelley. This literature will also be used in connection to the primary sources on the subject. These sources are the written transcripts of the sessions in Congress and the Senate as well as the hearings which are

⁴³ Holloway Sparks, 'Queens, teens and model mothers, in: *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 171-196, 172.

⁴⁴ Nadasen, Premilla, Jennifer Mittelstadt and Marisa Chappell, *Welfare in the United States: a history with documents, 1935-1996* (New York: Routledge 2009), 46.

⁴⁵ Melinda Cooper, *Family values: between neoliberalism and the new social conservatism. Near futures* (New York: Zone Books 2017), 41.

available for the public. Another primary source I am using is the book written by one of Nixon's key administrators, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The sources from Moynihan could shed light on some of the struggles that had been going on within the administration of which also a great deal is written in the secondary literature.

The focus of my research lies in a qualitative approach towards the case of the Family Assistance Plan. Considering this case is quite specific, a comparative approach is not the best method for my research. However, the focus on sentiments such as racist and sexist sentiments need to be seen in the broader spectrum of sentiments towards welfare in the US and possibly other countries in general.

The structure of this thesis will be chronological. This is the most logical order because of the influence certain decisions had on the further development on the plan as a whole. For this research I will limit my analysis to the final day (or days) of the debate in the House and the Senate in which a decision about the Family Assistance Plan had to be made. Due to a lack of space I will not look at all the debates on the Family Assistance Plan. However, based on the literature, I have no reason to believe other debates will diver much from the final debates in regard to the substance and the tone. On the debates in the Finance Committee and the Ways and Means Committee I will primarily use secondary sources as there were no primary sources available. On the Program for Better Jobs and Income I will only use secondary sources as well due to a lack of time for the research. My analysis will focus primarily on the steps of the Family Assistance Plan throughout the political institutions. However, a thorough analysis of the PBJI in relation to the concepts mentioned above, although it has gotten less far in the political arena in comparison to FAP, would be interesting as well.

In chapter 2 I will look at the history of welfare up until the plans of the Family Assistance Plan in 1969 starting with the New Deal, which is broadly considered as the starting point of the American welfare state. The sub-question I want to answer here is: *To what extent does the Family Assistance Plan fit in the history of the US welfare state and what was the role of the undeserving poor, gender and race from the Thirties until the Family Assistance Plan?*

In chapter 3 I will discuss the process of the Family Assistance Plan within the Administration which formed the eventual substance of the plan. The sub-question I want to answer here is: *How was the Family Assistance plan formed? What was the role of the undeserving poor, race and gender?*

In chapter 4 I will broaden my scope towards the public, and especially focussing on

public sentiment towards the plan, which started after the proposal by Nixon in a televised speech in 1969. The sub-question I want to answer here is: *What was the role of institutions outside the government on the Family Assistance Plan in the first weeks and months after the proposal?*

In chapter 5 the discussions in the House of Representatives, the Senate and two relevant committees, The Committee on finance and Ways and Means Committee will be analysed. The sub-question I want to answer here is: *What was the influence of the concepts: the undeserving poor, gender and race, in the discussions and the outcome of the Family Assistance Plan in Congress?*

In chapter 6 I will look more extensively towards the role of the experiments in the decision-making concerning Carter's Program for Better Jobs and Income (PBJI) and the legacy of the Family Assistance Plan in general. The sub-questions I want to answer here is: *What was the influence of the experiments on the Program for Better Jobs and Income?*

In my concluding chapter, chapter 7, I will summarize the most important findings of this thesis and answer the research question together with the sub-questions.

2. American Welfare: From the New Deal to the Family Assistance Plan

In the early nineteenth century in the US, the idea of boundless opportunities for people, possible for anyone with energy and talent, was very dominant. Poverty was quickly seen as a result of personal failure.⁴⁶ In the US, there has historically been a need from the government to categorize into groups those that should be eligible for welfare and those who should not. Most of the policies were organized to make a distinction between different groups of people.⁴⁷

As a result of this view, the welfare system in the US has been very vulnerable to racist and sexist policy. A welfare system based on harsh boundaries will easily lead to subjective and discriminative policies because of the relative ease of targeting these different groups while maintaining benefits for the other groups.⁴⁸ Another factor that could lead to a more subjective welfare policy is not only the categorizing of people, but also the important role for welfare conducted on state levels. The individual states held a lot of authority in how to spend the federal budgets they received for welfare. These factors meant that race and welfare would very much become intertwined on the theme of welfare in the US during the course of the twentieth century, which will be further explained in this chapter.⁴⁹ This chapter will give a historical overview of the American welfare system from the New Deal up until the proposal of the Family Assistance Plan. Apart from this overview, it is important to analyse the role of the undeserving poor, race and gender in the history of welfare in the US. The sub-question in this chapter is: *To what extent does the Family Assistance Plan fit in the history of the US welfare state and what was the role of the undeserving poor, gender and race from the Thirties until the Family Assistance Plan?*

The beginning of welfare: The New Deal and the Fair Deal

Welfare in the United States up until the Thirties was not very structured or generous compared to Europe.⁵⁰ When the stock market crashed in 1929 and a financial crisis began, by 1932 the gross-national product had fallen by about one third. Millions of Americans lost their jobs or had to cope with a strong decline in income.⁵¹ A feeling of uncertainty and a craving

⁴⁶ Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 14.

⁴⁷ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 3.

⁴⁸ Robert C. Lieberman, 'Race and the limits of solidarity' in : *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 23-47, 30.

⁴⁹ Michael K. Brown, 'Ghetto's, Fiscal federalism and welfare reform', in : *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 47-72, 48.

⁵⁰ Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (W. W. Norton & Company 1999), 201.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 195.

towards more social security swept the nation from the North to the South in the 1930's. During this time the Democratic Party gained a lot of popularity,⁵² mostly because Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Democrat's candidate, stated that the government should also take responsibility in providing an income for people if the markets failed in providing this. His campaign was a success as he became President in 1932.

With the launching of the second New Deal in 1935, relief programs were expanded as well as taxes on concentrated fortunes. With the Wagner act the government sought to support the right to collective bargaining and social security, a system of Unemployment Insurance, Aid to the Disabled, Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) and Old Age Pensions were for the first time provided by the government.⁵³ With the enactment of ADC This also meant that for the first time, single mothers and their children had the right to receive social provisions. Although ADC was enacted with little controversy, it did not have the same status as the other programs due to the fact that it was focused on women, and more specifically their children, and not the male breadwinner as was the case in the other programs.⁵⁴ According to Steensland, another factor that might have helped pass the program with little controversy is that black people were functionally excluded from the program by excluding agricultural, domestic and casual workers already covered by the New Deal.⁵⁵ This case is exemplary for the way that welfare in the US, already as early as in the Thirties was organized. With all programs covering different groups of people. The idea that welfare was expanded because black people were excluded meant that welfare legislation was more than giving money to people who need it, a more important question was who deserved to receive it? gender and race early on, played an important role in this question. This categorization of groups of deserving poor underlines the argument of Steensland mentioned in the introduction that the US had a very strict view on deserving and undeserving poor.⁵⁶

Roosevelt wanted to provide people economic security from cradle to grave, he saw this as a responsibility of the government. In reality it seemed that the New Deal was not as beneficial for everyone. There was a lot of black disenfranchisement in the Southern states of the US and most of the benefits were only linked to taxpayers. The taxpayers at the time being mostly white males, resulted in benefits for mainly white males. Because the authority on this policy was enacted locally within all states, the differences between states turned out to be

⁵² Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom*, 196.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 201.

⁵⁴ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 17.

⁵⁵ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 30.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 86.

enormous. In the more conservative Southern states, black people and women received much less benefits than white males did.⁵⁷ These Southern states had a key role in this legislation, and would play a key role in other legislation involving welfare that would benefit the black population. The Southern states were very different compared to the Northern states. In the South, the economy consisted for an enormous part of agricultural and low skilled jobs of which a relatively high percentage was occupied by black people. Because of the low wages they received, benefits had to be kept low as well in the philosophy of Southern business and Southern politics to prevent a system in which black people would become independent of labour due to higher state benefits. This philosophy of course made welfare infested with racial implications.⁵⁸

The Unemployment Insurance excluded 55 percent of African American workers (87 percent of black women workers) and 80 percent of working women.⁵⁹ With the lower status of ADC, the government gave states a lot of space to what extend the money for ADC could be spend. These funds were already given at a lower rate through the federal government than the other programs. The idea of Roosevelt was to put a maximum budget on federal spending for welfare towards the states, so that the states themselves would finance more of the welfare budget. Unfortunately this plan did not work.⁶⁰ This tactic resulted in massive differences between states in how much people would receive through ADC depending on where they lived.⁶¹

In 1939 wives, elderly widows and dependent survivors of covered male workers were switched from public relief into the social security system, which meant that single mothers and non-white poor would become the dominant group on welfare. With this switch, a clear division was made in programs that covered male workers on the one hand and females, poor children and non-white people on the other.⁶² This alteration would be of great importance on the view and stigmatization of “welfare”. Welfare was more and more seen as programs that were meant for groups that were broadly defined as the “undeserving” poor. With all the different programs for different categories of people, the New Deal created a system of welfare that was highly divided along the lines of gender and race.⁶³

After the war, a lot of veterans demanded better security rights. Harry Truman who

⁵⁷ Foner, *The Story of American Freedom*, 206.

⁵⁸ Brown, ‘Ghetto’s, Fiscal federalism and welfare reform’, 197.

⁵⁹ *Idem*.

⁶⁰ *Idem*.

⁶¹ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 18.

⁶² Brown, ‘Ghetto’s, Fiscal federalism and welfare reform’, 206.

⁶³ Cooper, *Family Values*, 33.

was elected in 1944 as the new president gave them these rights with a new welfare program called the Fair Deal. A couple of years earlier, an attempt of Roosevelt on a third New Deal had failed because of much opposition from angry Southern Democrats.⁶⁴ These Southern Democrats were again stricter than Northern Democrats on the matter of welfare and voted against more taxes in financing the third New Deal.⁶⁵ In 1935, with the enactment of the second New Deal, Southern Democrats had been successful in excluding agricultural workers from the benefits, because this would mean workers would become more independent which would have harmed the position of the business leaders compared to especially black workers.⁶⁶ Rarely did Southern Democrats support Northern Democrats on themes such as civil rights and labour issues.⁶⁷ Moreover, all proposals that would mean welfare benefits for the black low wage workers would meet fierce resistance from Southern Democrats.

With the debates revolving the Fair Deal, Truman did manage to extend social security benefits, which were doubled by 1953. With the successful instalment of the G.I. Bill, veterans would also receive more benefits and more opportunities for education. However, there was a big difference in the “welcoming back” for white veterans compared to black veterans. Black veterans were mostly shut out of the American Legion in the Southern states and were confronted with a lot of labour-market discrimination. Therefore, many black veterans became unemployed after the war.⁶⁸ Truman’s plans for national health insurance also did not make it through in the political arena, as well as some other proposals to extend the welfare state, mostly because of Southern resistance.⁶⁹

After the war, the number of ADC recipients had risen enormously. This was due to the fact that federal budgets to states had increased and the welfare standards had increased as well, making more people eligible.⁷⁰ It would rise in the fifteen years after the war from 256.000 families tot 800.000 families and would have its peak around the beginning of the Fifties. The amount of criticism against ADC cases rose during the Forties and Fifties because of the fact that most of the ADC caseload consisted of unmarried, separated or divorced women, which were in the eyes of the public not groups that deserved welfare.⁷¹ Some states made employment a requirement for ADC and a lot of Southern states made illegitimacy a

⁶⁴ Lieberman, ‘Race and the limits of solidarity’, 28.

⁶⁵ Brown, *Race, Money and the American Welfare State*, 117.

⁶⁶ Joe Soss, Sanford F. Schram, Thomas P. Vartanian and Erin O’Brien, *The hard line and the color line*, in: *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 225-254, 227

⁶⁷ Lieberman, ‘Race and the limits of solidarity’ 27,34.

⁶⁸ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 191.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 119.

⁷⁰ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 26.

⁷¹ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 173.

factor for not getting ADC, which would evidently be seen as too discriminatory by the federal government at the end of the Fifties. A lot of these states worked around these federal announcements by creatively reforming their policy. For instance, some states declared that if mothers would have a substitute father in their lives in the form of an uncle or a boyfriend, they would also be cut from ADC.⁷² There were states that instructed welfare teams to conduct midnight raids. In these midnight raids, houses, at midnight, would be checked on the possible presence of a man in the house. If this was the case, they argued, it meant there was a man of the house who could take care of the family, thus ADC was not necessary. These midnight raids were almost entirely conducted on the houses of single black mothers. Because it was also practiced with the ideology that women were secondary workers, if a man could take care of the family in financial terms, the women would not need to be financially independent, this policy did not only have massive racial implications, but it was sexist as well. The raids were to continue in the Fifties and a good part of the Sixties in some states.⁷³

Although the purges never had a big impact on the amount of ADC caseloads, it did have a big impact on the stigma of ADC. Women who worked were considered by the public as matriarchs who should have been at home taking care of their children. Single women without jobs who made use of ADC were considered welfare queens, a term that would stick for a very long time in the US.⁷⁴ The policy of deterrence would in some Southern states be the main focus point for welfare.⁷⁵ In the early Fifties it became clear that a lot of women did not apply for ADC because of the shame of receiving these payments.⁷⁶ During this time, the amount of black women that applied for ADC in comparison to white women was extremely high. In 1961, 40 percent of the ADC caseload composed of black families compared to 14 percent in 1939.⁷⁷ Research showed that states that had more minorities in their ranks on ADC, gave less benefits than other states. This shows us that welfare and race had a very strong connection in the US and that being black had a negative impact on the benefits you received.⁷⁸

⁷² Katz, Michael B., *In the shadow of the poorhouse: a social history of welfare in America* (10th anniversary ed., and updated; New York: BasicBooks 1996), (!).

⁷³ Soss, Schram and Fording, 'Introduction', in: *Race and the Politics of Welfare reform.*, 1-21, 17.

⁷⁴ Sparks, 'Queens, teens and model mothers', 183.

⁷⁵ Brown, 'Ghetto's, Fiscal federalism and welfare reform', 59.

⁷⁶ Brown, Race, money, and the American welfare state, 175.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 185.

⁷⁸ Martin Johnson, 'Racial Context, Public Attitudes and Welfare Effort in the American States', in: *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 151-169, 151,161.

The conservative Fifties

During the course of the Fifties, the women unemployment rate rose significantly, because of the idea that they had to take care of the children and the house, while the father provided a wage for the household. The amount of people that married at a young age grew and the amount of divorces dropped compared to the Forties.⁷⁹ In the Forties and the Fifties, a lot of black people migrated from the South to the North because, considering housing, jobs and treatment, they would be better off there. The amount of people that were eligible for welfare rose. The number of ADC recipients more than doubled in 1960 compared to the start of ADC. This was due to the fact that a lot of black people were eligible for welfare in the North while they were not eligible because of stricter rules in the South. In the late Forties and at the beginning of the Fifties, a lot of Northern states established fair employment commissions, an idea which was inspired by an indictment under Truman's Commission of Civil Rights in 1947 that published a devastating report on racial inequality in the United States. It called for intervention at a national level on inequality in housing, employment, education and the justice system. Although this was a good step towards a more inclusive welfare system, the most important expansion of ADC came with the Caretaker Provision in 1950. ADC was originally meant to help the children in need, but it did not include the caretaker. The name of the program underlined this fact: Aid to Dependent Children. This changed in 1950 when Congress agreed with what social workers and administrators had said for a long time: That the government should also provide an income for the caretaker. In 1956 the goal of ADC was successfully amended to an aid for mothers and their children, and not only children.⁸⁰ This step was important because it gave mothers a position of financial independency apart from their children.

In the Fifties, while more women and especially black women were aware of the ADC and applied, the resistance against ADC also grew rapidly. Stereotypes of ADC mothers being "over-sexed" and "uncontrolled breeders" that were mentioned by politicians and others, became more and more common.⁸¹ This underlined the idea that welfare discussions in the US were indeed inflicted with a gender bias. The media during the Fifties published a lot of negative articles on ADC mothers. In the Christmas edition of the Saturday Evening Post in 1949 it was reported that the city of Detroit was "cracking down" on "welfare chisellers" and in an article a year later it was said that "relief is ruining families" by supplying money to

⁷⁹ Martin Johnson, 'Racial Context, Public Attitudes and Welfare Effort in the American States', 166-167.

⁸⁰ Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 33-34.

⁸¹ Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 25.

children that were born without a “real family” to support them.⁸² The negative role of the media was not restricted to the Forties only. In the Fifties and Sixties, research showed that a disproportional amount of black people would be showed on pictures whenever an item about the negative effects of welfare was written. In the late Sixties for example, the amount of pictures with black people in negative welfare stories was 52 percent of all the stories about welfare, while in reality the caseload was only half this percentage.⁸³ This had a very big impact on the view of society towards welfare, who more and more saw welfare as something that only benefitted single black mothers. This group was as described by Quadagno in the introduction, not a deserving group because it did not fit in the ideal status quo of an American white family of a husband and wife with children.⁸⁴

During the Fifties when the numbers of ADC recipients grew, a lot of states chose to reduce the budget for ADC resulting in lower budgets split between more people. The ADC payments were low and a lot of states granted such low funds that people that received it actually had an income far below the poverty line.⁸⁵ However at the end of the Fifties, Dwight D. Eisenhower was able, together with a significant group of Liberal and moderate Republicans, to expand ADC in size and scope. The Federal Housing Assistance, the Unemployment Insurance, Old-age and Survivors Insurance were also expanded and a Disability Insurance was added.⁸⁶

The roaring Sixties

The Sixties can be seen as a time of much progressive political change on the subject of welfare compared to the Fifties and Forties. The civil right movements expanded, and the Sixties became a time of protest against a government that, in the eyes of the public, did too little for minority groups for too long. Students and emancipation groups became very vocal and activist during this time. Black right movements under the leadership of Martin Luther King issued for more economic rights for black people as to the fact that black unemployment was two and a half times that of white unemployment while at the same time the income of a black family was just over half of that of a white family. In 1964 King therefore called for a “Bill of Rights for the Disadvantaged” which aimed at providing resources for the economically disadvantaged. It was targeted at the poor in general, but aimed at providing a

⁸² Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 26.

⁸³ Martin Gilens, ‘How the poor became black’, in: *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 101-131, 105.

⁸⁴ Quadagno, ‘Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State’, 12.

⁸⁵ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 28.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 33.

little extra for black families since the government had done too little to give black people their rights.⁸⁷ Black unionist A. Philip Randolph joined King's cause and proposed in 1966, together with civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, a Freedom Budget of 100 million dollar in order to provide federal job creation and urban redevelopment which included a guaranteed minimum income for those unable to work or those that should not work like the blind, old and the disabled.⁸⁸ The Freedom Budget, although widely supported, would never be considered by the government as feasible. In 1966 King launched the Chicago Freedom Movement aiming at upgrading black employment, ending discrimination by unions and employers and demanding equal treatment in housing, which had been a big issue for a long time. They were not alone in this, as a massive amount of mostly students and black people joined the protest. The civil right movements especially stood up to the idea of the "undeserving" poor and the institutional injustice towards black people as well as women.

A couple of years before King's successful actions, John F. Kennedy was elected as president in 1961 and sought to improve welfare in the US. Kennedy made welfare reform a top priority. Some researchers say this was due to pressure from civil right movements while others say it was both due to these pressures and the discontent Kennedy and his administration felt towards the high poverty rates.⁸⁹ He announced his concern on poverty publicly on November 23 1963, by announcing a war on poverty. Already two years before this speech, in 1961, a new law was passed so that fathers could also be included in the ADC program. With the ADC-Unemployed parent provision, married men could now also be admitted into the program.⁹⁰ This was an important step, because before this implementation, children were only exclusively linked to women, while men did not share this same responsibility towards their children. This made the program more equal in terms of gender. The name of ADC changed to Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). In 1964, one year after the assassination of Kennedy, fellow democrat Lyndon B. Johnson was elected president. Johnson was determined to continue the work that Kennedy had done on welfare.⁹¹ He launched numerous legislative acts, including the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and the Fair Housing Act in 1968, which were aimed at providing more equal rights for black people economically as well as culturally.⁹² With these successes, the

⁸⁷ Katz, *In the Shadow of the poorhouse*, 283.

⁸⁸ *Idem*.

⁸⁹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 38.

⁹⁰ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 35.

⁹¹ Katz, *the undeserving poor*, 80.

⁹² Katz, *In the shadow of the poorhouse*, 257.

civil rights movement became the most effective movement for poor people in establishing more equality for black people in the Sixties.⁹³ For these civil right movements, ameliorating and expanding welfare was seen as a good tactic in the attack on the consequences of racism in the US.⁹⁴

Another good example in the fight for more equal welfare was the local policy on AFDC. Especially in the South, strong “suitable home” regulations were enacted leading to the consequence that a lot of times aid to non-whites and children born out of wedlock was denied. As governor Faubus of Arkansas said: “By taxing the good people to pay for these programs, we are putting a premium on illegitimacy never before known in the world”.⁹⁵ Most of the time in these Southern states, black and “illegitimate” children were the main victims of giving less or nothing. This attitude can be seen as very degrading towards mothers, who are blamed for not marrying the father of their child and not staying with him. They are therefore blamed for refusing a dependent position towards the male. This underlines the fact that policy was mostly constructed through the perspective of males, being degrading towards females as argued by Quadagno.⁹⁶

Especially on these subjects, civil rights as well as antipoverty movements worked together to attack this discriminative policy. One of the biggest organisations on welfare rights would become the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). It was founded in 1966 and consisted of social scientists, middle-class organizers, lawyers and was joined by CORE (Congress Of Racial Equality). Their member list consisted of mostly poor black women.⁹⁷ What was essentially different in the Sixties compared to the Fifties was the voice of the public to better the lives of the people on welfare and therefore to better the lives of the “undeserving” poor in the eyes of the government. There was protest against welfare, but for the first time also a significant amount of people, politicians and organizations advocated in favour of people that depended on welfare, for more rights and financial support.⁹⁸

The War on Poverty

During Johnson’s presidency, some of the biggest social security and welfare programs since the New Deal were launched: the Great Society programs. These programs provided health services to the poor and elderly: Medicaid and Medicare. The programs were very effective in

⁹³ Ibid. 284.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 252.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 253.

⁹⁶ Quadagno, ‘Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State’, 14.

⁹⁷ Katz, *In the shadow of the poorhouse*, 253.

⁹⁸ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 37.

helping poor people to get access to good medical care. The Food Stamp program was expanded, which resulted in massive improvements in reducing hunger.⁹⁹ Some new agencies were erected such as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC). The programs were, unlike before, aimed at every American, including black Americans and working women. The biggest goal in Johnson's program was to "eradicate poverty". This started with the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964.¹⁰⁰ It became clear that the tactic of Kennedy and Johnson in order to make welfare more equal, was a more centralized policy: giving the same orders and legislation to all the states, would in their philosophy be the best way in establishing this.¹⁰¹

With the war on poverty, the focus point of eradicating poverty changed to opportunity, rather than equality.¹⁰² This idea can be seen as a very typical American political perspective to look at poverty. The goal of welfare was not to create equality as a condition, but equality in the greatness of opportunities that everyone had in chasing the American Dream. President Johnson was against direct government assistance, and on an administrative level he was not alone in this.¹⁰³ It was therefore no surprise that Johnson was against the idea of a guaranteed annual income and its focus on direct payments, which was during his term mentioned as an option by people from within the administration. Johnson's policy was to change the poor, not the market itself.¹⁰⁴

In between 1965 and 1973, federal spending on welfare increased from 75 billion dollars to 185 billion dollars.¹⁰⁵ The increased amount of money spent on welfare had a lot of positive effects on the eligibility. The amount of people who were eligible for public assistance had grown from 7 to 14 million people in 1974. The participation of eligible families in the programs rose from 30 to 90 percent and as said earlier, there was a bigger focus on supporting poor black people.

There were big improvements considering equality and welfare in general. The amount of people living under the poverty line was halved between 1965 and 1972, partly due to elderly being financially lifted above the poverty line.¹⁰⁶ However, there was still a big difference in wages and employment opportunities between black and white people.

⁹⁹ Katz, *In the shadow of the poorhouse*, 266.

¹⁰⁰ Katz, *In the shadow of the poorhouse*, 254.

¹⁰¹ Brown in: *Race and the politics of welfare reform*, 60.

¹⁰² Katz, *In the Shadow of the poorhouse*, 251.

¹⁰³ Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (W. W. Norton & Company 1999), 285.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 286.

¹⁰⁵ Katz, *In the Shadow of the poorhouse*, 259.

¹⁰⁶ Katz, *the undeserving poor*, 113.

Furthermore, there was also a huge gap in the life expectancy and infant mortality rates between black and white people. The participation of black people on the labour market also dropped from 74 percent in 1965 to 53 percent in 1978.¹⁰⁷ This underlines Kelley's and Brown's arguments that the market was not free of racism and did not facilitate the same chances for employment for black people as white people had.¹⁰⁸

The problems with AFDC

AFDC was the most expensive social welfare program during the Sixties. It grew in size under Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon from 3.1 million in 1960 to 10.8 million people by 1974.¹⁰⁹ Much of this increase was due to an increase of economic malaise of black people during this time, which meant more of them were eligible for AFDC. Other reasons were the loosening of strict eligibility conditions by especially Northern states and mechanization in the South. This triggered big migrations from black people to the North where welfare was more generous. The civil right movements also played a big part in this increase of recipients. By making these governmental aid options more known to the poor, the number of recipients also rose.¹¹⁰ On a federal level a couple of factors contributed to the increase of the AFDC caseloads. With welfare amendments under the leadership of Abraham Ribicoff in 1962, two-headed families were now eligible for AFDC.¹¹¹ The dramatic increase in numbers and costs, together with the fact that AFDC was for a relatively big part utilized by black single mothers, made it a very unpopular program during the Sixties for Conservative politicians as well as a for lot of people in public.¹¹² Again it seemed that because the life of the black single and unemployed mother did not fit in the ideal picture of the American family, they were seen as undeserving.¹¹³

The negative public opinion on the AFDC was problematic for a government that saw societal support for welfare and public relief drop rapidly. As stated in the introduction, the idea of the culture of poverty became very popular in the Sixties. At the beginning of AFDC, when it was still called ADC, it was considered by the public and by politicians as a respectful program containing mostly white women who supposedly "deserved" welfare. It became, also due to media framing, to be more and more known as a program that would only grant

¹⁰⁷ Katz, *In the Shadow of the poorhouse*, 259.

¹⁰⁸ Kelley, *Yo mama's disfunkcional*, 91.

¹⁰⁹ Katz *in the shadow of the poorhouse*, 259.

¹¹⁰ Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 109.

¹¹¹ Brown, *Money, Race and the American Welfare State*, 213.

¹¹² Katz *The undeserving poor*, 75.

¹¹³ Quadagno, 'Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State', 12.

incomes to black single mothers, who were not seen as a group of “deserving” poor.¹¹⁴ But also politically it was one of the most debated issues. In 1968 the supreme court overturned policy of the state of Alabama on the AFDC called the “substitute father”. The substance of this policy was that if a woman was in a sexual relationship with a man, AFDC could be denied to them because of the idea that the family did have a substitute father and did not need the income. The enraged reactions of conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats on the overturning of this policy is very revealing in the political opinion on AFDC at the time. However, it also troubled some leftists and Liberals who thought that AFDC was mainly tasked to restore the traditional family with a male breadwinner as the head of the family.¹¹⁵ This sexist concern transcended political boundaries as the ideal of a dominant male household was popular with the left as well as the right. The fact that a male headed household was better than a female headed household can be considered sexist according to Cooper.¹¹⁶

1967 was the year of the so-called welfare crisis. Because of a growth in the number of welfare recipients due to well organized activism and a large amount of advocacy on behalf of welfare recipients, the financial burden of the supplement became more noticeable. A significant number of politicians were negative about this development and wanted to change the program. Many new amendments were accepted to enforce women to work for their AFDC entitlement through the Work Incentive Program (WIN). Another important amendment was the “freeze” on welfare, meaning that recipients would get the same amount of money even if they had a new child. This harsh measure met well organized opposition of activist organizations like the League of Women Voters and the National Conference of Social Workers which resulted in the eventual repealing of the freeze by Congress in 1969.¹¹⁷ However, the message from the political spheres was clear: the idea that people on welfare should not have the freedom of having more children was broadly supported by politicians. This degrading view on the poor underlines the perspective that the government should also interfere in the behaviour of the poor, and that their behaviour was wrong. It underlines the idea culture of poverty described by Kelley.¹¹⁸

The reinvention of welfare and altering the AFDC was one of the main topics in the elections of 1968. Even the Liberals, who were seen as big supporters of welfare, were

¹¹⁴ Cooper, *Family Values*, 35.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 37.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* 41.

¹¹⁷ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 43.

¹¹⁸ Kelley, *Yo mama's disfunkcional*, 18-19.

concerned about the AFDC, but for different reasons. They were afraid that because so few two-parent families were eligible for public assistance, the father would decide to leave in order for the wife to actually receive public assistance.¹¹⁹ Marital stability, as argued by Cooper, as an ideal that the wife should be dependent on the husband for financial support, was an important theme in welfare debates.¹²⁰ At the end of the Sixties it was the opinion of the Democrats as well as the Conservatives that AFDC was not working. It became evident that the program was not meeting the needs of the poor. In 1968, only six states managed to grant an income that was above the poverty line and dozens of states did not even meet their own standards of income grants above the poverty line. The working poor whom fell below the poverty line could not receive any welfare and the inequities between states in granting cash-benefits was enormous: in New Jersey one could receive \$332 per month while in Mississippi people would only receive \$55. Change was desperately needed.¹²¹ Richard Nixon, a Conservative Republican stated that he wanted to change welfare in the US dramatically. He won the elections and shocked the public after a couple of months in office with the idea of a guaranteed minimum income granted on a federal level to all. In the next chapters we will take a closer look at these plans, while also taking in account this brief history of welfare with a focus on the concepts of undeserving poor, race and gender. The process of the forming of these plans within the administration will be the topic of the following chapter.

¹¹⁹ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 46.

¹²⁰ Cooper, *Family Values*, 41.

¹²¹ Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", 2.

3. The forming of the Family Assistance Plan

With the election of the Republican Richard Nixon as president in 1968, the plan of a guaranteed minimum income seemed further from reality than with democratic president Johnson. However, Nixon surprised friend and foe with the announcement of the Family Assistance Plan in 1969. It is however too naive to see his public speech as the starting point of FAP. The idea of a guaranteed minimum income was being discussed in the administration well before Nixon was elected. As said in the previous chapter, an idea of a guaranteed minimum income was also proposed to president Johnson, who refused the idea. This chapter will focus on the process of FAP within the administration before becoming a proposed plan in 1969. The Administration did not only play a crucial role in the forming of the plan, but, also behind the rationale and the ideology. In this chapter I will analyse the forming of this plan especially through the concepts of race, gender and the undeserving poor. How big was the role of these concepts in the forming of the plan? To what extent was the ideology behind the plan discussed? And did everyone agree with the plan? We will first take a short look at the ideological background of the Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI) through a Negative Income Tax (NIT), the chosen system of FAP. We will then take a closer look at the steps within the Administration to come up with this legislation. The sub-question of this chapter is: *How was the Family Assistance Plan formed? What was the role of the undeserving poor, race and gender?*

Friedman and Theobald

The intellectual and political history of FAP began with the critique that the government was not working efficiently in providing an income for the poor. This idea was shaped by economists and analysts as early as the Forties. In 1943, Milton Friedman worked at the Treasury Department and noticed that a lot of working poor were confronted with many different types of taxation which caused inequities and work disincentives. Here he worked on the idea of the Negative Income Tax, the basic economic system behind FAP, as an idea to make the tax system more equitable and less wasteful.¹²² The system of a Negative Income Tax is a tax system wherein people whose income falls below a certain line, do not have to pay taxes, but actually receive an income to supplement their budget. The NIT was not a new idea, but it became popular under Friedman.¹²³ In his book “Capitalism and Freedom” (1962),

¹²² Steensland, *The failed welfare Revolution*, 31.

¹²³ Bertram, *The workfare State*, 46.

Friedman argued the system of Negative Income Tax as the most effective way of eradicating poverty, because it was based on direct transfer payments and therefore it would simplify administration and improve work incentives, resulting in more efficiency.¹²⁴ With this idea, the differences that were systematically made in race and gender in the US would be blurred. This income was for all the poor, no exceptions were made. This however also received criticism on the other hand, because systems such as NIT and other cost-efficiency based approaches did not give special attention to the problems of race and gender. Things were only measured in monetary terms, not in cultural terms.¹²⁵

Another important theorist for FAP was the Economist Robert Theobald. Between 1961 and 1965, he wrote three books about the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Income. Theobald as an economist had a lot of political interest. Theobald argued that the highest social goal was to maximize individual freedom. It was immoral to live in a society where not everyone could make free choices, but according to him this was indeed the reality in the US for the poor. In his book “Free man and free markets” (1963) Theobald therefore proposed a guaranteed income of \$1,000 per adult and \$600 per child. This would give a family with two parents and two children an income of \$3,200, which was more than the poverty line of \$3,000 considered by the government. Theobald’s ideas were very popular in the Sixties.¹²⁶

It was Liberal “welfarists” who proposed various guaranteed income plans during the time of the Johnson administration. Their ideas were very much in line with those of Theobald. However, one of these proposals was based on the same system as proposed by Friedman, making it a combination of the two ideas: a Guaranteed Annual Income through a Negative Income Tax.¹²⁷ When the drama around the AFDC began to rise during the Sixties, government officials saw another window of opportunity to work this revolutionary idea into the political agenda of Nixon, who promised much needed change in the welfare system of the US during the elections.

The Office of Economic Opportunity

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) had one of the most important roles in making the legislation of FAP. The OEO was erected in 1964 under Johnson. The goal of the OEO was twofold: to create new and coordinate existing public services, and to provide more opportunities for the poor. They were dedicated to compare welfare cases through system

¹²⁴ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 36.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* 63.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* 35.

¹²⁷ Bertram, *The workfare state*, 47.

analysis. It is therefore not surprising that the OEO would be the first government institution to consider and propose a GAI proposal.¹²⁸ From 1966 and on, many people within the federal government would take the idea of a GAI more serious. With its growth in popularity, the support for social experimentation on the subject grew as well. In 1967 the OEO began with the largest social experiment ever done by the government: The Graduated Work Incentive Experiment in New Jersey, which I will discuss in detail in chapter 6. In 1968, some 1.200 economists send a letter to the Capitol which stated that they openly endorsed the idea of a guaranteed annual income, by stating it was an affordable alternative.¹²⁹

The Nixon Administration

A short time before Nixon was elected, a committee was appointed, chaired by Richard Nathan, to research alternatives on the welfare system. The budget for these alternatives needed be between the relatively small budget of \$1 and \$2 billion. As a result, an incremental based research was chosen wherein innovative changes were sought within the current welfare system. If solutions could not be found within the current system, some long-term alternatives like the NIT needed to be taken seriously. Nixon, at the start of his presidency, seemed to be open to more radical measures to change welfare. Nixon as a child, experienced his family being on welfare themselves. He still regarded it as an awful and shameful experience.¹³⁰ A Guaranteed Annual Income proposal would however, as it turned out, meet fell opposition from a lot of administrators, because the whole welfare philosophy within the US administration had rarely been so directly challenged to its idealistic roots.

The Non-partisan and Objective Research Organization (NORC), a research organization of the University of Chicago, in a paper, analysed support for welfare reform and public thinking about welfare. It seemed clear that people could sympathise with poverty as a concept and were willing to pay taxes to the government for institutions that helped to reduce poverty. However, when looking at a more individual level, people resented other citizens that lived in poverty and quickly discredited their integrity, whilst supporting policies that control welfare cheating and embarrass the individual. This was according to researchers due to the fact that people gave a great deal about self-reliance and the economic incentive.¹³¹ With the conclusions of this research, you can see the influence of the idea of the undeserving poor.¹³²

¹²⁸ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 45-47.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* 70.

¹³⁰ Moynihan, Daniel P., *The politics of a guaranteed income: the Nixon administration and the family assistance plan* (New York: Vintage Books 1973), 86.

¹³¹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 87.

¹³² Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 10.

When looking at poverty in general, people are mostly sympathetic, but when taking a closer look at the people who are poor, the idea that poor people did something wrong, as in making the wrong choices and having the wrong behaviour, is very dominant. This is especially dominant in the American society, as described by Steensland.¹³³

There were several people within this administration who saw the Nathan report as very useful. This occurred during the time that the Nixon administration was already formed. One of them was Daniel Moynihan, who would play a leading role in the eventual proposal of the FAP. Moynihan was appointed assistant to the president on urban affairs, he had been in the administration since 1963 when he was appointed Assistant Secretary in the Department of Labor.¹³⁴ Moynihan became more publicly notorious when his controversial document “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action”, also known as the Moynihan Report, had unintentionally reached the public. Herein he explained that the biggest cause for the rise in, mostly single black mother recipients, of AFDC was due to a harsh ghetto culture. Reactions on this report were very mixed. This was underlined as Martin Luther King was sympathetic to the document whilst Malcolm X was very critical about it, calling its content racist. Moynihan stated that in solving the welfare struggles, a NIT would be “a spanking good idea”.¹³⁵ He considered the impact of race, family size and family structure as very important factors that lead to the imbalance in the budgets that people on AFDC got.¹³⁶ Other critics of the report stated it indeed had a racist undertone, because it focussed on blaming the victim. It also underlined the idea of the culture of poverty by blaming the behaviour of the poor, as argued by Kelley.¹³⁷ By some, it was not only considered as racist but as sexist as well. O’Connor describes the Moynihan report as sexist because it idealises the man as the natural head of the house.¹³⁸ The negative stance on divorces plays a role in the Moynihan report as well, again giving priority to the man as the one who needs to provide the income, which is considered sexist.¹³⁹ Despite the air of controversy surrounding him, Moynihan, with approval from Nixon, established the Urban Affairs Council (UAC). This council was a mechanism in which cabinet members could participate in the discussing of proposals that could also affect other departments, but were strictly themed to urban affairs. In this UAC he appointed a

¹³³ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 86.

¹³⁴ Raines, “The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged”, 3.

¹³⁵ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 50.

¹³⁶ *Ibid* 40.

¹³⁷ Schram, Sanford, Joe Soss and Richard C. Fording ed., *Race and the politics of welfare reform*: edited by Sanford F. Schram, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2003), 198.

¹³⁸ O’Connor, *Poverty knowledge*, 176.

¹³⁹ Cooper, *Family Values*, 41.

subcommittee to research the idea of welfare reforms.¹⁴⁰ They were charged with assisting the president in the development of a national urban policy.¹⁴¹ There were some people within the administration who did not agree with the approaches of Moynihan. The biggest opponent to Moynihan's plans was Arthur Burns. The counsellor of domestic affairs with cabinet rank, did not have the same instruments as Moynihan, but spoke and wrote directly to the president about his concerns. His biggest concern at the beginning was the curbing of the inflation, that could only be attained through thorough budget cuts.¹⁴²

The First Struggles within the Administration

At the end of January 1969, Moynihan put together a memo in which he analysed the existing problems around the welfare system, concluding with some alternatives. In this memo he stated that the wages for low-skilled male heads of houses was too little to maintain a respectable standard of living. The second cause of the problems was that it just might be welfare itself that lead to family breakups. With this he referred to a study that had shown a lot of families breaking up just after they became dependent of welfare. In strong words, he called the current system corrupt and destructive. With this destruction, Moynihan referred to the destruction of families and American values because of a male head of house disappearing. This focus on the important role of fathers and a focus on males who should be working in general can be considered sexist as well according to Cooper.¹⁴³ The administration at the beginning of Nixon's period however, was convinced that they had to do more with the subject of family. "It is an argument not without support in social science, but, more important, it is an almost automatic popular assumption", Moynihan stated.¹⁴⁴ Moynihan therefore suggested that the president had to take action against the family breakups. Burns noticed this memo and wrote some counter-memo's, underlining the fact that the welfare system was indeed flawed, but less rigorous measures needed to be taken before rash decisions were made, herewith confirming the conclusions of the Nathan report. The president however, seemed to mainly endorse Moynihan's memo when he urged the UAC a couple of days later to develop a whole new welfare program.

During this time, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) started an investigation for welfare reform on their own. Worth Bateman, a policy staff member of

¹⁴⁰ Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", 4.

¹⁴¹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 73.

¹⁴² Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", 4.

¹⁴³ Cooper, *Family Values*, 41.

¹⁴⁴ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 78.

HEW, formed a group with members from the UAC and economists from the OEO that were forming a plan based on the NIT. The plan became a guaranteed income of \$1.500 for a family of four with a 50 percent tax rate on earnings costing \$1,6 billion.¹⁴⁵ In response to concerns from labour secretary George Schulz, a work training program was added which costed \$600 million. They also, in response to concerns of the UAC subcommittee, incorporated the food stamps program which costed another \$1 billion.

During the first months, critics of the guaranteed income did not focus on ideological aspects, but more on pragmatic aspects like finances and economic productivity. What did happen was a switch in the target group. This group shifted from black unemployed towards white employed poor. The administration thought this would be a tactical development in gaining broad support for welfare ideas.¹⁴⁶ The idea of supporting the working poor was one of the most controversial and revolutionary aspects of the Family Security System (FSS), which was later called FAP. For the first time, welfare would not only be for the unemployed poor, but also for the working poor. This touched an interesting topic on the responsibility of the government. There was some consensus about helping the poor and unemployed, as they would not have an income otherwise. However, also providing for people who worked and were still poor was completely new.¹⁴⁷ Some people within the administration saw it as the responsibility of businesses to provide people with enough income to live by. However, most of the people from within the administration did not want to interfere with businesses on this subject and did not have a problem with a government also feeling responsible for the working poor. The idea of reaching out to the working poor was not only ideologically interesting, it did also have some racial overtones as well. Because of the focus on white working poor, the government wanted to get rid of the stigma that welfare was an equivalent for giving money to the black unemployed. This stigma was very dominant as discussed in the previous chapter. Spending more money on welfare could cause a “white backlash” not only in the House or the Senate, but also from the public, if white people would not become an explicit part of this welfare spending.¹⁴⁸ This focus on a possible white backlash meant that the plan also had to be considered with another societal dilemma: race. The administration knew that the endorsement of the public for AFDC was low also due to the fact that many white Americans thought it was unfair that black Americans received a large proportion of the

¹⁴⁵ Raines, “The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged”, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 83.

¹⁴⁷ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 52.

¹⁴⁸ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 104-106.

welfare budget. This sentiment intensified the feeling within the administration that in order to counter this sentiment from the public, work requirements needed to be included in the plan.¹⁴⁹ Here the idea of black people being a special group of undeserving poor can be clearly seen. Many white people in society blamed black people for making use of welfare, instead of being sympathetic towards the poor. Black people were, as described by Kelley, a main target of prejudice.¹⁵⁰

The president decided that he wanted to discuss the welfare plans that were made in the weekend of April 5th, 1969. Moynihan, Burns and secretary Finch (Health, Education and Welfare) were invited to the president's residence in Florida to discuss the programmes. After this weekend it became apparent that Nixon was most approving of Moynihan's plans which contained a GAI proposal through a Negative Income Tax.¹⁵¹ It was decided that benefits to Old-Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind and Aid to the Permanently and Totally disabled would be continued, because of the fact that they not only were voters, but were also broadly considered as the deserving poor.¹⁵²

Burns, however, would not give up even after Nixon made clear what his preference was. On April 21th, after meetings with economists and welfare experts to discuss changes in welfare, Burns send a memo to Nixon with his final plan. Herein he stated that it was not that surprising that welfare rolls kept on rising. One of the reasons he mentioned was a less negative stigma for people being on welfare. The rest of the memo consisted of critique on the plan of Moynihan's FSS. The new number of people on welfare (around 6,7 million more) would be disastrous, according to Burns, as well as the costs (\$2,5 billion for the plan of Burns compared to \$6 billion for Moynihan's). By stating this, together with his theory that this was also because there was a less negative stigma on welfare, Burns implicated that he wanted to see more harsh and restrictive measures against the poor, as to make welfare more stigmatizing again. The idea of the poor being undeserving was also very much alive within ranks of the administration.

A couple of days after Burns' memo, a big review meeting was held at the White House for all responsible parties. Many people were still sceptical of the current plans and alternatives were proposed on both Moynihan's and Burns' plan. The biggest impact in the last weeks before the on-air announcement of the plan by Nixon was through George Schulz.

¹⁴⁹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 105,119.

¹⁵⁰ Kelley, *Yo mama's disfunkcional*, 18-19.

¹⁵¹ Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", 12.

¹⁵² Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 198.

Nixon asked Schulz personally to take a final look at the plans. Schulz analysed the plans and finally suggested that Moynihan's plan would work best, but only if more work incentives would be put into the plan. A taxation that would disregard the first \$20 of the income taxation, so that the step from being unemployed towards work would be strengthened was included. This alteration would cost \$1 billion extra and would not be in any case more flexible towards people on welfare. According to Schulz it was rather an investment. Nixon, convinced of Schulz his arguments and while also implementing Burns' ideas of more work requirements, now made the final preparations for his plan.¹⁵³ Burns prepared one final charge on the plan as he, together with some economists, wrote a final memo to Nixon saying the FSS plan would be an economical disaster.¹⁵⁴ Apart from this, Burns wrote that the FSS plans were working towards a welfare system in which the people on welfare found it increasingly comfortable to be dependent on the state financially. Work was essential because it gave people human dignity, unlike being on welfare. Burns was against the idea that people had a "right" to an income.¹⁵⁵ However, as the date for Nixon's speech was nearly there, it appeared that Moynihan had won the battle.

In the next spring and summer months, the debate became heated as increasing numbers of staff members picked a side. It was either team Burns or team Moynihan. These internal conflicts almost sank the whole plan.¹⁵⁶ The proposal had become more workfare based, but the most important aspect, the guaranteed minimum income for families, remained. Although the FSS plan did not propose to worsen the situation of current AFDC recipients, it did focus for an enormous part (around 90 percent) on the working poor. The combining of the working poor and unemployed poor in the same program making an end to a historically big distinction in the US welfare system, was revolutionary,¹⁵⁷ as was the idea of a guaranteed income, giving people who received a low income a financial floor. "It was the most startling proposal to help poor persons ever made by a modern democratic government," Moynihan stated.¹⁵⁸

Three days before the speech, Nixon went over the plan one more time and convinced himself of two main reasons why the FAP was a good idea. First, the poor and especially the black poor, were being "destroyed" by the current AFDC. Second, the South had to be more

¹⁵³ Raines, "The Family Assistance Plan: Abridged", 17.

¹⁵⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁵⁵ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 93-94.

¹⁵⁶ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 49-50.

¹⁵⁷ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 116.

¹⁵⁸ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 216.

included in the welfare program. The poverty rates were too high and with this plan, it would be a big improvement for people in the South. Lastly, the government had to prove that the plan could be effective. It was now clear that the proposal of FAP would be the subject of his speech.¹⁵⁹ When looking at the process within the Administration in forming the FAP, it can be seen that the concepts already played a big role in framing the plan to the public by including the working poor explicitly and underlining the importance of the work incentive. The next chapter will look at how the public and organizations respond to the proposal of FAP which began in Nixon's televised speech. This will also be the starting point of the next chapter.

¹⁵⁹ Moynihan, the politics of a guaranteed income, 215.

4. The Family Assistance plan proposed: The reactions

Nixon announced the Family Assistance Plan on August 8th, 1969 in a televised broadcast.¹⁶⁰ With this speech, the plans for the FAP became publicly official. In this chapter I want to discuss public opinion, especially in the first months after this announcement, from both citizens as well as organizations, politicians and other actors. Looking into the public opinion on the FAP is essential for this research, because the plan and the process surrounding the FAP, as well as politics in general, depended strongly on public opinion, since the public evidently chooses their political representation. Organizations are of influence as well, because of the groups and the expertise they represent. In line with this idea, it became evident in the previous chapter that the administration as well as the president were very much taking into account how this plan could be received as positively as possible. For example, they argued if the training programs needed to be obligatory. They feared resentment by low-wage employers, because it would be too much of an intervention on the market.¹⁶¹ Because of the influence the public and organizations had on the plan, it is important to discuss which aspects of the plan received the most support or critique. This support and critique will inevitably have set the tone for the first debates in the political arena, which will be discussed in the next chapter. We will however begin this chapter with analysing Nixon's speech. This speech is the starting point of discussions involving FAP and is therefore an ideal starting point for public reactions on FAP. The sub-question of this chapter is: *What was the role of institutions outside the government on the Family Assistance Plan in the first weeks and months after the proposal?*

Nixon's Speech

In his televised broadcast on August 1969, Nixon explained the benefits of FAP, the costs, and the reason why these benefits weighed heavier than the costs in his opinion. Nixon argued that higher costs were an investment, just like "start-up costs" were for businesses to which every businessman could relate.¹⁶² However, it is interesting to see that Nixon not only provided arguments in favour of FAP, but also many arguments that were constructed solely against AFDC. Nixon talked elaborately about the failure of AFDC and how it needed to be

¹⁶⁰ '#FamiliesSucceed: President Nixon's Family Assistance Plan » Richard Nixon Foundation', Richard Nixon Foundation (2014) <<https://www.nixonfoundation.org/2014/06/family-assistance-plan-families-can-succeed/>> [Accessed 3 November 2019].

¹⁶¹ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 52.

¹⁶² *Idem*.

drastically altered. AFDC was not effective, because the welfare rolls were rising and it led to family breakups as well. Whereas having a father in the home was crucial for the wellbeing of children. He also argued that FAP was in fact not a guaranteed income, because a Guaranteed Annual Income did not give people an incentive to work, whilst this was the most important objective of FAP.¹⁶³ According to Nixon, Americans had to work their way out of poverty. America did not need more welfare, but more workfare.¹⁶⁴ Work incentives, according to Nixon, were justified because they fitted well within the American character. If the government would give handouts, this American character would cease to exist.¹⁶⁵

With the focus on work instead of the right to a minimum income, the speech touched many controversial points. The first being the division between the deserving and undeserving poor. By stating in his speech that Americans had to work their way out of poverty, he had shown to be critical on people that received welfare. Not only was this an attack on the behaviour of the poor, it also showed that people were only deserving if they were willing to work for welfare. By being critical on the behaviour of the poor, the ideas of the culture of poverty were dominant in Nixon's speech. The huge importance of having a father in the family who would teach children discipline according to Nixon. This positive viewpoint on the male of the house, which would have negative effects if only the mother was there, can be seen as typically sexist.¹⁶⁶ It became clear that the tactic of Nixon and his administration was built for a significant part on the failure of the AFDC rather than on positive arguments for FAP.¹⁶⁷ That the plan was seen as a die-hard alternative to AFDC might also have contributed to the fact that, although there were a lot of reactions in the first couple of weeks after the speech, it actually made quite a soft landing in the public debate.¹⁶⁸ By tactically framing FAP as an alternative to something everyone considered as highly ineffective, Nixon gave himself a big advantage.¹⁶⁹

First reactions after the speech

In the first couple of weeks after Nixon's speech the media and organizations responded immensely positive. A survey of the HEW concluded that 95 percent of the editorials were in favour of FAP. The Economist stated that Nixon's speech was ranked "as important as

¹⁶³ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 52.

¹⁶⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁶⁵ *Idem*.

¹⁶⁶ Cooper, *Family Values*, 41.

¹⁶⁷ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 53.

¹⁶⁸ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 226.

¹⁶⁹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 78.

president Roosevelt's welfare proposals in the 1930's which altered the welfare state drastically". Business week wrote that the plans were promising and had a new approach on a problem that could have never been solved under AFDC. Time Magazine said that although Nixon denied it in his speech, the plan was indeed a guaranteed income for millions of relief recipients. A lot of editorials hailed the revolutionary aspects of the plan, and the promising and bold approach on a very controversial subject.¹⁷⁰

Interestingly enough, there was not much objection on the plan from the businesses. The only organization on the business side of the spectrum that articulated a lot of critique was the National Chamber of Commerce. The National Chamber was annoyed by the high costs of the plan. However, their critique mostly focused on the obligatory aspect of the work requirement. They viewed it as too soft that a family would only be shorted by \$300 when they rejected work or training.¹⁷¹ In a survey of the National Federation of Independent Business Inc. however, it seemed that 60 percent of the 25.304 firms were in favour of the plan, whilst only 29 percent was against.¹⁷² Two big business organizations, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the Committee for Economic Development of the Conference Board (CED) openly endorsed this plan. Surprisingly, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), which was considered a highly conservative organization, did not openly oppose the plan. While this organization historically had a very strong lobby group and a lot of companies behind their organization, it was a very welcome development for Nixon.¹⁷³

The plan was also openly endorsed by the League of Women Voters who said it was equitable as well as efficient, although they did have some reservations about the budget that people would receive, which was in their eyes not sufficient.¹⁷⁴ the sentiment of the public towards Nixon's speech was no different. The government had not received that much reactions in the form of letters towards a plan in a very long time until the announcement of FAP, according to the permanent staff. The reactions in the letters were for 80 percent positive towards the plan, only 9 percent of the letters could be qualified as negative reactions towards it.¹⁷⁵ However, when looking at the substance of the letters it can be seen that the positive reactions were more due to the fact that Nixon wanted to get rid of AFDC, then that

¹⁷⁰ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 290.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 291.

¹⁷² *Ibid.* 294.

¹⁷³ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 136.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 137.

¹⁷⁵ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 55.

the letters considered the merits and arguments for FAP as positive. It seemed that the public was mostly glad about the fact that the government would finally get rid of AFDC, and that the focus on work incentives was essential for broad support. A Gallup poll taken in 1969 about a guaranteed income proposal confirms these sentiments. This poll showed that public support for a guaranteed income proposal was not self-evident. 62 percent of the respondents were negative about the idea of a guaranteed income. According to the research team this was due to the negative connotations people had with welfare as a whole.¹⁷⁶ In the Harris Survey, it seemed that support was mostly focussed on the inclusion of the working poor and the aspect of the work incentives.¹⁷⁷ This was underlined by the people who endorsed this plan. Most of the people who send a letter to the Capitol could be categorized as white middle class Americans.¹⁷⁸

Surprisingly enough, but in line with the companies as well as the public and the media, political opposition was almost unnoticeable in the first months after the speech. The build-up of this opposition was slow and muted.¹⁷⁹

Protest grows

After a couple of months however, more criticism towards the FAP from organizations, businesses and politicians would reach the Capital. Strong voices within the business community began taking a negative stance towards the FAP. Karl Schlotterbeck from the US Chamber of Commerce lead the charge. According to Schlotterbeck it would be the beginning of a national guaranteed income arrangement, which was wrong in his eyes. It could, however, be considered as odd that the Chamber of Commerce held this opinion. In a survey among the businesses they represented, it seemed that 84 percent of the companies were actually in favour of the FAP.¹⁸⁰

Many state and local governments joined the critique of the Conservatives and the Chamber of Commerce, not only because the FAP would cost more, but also gave people an incentive to abstain from working. Columnist James Kilpatrick stated that the newly assisted working poor “would be the permanent poor feeding like parasites on the body politic unto

¹⁷⁶ Robert Asen, ‘Nixon’s Welfare Reform: Enacting Historical Contradictions of Poverty Discourses’, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 4 (2001) 261–279 <doi:10.1353/rap.2001.0019>, 267.

¹⁷⁷ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 268.

¹⁷⁸ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 124.

¹⁷⁹ Lampman, Robert J. “Nixon’s Family Assistance Plan”. *Institute for Research on Poverty*, (1969), University of Wisconsin, Madison, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 130.

the end of time".¹⁸¹ This was a clear charge on the behaviour of the poor and an underlining of the thinking on the poor through the eyes of the culture of poverty.¹⁸² As time passed, more and more editorials, in most cases in less extreme words than those of Kilpatrick, became critical on the workability of the plan.¹⁸³

Moynihan noticed that a lot of congressmen had trouble with the technical aspects of the plan. A lot of congressmen turned to experts in the field in order to form their opinions.¹⁸⁴ Not only Conservatives, for whom in general this plan was more controversial, but Liberals as well grew critical of the FAP proposal. The Liberal's main argument was that the welfare recipients in the North gained virtually nothing out of the new plan, except a work requirement. The fact that people in the South were better off whilst in the North in some cases worse, was unjustifiable for them. Another negative factor of the plan was that it diminished the incentive of employers to raise the wages of employees. Because in the new plans, the government took responsibility for giving an extra income for the working poor, the businesses could avoid the responsibility to pay the employee enough to live by, according to Labor and the AFL-CIO president George Meany. He stated that raising the minimum income would be a better and less costly solution.¹⁸⁵ However, the main critique of the Liberal coalition was not focussed on the working poor, but the ill treatment of the welfare poor. They found the new plans degrading towards the poor because of the work requirements and the total amount of welfare they would receive. Therefore, they defended the rights of the workless poor as a deserving group of poor.

The National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) was by far the most vocal in their objection to the FAP. Although in earlier years the NWRO endorsed ideas about a guaranteed annual income publicly, this was not the case for the FAP which in their eyes had many flaws.¹⁸⁶ Not only were they critical on the work requirements, but the NWRO also wanted a minimum income of \$5.500 for a family of four instead of \$1.600 . A demand that in the eyes of Moynihan would destroy all negotiations, as it was a far too extreme demand to reach a consensus on with the majority of the House and the Senate.¹⁸⁷ For the NWRO however, this was a principal point because a family of four in New York received roughly that amount under the old welfare scheme. It also seemed that the NWRO was, apart from the substance of

¹⁸¹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 57.

¹⁸² Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 10.

¹⁸³ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 123.

¹⁸⁴ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 282.

¹⁸⁵ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 58.

¹⁸⁶ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 121.

¹⁸⁷ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 306.

the plan, very suspicious towards Nixon's rhetoric and the fact that he of all people proposed it. The bond between Nixon and the NWRO, together with some other organizations that fought for more black people's rights, was at an all-time low after a failed meeting that resulted in a frustrated Nixon walking away from the meeting.¹⁸⁸ A lot of social welfare professionals agreed with the arguments of the NWRO. In the months after the speech, concerns from black social service organisations, such as the Urban League, grew. Especially the aspect of expanding the effort to get people on welfare to the job market did not fare well. A columnist for the Greater Milwaukee Star voiced the concerns of many by writing: "What guarantee does the black recipient have that he will not be forced to take all of the dirty and sloppy jobs available in the sweatshops of industry?"¹⁸⁹ This was an important concern, which was also mentioned by Kelley and Brown. It was according to the Urban League and others naïve to think that work opportunities were equal for black and white people, most black people also did not have the security of a safe work environment because they were excluded from unions and other working organizations.¹⁹⁰ The coalition for Health and Welfare Legislation, a group of thirty-five agencies in New York was also against FAP: "The bill tends to look upon the recipient of family assistance as a person to be corrected by punitive measures rather than one who should be assisted by a whole series of incentives", this again underlined the fact that there were organizations that were concerned about the way that the government looked at the workless poor, namely as undeserving.¹⁹¹

Another black civil rights movement, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, was less negative of the plan compared to the NWRO. They never actively opposed the plan. However, bishop Steven G. Spottswood, the chairman of the National Board of Directors stated that Nixon needed to be labelled an anti-negro president with his policy overall. Spottswood said that it was the first time since 1920 that the administration had made calculated policy to work against the needs and aspirations of black people.¹⁹² Although the NAACP did not actively oppose the FAP, it was clear that they were not fond of it either. The subject of the FAP could be best described, according to Moynihan, as one that did not have top priority for the NAACP.¹⁹³ However, the rhetoric of Spottswood

¹⁸⁸ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 129.

¹⁸⁹ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 61.

¹⁹⁰ Brown, *Race, money, and the American welfare state*, 165.

¹⁹¹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 324.

¹⁹² The Crisis, 'In the Nation's press' *The Crisis magazine* volume 77 no. 7 (1970), <<https://books.google.co.il/books?id=PSau77z3kQcC&pg=PA276#v=onepage&q&f=false>>. [Accessed February 18 2019].

¹⁹³ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 339.

and his NAACP was clear: Nixon's policies worked against black people, FAP was not excluded.

Nixon and his staff also noticed that the plan was not received well in the South. Although the recipients in this area would be the group that would benefit the most from this plan financially, this was not important for the businesses and Southern politicians. Nixon, noticing the negative stance of groups like the NWRO, started a pro-FAP campaign by sending experts from the White House to talk to businesses in the South. Moynihan and other staff members were sent to tv-shows to talk about the plans.¹⁹⁴ In a memo that Moynihan sent to Nixon's aid Ken Cole, Moynihan wrote the president was right that groups like Wiley's (from the NWRO) needed a response. However, he also stated that groups like the NWRO were not the most important problem, but rather the left-Liberals who in his eyes were furious, because the president proposed something that they should have proposed.¹⁹⁵

The struggle over the plan took shape at the end of 1969 and the beginning of 1970. Between 1970 and 1972, versions of the Family Assistance Plan were discussed in the political arena. These discussions were of course with all the reactions and stances of the public, organizations and others in mind. There was a big role in the process for a lot of the organizations mentioned in this chapter. In the following chapter, the course of FAP through this political arena will be analysed.

¹⁹⁴ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 124.

¹⁹⁵ Moynihan, Daniel P. "Memorandum for Ken Cole", 17 September 1969.

5. The Family Assistance Plan in the political arena

A couple of months after the televised announcement, the proposal was discussed in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Conditions looked favourable. Although Nixon himself was a Republican President, the House of Representatives and the Senate both had a majority of Democrats.¹⁹⁶ This was considered favourable because the plan was, considering its finances, an expansion on welfare, something the Democrats historically were in favour of. However, it would also first be analysed by the appropriate committee of the House: The Ways and Means Committee. After approval in the Ways and Means Committee and the House it needed to go towards the appropriate committee of the Senate: The Finance Committee, before ultimately a vote on the Senate floor.

As said in chapter 3, FAP was considered a big change in the welfare system and also a sharp attack on the American welfare ideal. For this reason, discussions about FAP were very sharp. In this chapter, the steps that FAP has taken in the political arena will be analysed. From the Ways and Means Committee up until the Senate Floor. This process did not happen once but two times. FAP was voted down in 1971 in the Senate, but got another chance with a revised version in 1972. The focus for the analysis is on the concepts of race, gender and the undeserving poor. How big was the role of these concepts in the discussions about FAP? It can be challenging to observe this to some extent, only the formal discussions within the institutions will be followed. Therefore, it can also be the case that some things are said implicit. For this, it is important to use the theory on these concepts as a guiding principle. The sub-question of this chapter is: *What was the influence of the concepts: the undeserving poor, gender and race, in the discussions and the outcome of the Family Assistance Plan in Congress?*

The first step: The House Ways and Means Committee.

In October 1969, FAP was sent to the House Ways and Means Committee in a package that contained several other important changes in Social Security, like expansions in welfare for the aged, blind and handicapped.¹⁹⁷ The Ways and Means Committee was the first, but not the easiest hurdle for the administration to manoeuvre through. This was mostly due to the fact that the Chairman Wilbur Mills was seen as a Conservative Representative, especially on fiscal matters. The chairman in these committees regularly had the most influence on the plan

¹⁹⁶ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 2.

¹⁹⁷ University of Chicago Press, *Chronological order of the FAP in political institutions*.

and this was certainly the case with Mills. Mills was seen as a very influential man with strong leadership capabilities.¹⁹⁸ The first impression of the committee was consequently not that favourable of the plan. The Committee held their hearings in October and it received some immediate concerns from people within the Committee from Chairman Mills and Representative Al Ullman.¹⁹⁹ However, this negative stance changed rapidly as the hearings went through. With the help of convincing statements on the work incentives and less marital breakups from administrators Finch and Schulz.²⁰⁰ Immediately it seemed that the focus on less marital breakups worked very positively. As argued by Cooper, this incentive can be typified as sexist whilst marital stability at the time was based on a subordinate role of women.²⁰¹

The Committee went into deliberations for months after the hearings. In February the Committee voted 21-3 in favour of the plan, with almost no changes compared to the original draft and the bill was sent to the House of Representatives in April 1970.²⁰² The three people against were Southern Democrats, from Texas, Georgia and Oregon. The bill would in their eyes constitutionalize poverty through direct payments in the form of a guaranteed income. However, they did want to expand funds to the aged, blind and disabled.²⁰³ This clear double standard would be the first in many that this categorization was made by politicians and valued differently. There was no discussion about the expansion of welfare for the aged, blind and disabled whilst expansions for the able-bodied poor were a target of big debate. This shows a clear division in deserving and undeserving poor as mentioned by Katz.²⁰⁴

The House of Representatives

On April 16, 1970, the House of Representatives held a final debate on the proposal of the FAP. Texas Representative Ed Foreman immediately set the tone by saying that too many people had been on welfare already and that the FAP had too little incentives for individual excellence. It would according to Foreman, therefore destroy the moral fibre of the United States.²⁰⁵ His arguments were exemplary for critique that many Representatives shared.

¹⁹⁸ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 400

¹⁹⁹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 402-403.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 403-407

²⁰¹ Cooper, *Family Values*, 41.

²⁰² Neuberger *The Emergence and defeat of the FAP.*

²⁰³ Department of Health and Human Services (1972), "Amendments to the Social Security Act 1969-1972 Vol. 8" <<https://www.ssa.gov/history/pdf/Downey%20PDFs/Amendments%20to%20the%20Social%20Security%20Act%201969-1972%20Vol.%208.pdf>>, 922.

²⁰⁴ Katz, *The undeserving poor*, 13.

²⁰⁵ 116 Cong. Rec. (Bound) – House of Representatives April 16, 1970, Pub. L. No. X 1.1.; § 116, (1970). <<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-CRECB-1970-pt9/GPO-CRECB-1970-pt9-4>>, 12028.

Representatives Philip Crane from Illinois, stated that by giving money to the working poor, it would “deprive them of their self-respect” and would “hurt them in their pride”.²⁰⁶ This statement shows that some Representatives clearly had objections with the fact that the working poor would fall into the same category as the non-working poor under the FAP. This was not desirable because according to these Representatives, only the non-working poor needed to feel ashamed of their situation. FAP would blur these lines, and was therefore attacked on its moral premise, which was not according to the American work ethic as described by Steensland.²⁰⁷ If a personification of the Culture of Poverty could be found it would be in the form of John Williams from Delaware. Williams consistently used sharp rhetoric in his view on the non-working poor. He stated for instance that this plan “would further reward the indolent”.²⁰⁸ The FAP was according to Williams a “gigantic giveaway to the lazy”.²⁰⁹ Not everyone agreed with this critique on the working poor. Representative Leggett stated: “Mr Chairman, I have never subscribed to the theory that the poor are poor because they are too lazy to work. Very few people enjoy thinking of themselves as parasites, and fewer still are happy with the miserable standard of living afforded by welfare payments”.²¹⁰ These statements however, opened up the debate for behavioural differences between deserving and undeserving poor, in the form of the Culture of Poverty, which, according to Kelley, blamed the able-bodied poor for their own situation due to negative behaviour and a lack of character.²¹¹

Discussions about the role of women in the job market can also be seen during these debates. One of the few women in Parliament, Representative Martha Griffiths of Michigan, argued that women should not stay at home getting welfare, but should work just like men.²¹² In the passed Family Assistance Plan legislation it was written that women who were married to a man did not have to work. They were not forced to a work requirement like men. Single women who had children under the age of six also did not have to work. Griffiths did not like this distinction. She also stated during the hearings that it would be a bad idea to let these women stay at home, especially the single women, because it would destroy their work incentives and would keep them too much at home. Griffiths was also against the fact that FAP was only meant for families with children. Childless couples were not eligible for

²⁰⁶ 116 Cong. Rec. (Bound) – House of Representatives April 16, 1970, 12048, 12075.

²⁰⁷ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 86.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 36.

²⁰⁹ *Idem.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.* 90.

²¹¹ Kelley, *Yo mama’s disfunkcional*, 18-19.

²¹² Congressional Record, House of Representatives 16 April 1970, 12028.

welfare under this plan.²¹³ Griffiths was not alone in this critique on the plan as other Representatives underlined this point. Some Representatives however, had completely different viewpoints than Griffiths on this topic. Representative William Ryan of New York stated it was wrong that mothers without a husband had to work under the plan.²¹⁴ He was convinced that especially this group had to be exempted because they were alone and had to take care of the children, which was in fact a double job. It was indeed so that under this bill, single women with children over six were forced to follow the work requirements while women with a husband did not have to. New York Representative Ogden Reid stated: “I am in no sense saying a woman should remain in the home, but she needs to have a choice”.²¹⁵

These discussions underlined the different role of women compared to men considering employment. Griffiths plead for equal treatment in this sector. Ryan and Reid did not disagree with this point. However, they wanted to give attention to the aspect that women were already treated unequal because most of the times, they had the big responsibility of taking care of a child, they were living in a society where men sometimes avoided this responsibility. Because women could not do this, it would be fair for them to have the freedom to work or not. This discussion underlines the big implications on gender that welfare and work incentives had.

With these debates, the subject of families and marital stability was touched. It was discussed in detail and this clearly showed it was an important topic.²¹⁶ There were concerns that the AFDC had destroyed the marital stability of families, because it was argued that for a lot of families under AFDC, it would be profitable for the family if the father would leave the house and get welfare in another place. Under FAP, single fathers and mothers without children in the house would not receive any payment.²¹⁷ Representative Edward Hutchinson from Michigan went as far as saying that it was wrong to give a government payed income to fatherless homes.²¹⁸ This touches the theory wherein single mothers did not fit in the ideal of the American family and where therefore morally wrong to “award” these families with an income. This can be typified as sexist, as earlier described by Nadasen.²¹⁹ Notable in the debates about marital stability as well was the connection between work and the implication

²¹³ Congressional Record, House of Representatives 16 April 1970, 12028.

²¹⁴ Ibid. 12049.

²¹⁵ Ibid. 12076.

²¹⁶ Congressional Record, House of Representatives 16 April 1970, 12028.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 12031.

²¹⁸ Ibid. 12037.

²¹⁹ Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 46.

that when work was mentioned by some politicians, they explicitly referring to men.²²⁰²²¹ The idea that only men had to have a role in the job market can be typified as sexist, as described by Nadasen.²²²

A subject that was mentioned fairly implicit was race. This is odd considering the amount of media attention poverty of black families, and especially the number of black AFDC recipients, had generated in these years. That the subject did have racial overtones was ironically made clear by Ohio Representative Wayne Hays who, when giving an example of a family with eleven children who, according to him, even had more of an incentive to make children under FAP, explicitly said this example was not based on a black family.²²³ Some Representatives mentioned racism more explicit, but did this mostly as an attack on AFDC. Representative Reid touched this subject by saying that great inequities between the states were finally being repelled under FAP.²²⁴ By mentioning this, he did not directly discuss this subject. However, it was well known that especially in the Southern states, the poor, and especially the black poor received very little welfare.²²⁵ Representative Robert Leggett from California was clear in his statement as well. He said that when he had heard about the house raids on black women of local governments, he was “shocked”. He also talked about discrimination on the job market by mentioning black men were not easily hired for jobs.²²⁶ New York Representative Shirley Chisholm, who was the first ever federal elected black woman, also referred to the job market, but in this instance focussed on black unemployed single mothers. According to Chisholm, a lot of black mothers did not work because of inadequate day-care facilities. She also stated that the wage for these black women was far too low, which meant they would remain in poverty because of this discriminatory low wage.²²⁷ The inequalities for black people on the job market compared to white people are underlined by the theory of Brown.²²⁸

The need for a change in the welfare system was underlined by the final vote on the plan: 243 voted in favour of the plan, 155 against. The plan had passed the House. President Nixon was very pleased with this according to Moynihan. The moral within the

²²⁰ Congressional Record, House of Representatives 16 April 1970, 12045.

²²¹ Ibid. 12028.

²²² Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 46.

²²³ Congressional Record, House of Representatives 16 April 1970, 12062.

²²⁴ Ibid. 12080.

²²⁵ Ibid. 12085.

²²⁶ Ibid. 12090.

²²⁷ Ibid. 12091.

²²⁸ Brown, Race, money, and the American welfare state, 165.

administration was very high after the approval in the House. This was understandable because the Senate was seen as more progressive than the House.²²⁹

Finance Committee Hearings

After the somewhat surprisingly easy passage in the House of Representatives, the legislation on the FAP was passed to the Senate Finance Committee on the 23rd of April 1970. While the Senate was considered progressive, the Finance Committee was not.²³⁰ Historically the Finance Committee had been a collection of Conservative politicians, this 91st Committee was no exception. The chairman of the Finance Committee was Senator Russel Long from Louisiana who was considered a Conservative and would as it turned out, play a key role in the blocking of FAP. Even if all the Liberals in the Committee would vote for the plan, they needed to win over at least three Conservatives as well.²³¹ Furthermore, from the total of seventeen Senators, six of them were Southern Democrats, these people were, with some experience by now, considered as the most critical towards the plan.²³² Historically the Finance Committee was dominated for a generation by Southern Democrats.²³³ All the Republicans were considered Conservatives as well.²³⁴ None of the seventeen Senators had said beforehand that they were positive towards the plan.²³⁵ Moynihan stated that the Finance Committee was seen by the Administration as an institution made up of very different individuals. The Committee had also been known as an institution that was very susceptible to pressure and lobby groups.²³⁶

The first step towards final approval were the Hearings in the Finance Committee. These Hearings were split up in three session which took place from April 29 to September 10. The first two sessions being for the Administration, the last session was for public hearings.²³⁷ The Conservative Republican Williams, who had been critical in the House on the plan, was in this Commission the most critical Senator and the instigator of a heap of attacks on the work incentives in FAP. The most important aspect of critique, in which other Senators shared his arguments, was towards the so called “notch effect”. This referred to a situation in

²²⁹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 243.

²³⁰ *Ibid.* 245.

²³¹ Leland G. Neuberger, “The Emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan”, USBIG Discussion Paper No. 66, (2004), Boston University, 19-21.

²³² Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 455.

²³³ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 147.

²³⁴ *Idem.*

²³⁵ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 457.

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 440,454.

²³⁷ Family assistance act of 1970. Hearings, Ninety-first Congress, second session on H.R. 16311 part 1, June 17 and July 14, 15 1970. (Washington, 1970) <<https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Social15.pdf>>.

which someone who was on welfare, in some states, through programs such as Medicaid, Public Housing, the new FAP, Aid to Families with Dependent Children of Unemployed Parents (AFDC-UP) and Food Stamps, could earn more than someone who was working. Williams stated therefore that it was beneficial for people to “spit in their boss’s face” in order to get a pay raise.²³⁸ In his book, Moynihan said that the families that the Senators were referring to, were “the worst the situation could get”. He said that this group must have been an extremely small proportion of the people on welfare.²³⁹ Senator Herman Talmadge of Georgia stated what the effect of FAP would be in Georgia: “So he could do a little casual labour on somebody’s yard from time-to-time and maybe sell a little heroin or do a little burglary and he would be in pretty good shape, wouldn’t he?”²⁴⁰ Talmadge referred to a situation wherein someone would receive their FAP benefits without doing anything in return, because people could earn more on welfare in certain situations because of the notch effect, than if they worked. The statements of Williams and Talmadge were again clearly linked to prejudices about the behaviour of poor people. This is in line with the culture of poverty as described by Kelley.²⁴¹

The administration did not have an answer on the accusations of the Conservative Senators. They said It was indeed possible that under certain circumstances, people could receive more on welfare than working. Because it became clear that most of the Senators would not compromise in this, the first round was ended until a solution was found. The Washington Post posted an article stating it was almost certain that the FAP was defeated at the hand of Senator Williams.²⁴² However, the administration was resilient and worked hard to revise the bill.

The plan was stalled until July. The notches had been repaired by the administration. The penalty for not accepting the work requirements was raised from 300 to 500 dollars. Benefit reductions in Medicaid and Public housing had also been made. Some of the state supplements had been reduced. The program of AFDC-UP had been cancelled altogether in the plans. However, as a result, the promise that had been made by Nixon that no one would be worse off, was broken. Due to the alterations, some families in the North would be worse off under FAP than under AFDC.²⁴³ Although the administration had done exactly what had

²³⁸ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 148.

²³⁹ Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 480.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 473.

²⁴¹ Kelley, *Yo mama’s disfunkcional*, 18-19.

²⁴² Moynihan, *The politics of a guaranteed income*, 487.

²⁴³ Neuberg, *The emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan*, 25.

been asked of them, namely deleting the notches, it seemed that a new unfavourable situation had risen for politicians on the left. A lot of these Senators thought the plan was now worse than before. Fred Harris, a progressive Democrat from Oklahoma, and one of the few members that was favourable towards the plan was unhappy:

*'In every instance that you have mentioned (.....) when you have made an effort to rationalize what is a very irrational system, and avoid these notches that apply, disincentives to work which presently exist, you have done it to the detriment of the recipient. He winds up being the victim of rationality'.*²⁴⁴

A big discussion point in the Commission was the fact that women that had children under the age of six did not have this work requirement under FAP. On the other hand, the mother was not required to work if there was a father in the house. For some Senators this was very odd. Harris asked if society really was better of when a woman went to work instead of being at home raising her children, a discussion mentioned earlier as well. Other Senators did not find the focus on marital stability of the FAP enough. There were concerns from Senator Long and other Senators about the rate of family-breakups under FAP. It seemed from the preliminary results of the New Jersey experiment that families that received FAP benefits tended to break up more. The administration did not have a fitting answer other than that the results were preliminary and could not be taken too seriously.²⁴⁵

Although the Senators in the first and second round of hearings had stated that the problem was the work incentives and the costs of the plan, it seemed to Moynihan that there was more to it than explicitly mentioned. "They seem to realize what the bill would mean to the South" Moynihan stated in a memo to Nixon in July. With this he opted the end of the political dynasties in the South that were built on racial division and poverty.²⁴⁶

In August and September, Hearings continued. This time with institutions from outside the government. A lot of organizations made use of these Hearings. Some of them also discussed the topics of race, gender and the undeserving poor under FAP. Mary Dublin Keyserling spoke on behalf of the National Council of Jewish Women, The National Council of Catholic Women, The National Council of Negro Women, Church Women United, The National board of Managers and the National Consumers League. Keyserling stated it was

²⁴⁴ Moynihan, The politics of a guaranteed income, 508.

²⁴⁵ Family assistance act of 1970. Hearings, Ninety-first Congress, second session on H.R. 16311 part 2, July 21 , 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30 and August 4, 6, 13 and 18 1970. (Washington, 1970)
<<https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Family2.pdf>>, 967.

²⁴⁶ Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 150.

bizarre that the bill only focussed on families with children. It negated singles and couples without children. This argument was an attack on the ideal American family standards that were included in the proposal, as families with a husband and wife with children would be the only family that deserved benefits. An aspect that was surely gender-biased as argued by Nadasen.²⁴⁷ Keyserling also argued that it should be a right for women to choose to stay in the house and raise children instead of working.²⁴⁸ Mrs. Wayne W. Harrington of the United Methodist Church Women Division had the same critique as Keyserling on the plan. Harrington talked about the close relation between her organization and the NWRO. The organization had talked with a lot of the mothers who were members of the NWRO and was shocked to hear about the house raids that were conducted in some States to monitor these mothers if they were indeed single. She addressed the fact that women did want to work but were also confronted with discrimination and underappreciation socially and financially.²⁴⁹ They were joined by Clarence Mitchell, director of the NAACP as well in this critique.²⁵⁰ Again, the racial inequalities as theorized by Brown were mentioned in the discussion.²⁵¹

Mr. Sills, director of the National Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres was critical as well, stating that the FAP would continue the work of AFDC in being paternalistic by the affluent and intimidating to the poor. Sills mentioned the role of racism, which had not been much discussed in the other Hearings between the Committee and the Administration. Sills stated that because of the organizations involvement with Neighbourhood Centres they had witnessed humiliation and racism towards welfare recipients first-hand. The idea that the Federal government would be responsible for welfare and not the states was considered positive.²⁵² The speech of Representative of Mississippi Robert G. Clark, showed that concerns for racist welfare policy was also vivid amongst members in Congress. Clark himself was the first black Representative in almost a hundred years from Mississippi. He was also in favour of more responsibility of the Federal Government concerning welfare. He had witnessed subjective policy thinking in the State of Mississippi first-hand. “Should you be able to walk or crawl, then you do not qualify for such programs”²⁵³ Clark stated. The treatment of black welfare recipients by his state were

²⁴⁷ Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 46.

²⁴⁸ Family assistance act of 1970. Hearings, Ninety-first Congress, second session on H.R. 16311 part 3, August 24 ,25, 26, 27 and 31 and September 1, 9 and 10 1970. (Washington, 1970)
<<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39076005995233>>.1405-1406.

²⁴⁹ Ibid. 2297-2300.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. 2095.

²⁵¹ Brown, Race, money, and the American welfare state, 165.

²⁵² Family assistance act of 1970, Hearings part 3, 1813.

²⁵³ Ibid. 1509.

degrading and insulting according to Clark, only underlining the fact that welfare and race were heavily intertwined. Clark talked of people being refused welfare during the cotton-picking season because of the cheap labour that was needed during that period.²⁵⁴ Here racism and the economic consequences for the South became clearly linked. It underlined the fact that the South wanted to have as little black people as possible on welfare in order to get cheap labour. This can be typified as racist policy as stated by Hinton.²⁵⁵

The decision in the Finance Committee

Nixon had heard from the Administration that the Hearings had not convinced the Senators in voting in favour of the bill. Although some Public Witnesses did make an impact, it seemed a majority was still against. Nixon decided to meet up with some of the Senators and invited them to a state dinner on September 3. Senators Long, Miller, Ribicoff, Byrd and Bennet were invited to talk with Nixon about the plans. Nixon asked Long if there was a chance of passing the bill. Long replied by saying there was, but that there was rigorous opposition to the work incentives. “There was a rising objection to ‘people who lay about all day making love and producing illegitimate babies’” Long said.²⁵⁶ Bennet suggested that therefore a division between the working poor and the poor needed to be re-established. Nixon agreed. It seemed on the days before the voting on the bill that a small majority was in favour of the bill, including Long.²⁵⁷ With a few Senators still indecisive on the plan, it could have gone either way. However, a few days before the voting, the NWRO, with the help of Senator McCarty began a session of unofficial hearings. In these hearings, around 100 mothers on welfare stated the plans would negatively affect their income and their self-respect. One of the women testified: “I heard that Senator Long said as long as he can’t get his laundry done he’s going to put the welfare recipients to work, those days are gone forever, we ain’t gonna clean it!”²⁵⁸ A lot of the Senators attended these Hearings. According to observers, some Senators that were willing to vote for the bill had now turned against it. On November 20, the Senate Finance Committee voted 10-6 against the bill.²⁵⁹ The bill was sent to the Senate on December 11 without FAP. However, Connecticut Senator Abraham Ribicoff and Senator Robert Bennet from Utah had decided to amend the Security Bill with a plan that was very similar to FAP,

²⁵⁴ Family assistance act of 1970, Hearings part 3, 1509.

²⁵⁵ Hinton, From the war on poverty to the war on crime, 12.

²⁵⁶ Moynihan, The politics of a guaranteed income, 523.

²⁵⁷ Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 153.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. 153.

²⁵⁹ Neuberger, The emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan, 31.

therefore FAP would still be discussed in the Senate. The Administration would be happy with it as well.²⁶⁰

Discussion in the Senate

With the rejection of FAP in the Finance Committee and only the Ribicoff-Bennet amendment to discuss on the Senate floor, the discussion was different in form. Some Senators were unhappy with this. The Senate took multiple sessions at the end of December to discuss the topic.

During the debates, some points were made on FAP that can be linked to racism, the undeserving poor and sexism. On the matter of race through the words of Senator Edward Kennedy from Massachusetts. He began his story by saying he would definitely support Ribicoffs amendment. Not only would this amendment and the approval of FAP make the welfare system less punitive, it would also mean the absolute end of policy he described as racist, like the man in the house rules that some States carried out.²⁶¹

A lot was spoken on the matter of the undeserving poor. Some Senators were explicit as to their prejudices on non-working poor. Long devoted a big part of his speech on examples of poor who should, in his eyes, not be on welfare. These examples consisted of mostly poor mothers who received relatively large amounts of welfare while they were not working and other examples of “welfare fraud”.²⁶² Senator Williams was not only the bogeyman against FAP in the Finance Committee but in the Senate as well. He would retire at the end of December, which possibly made his rhetoric sharper than usual. Williams stated: “FAP is the most diabolical incentive program for increased dependency I have ever seen presented to Congress. It is an incentive to pay people more not to improve themselves in life”.²⁶³ Possibly the biggest plea against the undeserving poor was through Senator Paul Fannin of Arizona. He argued that the 20th century had become a century of “freeloaders who lived on welfare and off money that other people had rightfully earned”. According to Fannin it was especially dangerous because they “could live with it”.²⁶⁴ Senators like Fannin and Williams proved there were people in Congress that were convinced there was a big group on welfare that could be considered as undeserving, fuelled by arguments based on prejudices. It

²⁶⁰ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 154.

²⁶¹ Cong. Rec. (Bound) – Senate December 31, 1970, Pub. L. No. X 1.1.; § 116, 33, 1970 Additional Government Publications (1971). <<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-CRECB-1970-pt33/GPO-CRECB-1970-pt33-4>>, 43630.

²⁶² *Ibid.* 43631.

²⁶³ Congressional Record, Senate December 31 1970, 43658-60.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 43218.

was not the first time that non-working poor were described as lazy, unambitious, fraudulent, and happy with their financial dependency. These behavioural aspects were in line with the idea of the culture of poverty as described by Kelley.²⁶⁵

There were also a lot of arguments that can be linked to gender. Long for instance, argued that it was very odd that a mother had the right not to say who the father was. He was frustrated about this fact because he wanted these deserting fathers to be prosecuted, which was impossible if the government did not know the name of the father. Long did not consider the implications this would have for the mother.²⁶⁶ Williams used several sexist arguments in his critique on FAP. He uses the same rhetoric as earlier in the House of Representatives arguing that the FAP promotes mothers to have illegitimate babies because a mother would receive 300 dollars of welfare per child. It would also lead to family break-ups as well.²⁶⁷ , Again implicating morally wrong behaviour of single mothers. Williams said that the FAP was not a system in which a man was encouraged to provide for his family. Here he explicitly referred to the man that had to provide for the family. FAP in his eyes “destroys everything we stand for in this country: a good family life”.²⁶⁸ The importance of a male head of house and male dominance was seen as an important value by several senators, which can be typified as sexist.²⁶⁹

H.R. 1: The Family Assistance Plan tried again.

In 1971, Nixon and his Administration went for a rebound in the new bill called H.R. 1. By symbolically naming it H.R. 1, Nixon implied the plan had top priority. There were a couple of important differences in the new FAP proposal. Compromising with both left and right, the Food Stamps Program now was included in the FAP. As a consequence, the total budget people would receive rose from 1600 to 2400 dollars. However, this was nothing more than a convenience, people on welfare did not actually receive more, as the value of the Food Stamps people already received was approximately the same. The controversial state supplements, forcing states to pay extra so that no recipient would be worse off in the new plans, was abandoned. This meant a great fiscal relief for some of the states, however this would also mean that under the new plans it would be quite possible that more recipients would be well worse off in the new plans.²⁷⁰ The new plan also had a bigger focus on

²⁶⁵ Kelley, Yo mama's disfunkcional, 18-19.

²⁶⁶ Congressional Record, Senate 31 December 1970, 43631.

²⁶⁷ Ibid. 42987.

²⁶⁸ Ibid. 42753-58.

²⁶⁹ Cooper, Family Values, 41.

²⁷⁰ Neuberg, The emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan, 32.

categorizing the target groups. A division was made between the aged, blind and disabled, families with heads who had employable members and families with heads who did not have employable members. These three groups, in the new plans would fall under different branches of government. This was a huge improvement for the Conservative members of Congress who felt that division had to be made in order to make the plan more shameful for the undeserving poor. By categorizing these groups, at least it would be easier to see who was more deserving.²⁷¹ This compromise with the Conservatives meant that the non-working poor would fall under a completely different group than the working poor, something that was not the case in the first proposal.

The House of representatives, new arguments

The process in the Ways and Means Committee was exactly the same as the outcome of the debate on the FAP in 1969 and 1970 would be. In May 1971, with a vote of 22-3 in favour of the plan, the bill was again passed in the Ways and Means Committee. Ullman again was against the plan, but had a sharper tone compared to the first draft in 1970. He stated the plan “opened up the Treasury, permanently enrolling people on welfare”.²⁷²

Opposed to limited discussions in Ways and Means, H.R. 1 did again cause some heated debate in the House. Representative Frank Brasco of New York was one of the first speakers openly questioning the discussions about who was deserving and undeserving. “There are those who sincerely subscribe to the 19th Century view of welfare. It is their belief that there is something wrong with anyone who must seek public relief. With all due respect, I say they are utterly wrong”.²⁷³ Brasco argued against what others like Long and Williams consistently pointed out: that single mothers with children were seen as more undeserving than elderly, working or handicapped people, something he did not agree with. Although a lot of Representatives in essence supported this point of view,²⁷⁴ it resolved in sharp discussions about those deserving and undeserving. Representative Lawrence Hogan of Maryland, just like Williams and Long had done, dedicated his speech to give examples of cases in which there was “welfare abuse”.²⁷⁵ The ideas of the culture of poverty seemed to be rigorous in the debates on FAP.

²⁷¹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 161.

²⁷² *Ibid.* 162.

²⁷³ Cong. Rec. (Bound) - House of Representatives: June 22, 1971, Pub. L. No. X 1.1 :, 1971 Additional Government Publications (1971). <<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-CRECB-1971-pt16/GPO-CRECB-1971-pt16-4-2>>, 22365.

²⁷⁴ Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22363, 22392.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 22388.

Interesting again was the focus on the family life of people on welfare and the concern that it had deteriorated under AFDC. Representative John Anderson from Illinois in strong terms supported FAP for this reason, saying that FAP would “break this cancerous social order”. He referred to statistics showing that a large percentage of the AFDC caseload consisted of single mothers with children and no father in the house.²⁷⁶ His words were acclaimed by other Representatives soon after.²⁷⁷ The father figure, and more specifically the man as head of the house was seen as absolutely essential for the welfare of a child according to the majority of Representatives. In its essence, finding a father figure in the house a positive factor cannot be described as sexist. What was sexist however was the fact that households led by single mothers were described as “cancerous” and morally wrong.²⁷⁸ New York Representative Bella Abzug on the other hand criticized the harsh situation for single mothers in the bill mentioning they would have double jobs, as already stated in the debates in 1970. It was according to her repressive against women, forcing them to take low paid jobs.²⁷⁹ Griffiths however, said that as well as the man in the house ruling, the AFDC had some other immoral aspects as well. “The present welfare system says to every woman in America: You may have a child and you may marry the father or not, but if you choose not to do so the rest of us will support you”. Griffiths thought that supporting a mother although she did not marry the father was wrong. A woman should marry the father of the child and also stay with the husband in the same home, or else be rightfully deprived of welfare support.²⁸⁰ Here Griffiths did point out something that could be considered as sexist. Arguing that a woman was not worth of welfare because she did not want to marry the father, underlines the subservient role that woman needed to conform to. This is described by Quadagno as sexist.²⁸¹

Representative Chisholm initiated the subject of racism during her speech by saying: “the reason we are confronted with this problem is because of a ‘society that has not permitted people of a certain ethnic origin primarily to become proud, self-sustaining in this country’”. She also stated that black men did not have the same chances at work as white men. With these statements, Chisholm referred to inequalities in the system and society in general on the premise of being black or white.²⁸² Representative Abzug was for this reason against the FAP

²⁷⁶ Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22376.

²⁷⁷ Ibid. 22346-59.

²⁷⁸ Nadasen et al, Welfare in the US, 46.

²⁷⁹ Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22353, 22402.

²⁸⁰ Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22400.

²⁸¹ Quadagno, ‘Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State’, 14.

²⁸² Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22363.

because she considered it to be even more racist than AFDC. It was patronizing and made distinctions between different groups of deserving people. Abzug stated “It strikes out to poor people, women and children and should be defeated”.²⁸³

Abzug did not get what she wanted, again, the Bill now called H.R. 1 passed the House with a very easy margin of 288-132.

Committee on Finance round two

After another easy passage in the House, the bill, again, went to the Senate Committee on Finance. There was one big change in the Finance Committee compared to the first discussion. Senator John Williams, arguably the biggest critic on FAP, had retired at the end of 1970, just after the Senate Debates.²⁸⁴

The first round of Hearings went on from July 27 until August 3 with debates about the same main issues with the plan. The Republicans as well as the Democrats had trouble with the child care provisions which were too little in their eyes.²⁸⁵ While debating these subjects in August, Nixon abruptly put an end to these debates with his announcement on August 15 to stall the welfare bill for 1 year, taking effect only as early as 1972. He made this decision to give priority to an economic bill that focussed on tax-cuts and job stimulation. Chairman Long, seeing this bill did not have to be rushed anymore, put the plan in the freezer for 10 months.

Some members of the Finance Committee did not wait for these 10 months before making plans. Ribicoff, the Senator who tried to get FAP through in 1970 with an amendment, created a new one on H.R. 1. With support from 18 other Senators and other organizations, Ribicoff proposed an alternative to the FAP. In his new plan, families would receive \$3000 in benefits, including childless couples and singles. His plan was therefore the only proposed Guaranteed Income Plan that was truly universal. He also implemented the State Supplements as well in the plan. These supplements were put out of the new FAP under H.R. 1.²⁸⁶ Ribicoff was not the only one who was trying to alter the House passed bill. Senator Long also came up with an alternative to the FAP in H.R. 1. His plan was on the ideological opposite side of Ribicoffs. His Guaranteed Job Opportunity Program (GJOP) was highly focussed on work requirements and work incentives. Under GJOP, people would receive a work bonus for working federal or private jobs and were forced to apply to job training and

²⁸³ Congressional Record, House of Representatives, 22 June 1971, 22402.

²⁸⁴ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 167.

²⁸⁵ *Idem*.

²⁸⁶ Neuberger, *The emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan*, 34.

work programs except mothers with a child under six. With no other supplements, which was also part of Long's plan, recipients would receive well below the poverty line.²⁸⁷ As a result, there were now three plans making their way through government. Ribicoff's more generous FAP, the House passed FAP and Long's stricter GJOP.

The Finance Committee underlined their Conservative views by voting 10-4 in favour of the alternative bill drafted by Long. The GJOP became the new bill to vote on in the Senate later that year. Not a single Republican in the Finance Committee had decided to support the House drafted bill instead.²⁸⁸ Tension were rising as Ribicoff announced Long's GJOP as "Slavefare" and that it was "barbaric to penalize innocent babies for the wrong doing of their parents".²⁸⁹ Long was on his part not fond of Ribicoff's alternative, this was not odd considering these two plans were, ideologically speaking, miles apart from each other. Nixon now had three options as well: Stay in the middle with the House Passed bill, compromise with Long or compromise with Ribicoff. Whilst his Administration implored him to compromise with Ribicoff because his plan was ideologically more in line with the original bill, Nixon eventually decided he would not compromise with either of the two. The plans therefore were sent to the Senate for a final time.

Senate Round two

On the October 3 1972, Ribicoff's amendment was being discussed one final time before voting. The debate about the amendment became mostly a heated one-on-one discussion between Senators Ribicoff and Long.

Long launched a final crusade against FAP with arguments against Ribicoff's amendment. Long argued that the bill was "held hostage" by Ribicoff's amendment. With this he referred to the deserving poor, being the aged, blind and handicapped, for whom the total bill would have major improvements, was being hijacked for a second time by a plan that would guaranteed an income to the undeserving poor.²⁹⁰ Long continued by saying that more welfare equalled more out of wedlock births, With the "bonus" that mothers would receive per child it would teach children how to deceive and misrepresent.²⁹¹ With a generous welfare

²⁸⁷ Neuberg, The emergence and defeat of the Family Assistance Plan, 33.

²⁸⁸ Ibid. 37, Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 172.

²⁸⁹ Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 173.

²⁹⁰ 118 Cong. Rec. (Bound) - Senate: October 3, 1972, Pub. L. No. X 1.1.; 1972 Additional Government Publications (1972). <<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-CRECB-1972-pt25/GPO-CRECB-1972-pt25-6-1>>, 33408.

²⁹¹ 118 Cong. Rec. (Bound) - Senate: October 3, 1972, 33409.

scheme, Long argued, the State would be “paying people to do all the wrong things”.²⁹² Long also made arguments that touched the subject of race. In his statement he was critical of the court decision to strike down the man in the house ruling, implicating that mothers could “deceive” the State even more by having a man in the house and receiving welfare as well.²⁹³ This can surely be considered racist as it was at the time well known through media coverage that the man in the house ruling was especially used against single black mothers in most states while crossing all boundaries of privacy. Long continued by arguing that people in the South would not work anymore if they would receive FAP, saying all muscles would go to waste and nobody would want to work in the Mississippi shipyards and Cotton gins. The economy, according to Long, would be completely shut down.²⁹⁴ It was widely known that especially black men were completely underpaid and were overrepresented in the sectors specifically mentioned by Long. Long successfully put together almost all the critique that was made on FAP that can be considered racist, sexist and as an attack on the behaviour of the poor. Long's speech was a suiting end in this way.

Ribicoff countered this critique by saying that under the Long bill, the government would be subsidizing the sweatshop owner and everyone who used the lack of welfare as an instrument to pay people too little,²⁹⁵ also implicating the poor situation of black people in the South. Ribicoff's arguments were not enough, most Senators in the end agreed with Long, his motion to table the Ribicoff Amendment passed with 52-34.

Stevenson's Amendment was less generous than Ribicoff's and more in line with the original bill of Nixon and his Administration. Unsurprisingly, the proposal received a lot of critique. Virginian Senator Robert Byrd quoted Moynihan who had said that the FAP would provide an income for those deserving or not. In this he saw Moynihan as putting it fair, but this exactly underlined Byrd's fears.²⁹⁶ Byrd stated the government only had a responsibility to the deserving poor. Russel Long eventually also won this round, his motion to table Stevenson's Amendment passed 51-35.

²⁹² 118 Cong. Rec. (Bound) - Senate: October 3, 1972, 33412.

²⁹³ Ibid. 33409.

²⁹⁴ Ibid. 33410-11.

²⁹⁵ Congressional Record, Senate 3 October 1972, 33418.

²⁹⁶ 118 Cong. Rec. (Bound) - Senate: October 4, 1972, Pub. L. No. X 1.1.; 1972 Additional Government Publications (1972). <<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-CRECB-1972-pt25/GPO-CRECB-1972-pt25-7-1>>, 33652.

The end of the Family Assistance Plan

With the voting down of both Ribicoff's and Stevenson's Amendments, the whole process of FAP through the political arena had come to an end. No other Guaranteed Income Plan would be proposed in Nixon's term. There was however, still hope for the people that supported FAP. There were still four experiments on a NIT that needed to be concluded, only the New Jersey experiment was mentioned with preliminary results in the debates. This given fact would pivot the GAI in an odd position: Although the plan was put down in the Senate, the US government still experimented with the idea of a Guaranteed Income with a NIT through these pilot projects. It also raises the question if this was really the end of the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Income in the US. The next chapter will look in more detail into the legacy of the guaranteed income idea by looking at the outcomes of the experiments and steps that were taken by President Carter on the subject of a guaranteed income.

6. The Legacy of the Family Assistance Plan

When the amendments of Ribicoff and Stevenson were tabled by Long, who later called the blocking of FAP the crown on his career.²⁹⁷ It meant the end of the Family Assistance Plan. It would not again return to Congress. It is however, too early to stop at that moment when looking at Guaranteed Annual Income plans. The end of the FAP did not necessarily mean the end of the most controversial aspect of the plan: A guaranteed income for all the poor. After the defeat of FAP, this idea still turned out to be very much alive within the American administration. Because of the innovative aspects of the plan, the administration had decided to also fund four pilot experiments on a Negative Income Tax in different areas of the US during Nixon's course. The overall conclusion of the New Jersey experiment was positive. The experiment was highly acclaimed. This according to O'Conner helped in keeping the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Income alive even after the demise of FAP.²⁹⁸ The two Presidents after Nixon: President Gerald Ford and President Jimmy Carter, also had a period within their administration where a GAI plan was considered. However, only for Carter, the idea took an advanced shape with his Program for Better Jobs and Income (PBJI). Fords ideas stranded within the administration.²⁹⁹ The continuing of the administration on ideas of a GAI proposal shows the resilience of the idea. It also underlines the fact that for the administration, revolutionizing welfare was not solely dependent on FAP as a proposal, but more broadly on the idea of giving everyone a minimum income independent of for instance race or gender.

This chapter takes a closer look at the experiments that were launched under the administration of Nixon, but were only finished at the time of Ford and Carter. The chapter will look briefly at the proposal of Carter and the similarities between Carters proposal and the FAP. In this chapter it is important to give specific attention to the role of the experiments in the further policy making of PBJI. Of the four experiments, there was one under Carter that received the biggest attention: The Seattle/Denver experiment. Because of the scale of this experiment, it received considerably more attention from the administration, politicians and the media than the rest did, as most of them found that the results of this experiment would be, because of the bigger scale the most accurate.³⁰⁰ I will therefore direct most of my attention to this experiment. Finally, I will examine if the end of PBJI was also ultimately the

²⁹⁷ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 68.

²⁹⁸ O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge*, 192.

²⁹⁹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 179

³⁰⁰ Karl Widerquist., 'The Basic Income Guarantee Experiments of the 1970s: a quick summary of results | BIEN' <<https://basicincome.org/news/2017/12/basic-income-guarantee-experiments-1970s-quick-summary-results/>> [Accessed January 9 2019].

end of the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Income in the US. The sub-questions of this chapter are: *What was the influence of the experiments on the Program for Better Jobs and Income?*

The four experiments

The launching of four major NIT experiments was special. They were the first major social science experiments ever conducted in the US.³⁰¹ The experiments were designed to focus for a big part on the aspect of work incentives. In some of the experiments however, some other factors were looked at as well. Family stability was one of those aspects. With the special attention aimed towards the negative effect of marital breakups, it seemed that the researchers wanted to accommodate one of the biggest and arguably most gender-biased of concerns from politicians as well, as we have seen in the previous chapters already. It is also important to mention the aspect of race in these experiments. Not only did race play an implicit role in the debates on FAP, race played a role in the experiments as well. This was mostly due to the fact that scientists wanted certain amounts of black or white people in the experiment to see if there were differences in how they would react.³⁰² In principal, all four experiments were the same. It consisted of a fixed amount of families, a certain stratification, in all the experiments with special attention to race, as to have diverse families, it measured work incentives and other factors and was for a fixed term.³⁰³ All these families would receive a NIT income, which was also dependent on the income they already earned. If their income was bigger, they would receive a smaller amount of support. There was also a maximum amount of income that people received beforehand as to be eligible for the experiment. Naturally, people needed to receive a relatively low income as to measure the effects of a NIT on low income families. In most of the experiments this was set on 150 percent of the poverty level.³⁰⁴

The Seattle/Denver was the third experiment conducted, but would also be the biggest of the four. It started in 1970 and consisted of 4800 families, which was roughly three times the size of the other experiments. It consisted of mostly two parent families, but it contained single parent families as well. The design of the experiment was focussed around a Negative Income Tax. Everyone received a fixed NIT income dependent on the income they received

³⁰¹ Karl Widerquist., 'The Basic Income Guarantee Experiments of the 1970s'.

³⁰² O'Connor, Alice, *Poverty knowledge: social science, social policy, and the poor in twentieth-century U.S. history. Politics and society in twentieth-century America* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press 2001), 193.

³⁰³ Alexander Basilevsky, Derek Hum and Peter H. Rossi, *Experimental social programs and analytic methods: an evaluation of the U.S. income maintenance projects. Quantitative studies in social relations* (Orlando, Fla: Academic Press 1984), 17-20.

³⁰⁴ *Idem*

already. Only people who received below 11.000 dollars would be included in the experiment. There were three support levels: 3800, 4800 and 5600 dollars. This was more than what was discussed in Congress at that time. Not only did people receive an income, they would also need to make use of manpower programs, that focussed on finding jobs for people.³⁰⁵ These families consisted mostly of families with a male head of house.³⁰⁶ However, the people who received benefits were also stratified by race as well, which also happened in the other three experiments.³⁰⁷ Distinctive for the Seattle/Denver experiment were the different terms for receiving benefits. The terms for receiving these benefits were fixed at different levels as well as to measure short, middle and long-term changes. These terms were set on 3, 5 and 20 years, meaning that some people were told they would receive an income up until 1990.³⁰⁸ However, this long term would eventually never be reached as the experiment was ended by the government in 1976.³⁰⁹ The ultimate goal of the experiment was to measure a change in work incentives and marital stability.

Results on this experiment were however also the most inconclusive. For instance, David Greenberg and Harlan Halsey of respectively the University of Maryland and SRI, a governmental tax expertise company, stated in their article that the decrease in work efforts was mostly explained by systematic misreporting by the target group on their work efforts.³¹⁰ Thomas MaCurdy, from the National Bureau of Economic Research, on the other hand stated that the reduction of work efforts was quite large.³¹¹ On the aspect of marital stability the same occurred. Michael Hannan, Nancy Tuma and Lyle Groeneveld of the Stanford University and the Stanford Research Department, argued that the number of divorces were significantly higher with people that received a NIT.³¹² Glen Cain and Douglas Wissoker of respectively the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Urban Institute, stated that Hannan, Tuma and Groeneveld were wrong in their finding because they misinterpreted a lot of these results. For instance, Hannan, Tuma and Groeneveld only used the data of three years, Cain

³⁰⁵ Basilevsky et al., 'Experimental social programs and analytic methods' (1984), 18.

³⁰⁶ O'Connor, Poverty knowledge, 193.

³⁰⁷ Basilevsky et al., 'Experimental social programs and analytic methods', 18.

³⁰⁸ *Idem*.

³⁰⁹ Widerquist 'The Basic Income Guarantee Experiments of the 1970s.

³¹⁰ Greenberg, David, and Harlan Halsey, 'Systematic Misreporting and Effects of Income Maintenance Experiments on Work Effort: Evidence from the Seattle-Denver Experiment', *Journal of Labor Economics* 1 (1983) 380–407 <doi:10.1086/298019>.

³¹¹ Thomas E. MaCurdy "An Intertemporal Analysis of Taxation and Work Disincentives: An Analysis of the Denver Income Maintenance Experiment". Working Paper. National Bureau of Economic Research, (1981).< <https://doi.org/10.3386/w0624>>.

³¹² Michael T. Hannan, Nancy Brandon Tuma and Lyle P. Groeneveld, 'Income and Marital Events: Evidence from an Income-Maintenance Experiment', *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977) 1186–1211 <doi:10.1086/226463>.

and Wissoker used all five years.³¹³ The overall conclusion of the US department of Health was that there was a small reduction in work efforts, a small reduction in marital stability and an improvement in the use of training and job opportunity programs.³¹⁴ On average, the work reduction measured by all the four experiments together was around 5 to 8 percent. The work efforts of females dropped at a significant rate,³¹⁵ but this was mostly due to the fact that they worked a lot less than men at the beginning of the experiments.³¹⁶ The work efforts of black workers had improved at a significant rate.³¹⁷ In the end there was no conclusive research support for the hypothesis that people would significantly reduce their work efforts. The only measured drop was in the amount of work hours, but this was mostly due to the fact that people took more time to care for their children and for training programs.³¹⁸

There is in hindsight a lot of criticism on the basic premise of the experiments.³¹⁹ Karl Widerquist, an American philosopher mentions in his article for instance the sample of people working close to the poverty line. This is especially the group that would reduce their work efforts the most because the grant they received was very high in comparison to their income. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the whole population. There was also no demand response included in the experiments. The higher wages that occurred for most of the people in the experimental group could have countered the work effort reduction. It is also according to Widerquist too naïve to think that people simply dropped out of the labour force. Another theory could be that people took more time to find a job that fitted them.³²⁰

Apart from the critique on the premise of the experiments and the difference between the findings, it is important to see what the impact was on the decision making in the political arena. What was the impact of the conclusions? And which conclusions were considered as valid by the politicians and the Carter Administration?

The Seventies, a different situation

Under the successor of Gerald Ford, President Jimmy Carter, a Guaranteed Annual Income proposal had a more advanced stage of legislation. President Carter had, like many others,

³¹³ Glen G. Cain, and Douglas A. Wissoker, 'A Reanalysis of Marital Stability in the Seattle-Denver Income-Maintenance Experiment', *American Journal of Sociology* 95 (1990) 1235–1269 <doi:10.1086/229428>.

³¹⁴ U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, "The Rural Income Maintenance Experiment: Summary report", University of Wisconsin, (1976), <<https://www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/sr/pdfs/sr10.pdf>>.

³¹⁵ Basilevsky et al., *Experimental social programs and analytic methods*, 212.

³¹⁶ Widerquist, 'The Basic Income Guarantee Experiments of the 1970s'.

³¹⁷ Basilevsky et al., *Experimental social programs and analytic methods*, 212.

³¹⁸ Birnbaum, Simon, 'Basic Income', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (2016) <doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.116>.

³¹⁹ Basilevsky et al., *Experimental social programs and analytic methods*, 214.

³²⁰ Widerquist, 'The Basic Income Guarantee Experiments of the 1970s'.

denounced the current welfare system as a system that was anti-work and anti-family.³²¹ It is important to see the different welfare situation between Carter and Nixon. After the rejection of FAP in 1972, two other important welfare programs did pass. The first of these being the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) which passed as a part of the Social Security Amendments of which FAP was excluded. This program was an expansion of welfare for the aged, blind and disabled. SSI was in fact a guaranteed minimum income for this group. It can be accurately seen as FAP for the group of aged, blind and handicapped.³²² A minimum income for this group of deserving poor was something, as seen in the previous chapter, that every Member of Congress agreed on. The negative consequence of this approval however was that the PBJI would therefore only be meant for the groups regularly seen as the undeserving poor, whilst the deserving poor already were accounted for. Another expansion was made for the working poor, the other deserving group, in the form of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) that was passed in 1975. The EITC gave state supplements to the working poor by reducing the tax burden and in some cases even meant a tax refund. It was therefore linked with the idea of a Negative Income Tax, but only focussed on the working poor. These proposals in essence had the same effects as FAP, the important difference is that it specifically excluded the group of undeserving poor: the non-working poor.³²³ Steensland also mentions a change in the cultural perspective of the US in the mid-seventies. Whereas the cultural perspective in the Sixties was focussed on the relationship between race and welfare, this perspective changed more and more towards family values and female labour participation.³²⁴

The PBJI proposed

Carter wanted to change the whole welfare system just like Nixon wanted. The Liberal approach of direct transfer payments was less popular during the time of Carter than it was with Nixon.³²⁵ His Program for Better Jobs and Income (PBJI) looked similar to Nixon's FAP. Single mothers, along with elderly and disabled people would receive 4200 dollars per year for a family of four. This sounds like it was more generous than Nixon's plan but because of inflation between these years it was in fact less generous. People ended up at 65 percent of the federal poverty line. Families with two parents qualified for lower benefits and

³²¹ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 61.

³²² Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 177.

³²³ *Ibid.* 177-178.

³²⁴ *Ibid.* 184.

³²⁵ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 183.

the primary wage earners would qualify for public service jobs. This plan would benefit certain two parent families, but a lot people currently on AFDC would be worse off.³²⁶ The only thing more “generous” than FAP was that there was no expectation to work for single parent families with children younger than fourteen.³²⁷ The Public Jobs component was new compared to FAP. What was interesting about this component was that it’s creative base was on the results from the experiments. An HEW official stated: “First of all, with respect to work effort, the income maintenance experiments have taught us a number of important lessons that bear directly on policy. Evidence from the experiments persuaded the administration not to propose the pure cash assistance program examined in all the experiments”.³²⁸ Carter and his administration clearly saw this as a risk. The results from the experiments were also used for a dozen of planning and strategy meetings concerning the PBJI plan.³²⁹ Public reactions on the plan were like with FAP, favourable as many editorials and polls showed that a large part of the US was positive towards the plan. Also, just like FAP, this was for a large part because of the negative way that ADFC was looked upon.³³⁰

Feminist organizations like the League of Women Voters, NOW, Women’s Lobby, women’s religious organizations and other welfare rights activists were however, very unhappy with the plan. They denounced the low benefit level and the fact that a lot of single mothers would see their incomes reduced. They were angry at the fact that single mothers would be put into an income support tier that saw them as unemployable and dependent. These organizations argued that single parent families were just as complete as two parent families and should be treated as such.³³¹ Vernon Jordan of the Urban League stated that Carter neglected the need of the working poor. Black poor people and other poor people were put on the street with balanced budgets instead of balanced lives.³³² There was an unwillingness within Carters administration to put more funds into childcare so that mothers could earn a wage instead of being dependent on welfare.³³³ Furthermore, it was said that Carter did not give full attention to his PBJI, and that he was very unwilling in spending more on PBJI. Carter demanded a reform with a minimal budget.³³⁴

³²⁶ Nadasen et al, *Welfare in the US*, 61.

³²⁷ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 195.

³²⁸ General Accounting Office, “Report to the honorable Daniel P. Moynihan, Income Maintenance Experiments: need to summarize results and communicate the lessons learned” (1981) HRD-81-46, 25.

³²⁹ Greenberg, David H. and Marvin B. Mandell, ‘Research Utilization in Policymaking: A Tale of Two Series (Of Social Experiments)’, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 10 (1991) 639 <doi:10.2307/3324989>.

³³⁰ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 206.

³³¹ *Ibid*, 201.

³³² Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 200.

³³³ *Idem*.

³³⁴ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 192-195.

The discussion in the political arena went poorly for the PBJI. Already on the first hurdle, the Ways and Means Committee, there was a lot of resistance. PBJI was unlike with Chairman Mills with FAP, not favoured by the Chairman Al Ullman, who also had been against FAP from the start. Ullman did not like the fact that so many people would be dependent on welfare.³³⁵ Also unlike FAP, PBJI was not supported by a big group of lobbyists. The role of groups outside of the political arena was also less significant, and only vocal in some instances.³³⁶ Furthermore, there was a concern within the administration that Carter himself, was more concerned with other issues than welfare reform, for which he had little attention.³³⁷

The role of the experiments was on the other hand relatively more significant than with FAP during the discussions. Unfortunately for the administration, it would seem in the end, that the experiments influenced the debate in a negative way. During the debates, and as stated earlier in this chapter, by far the most frequently used experimental conclusion was with the Seattle/Denver experiment and especially the marital stability aspect.³³⁸ Furthermore, one of the most influential figures against PBJI was Daniel Moynihan himself. After his period within Nixon's administration, Moynihan became a Senator representing New York. Moynihan, referring to the Seattle/Denver conclusions stated that the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Income turned out to be a complete failure and that they were wrong to think it would work. It seemed that he was mostly concerned about the drastic decrease in marital stability in the Seattle/Denver experiment measured only in a couple of articles, completely ignoring the fact that other scientists had completely different conclusions. During the debate, politicians against PBJI used the results of the experiments against the plan, like Russel Long for instance, who's main argument against PBJI was that mothers with children under 14 should not be exempted from work.³³⁹ It became clear that the results on the experiments were quickly framed as solely negative by critics of the plan, not only were the results that stated no significant changes in the work effort, which was the case in most of the results, downplayed, the results that suggested big increases of marital breakups, of the more controversial experiments, were emphasized in great detail.³⁴⁰ The effects that some experiments showed on marital stability was one of growing concern for politicians. As stated

³³⁵ Bertram, *The Workfare State*, 205.

³³⁶ *Ibid.* 208

³³⁷ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 186.

³³⁸ *Ibid.* 214

³³⁹ Steensland, *The failed welfare revolution*, 205.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 215.

earlier, the idea of family values, that were only strong under “intact” families, had become even more important during this period than during deliberations concerning FAP. These conclusions were picked up by the media as well.³⁴¹ The idea that slight increases in marital breakups and slight decreases on work incentives might also be due to positive factors, like a better quality of jobs and more independence of women, were almost completely ignored.³⁴² The extreme effects on marital stability were accusations that the PBJI would not overcome. It eventually stranded in the Ways and Means Committee. Even more ironic was the fact that EITC was expanded by the end of the 70’s.³⁴³ This underlined the fact that it was not the unwillingness to spend more on welfare of Congress, but more accurately the unwillingness to spend more on the group defined as the undeserving poor.

The end of a Guaranteed Annual Income

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1981 meant the end of plans on a Guaranteed Annual Income. It also meant the beginning of rigorous cutbacks on welfare spending and especially on AFDC. It seemed that Reagans Californian style of welfare policy was the absolute opposite of ideas such as the FAP and PBJI. The US would not see a Guaranteed Income Plan come so close to being reality after FAP.³⁴⁴ Only after 2000 did plans on a Basic Income and other Guaranteed Income plans gain popularity in certain scientific, political and social circles. It remains to be seen if such a plan will lead to political debates such as debates on FAP, and if it will eventually succeed in becoming the new American welfare policy.

³⁴¹ Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 216.

³⁴² Ibid. 215.

³⁴³ Idem.

³⁴⁴ Steensland, The failed welfare revolution, 219.

7. Conclusion

The Family Assistance Plan proposal generated much discussion in the US Congress with heated debates, as is shown in the previous chapters. In this thesis, my aim has been to analyse the process of FAP through the concepts of gender, race and the undeserving poor. In this conclusion I aim to formulate a coherent answer to the research question on the basis of the analysis of the previous chapters. In order to get to this point, I will answer the sub-questions first, in order to answer the main question.

As I have shown, already as early as the Thirties in plans of Roosevelt concerning the New Deal, a categorization of people in different welfare programs played an important role in the US welfare policy. The New Deal was more beneficial to white people than black people. The South resisted welfare expansions and excluded black people from welfare systematically. Furthermore, with the switch for widows in 1939 from welfare to social security another step was made in the further stigmatization of the people on welfare whereas only the groups that were seen as the undeserving poor, namely single mothers and the able unemployed stayed on welfare. During the Forties and Fifties, welfare expanded. The huge differences in welfare between black and white people however remained. They were often the target of sexism and racism as can be seen with the “father in the house” ruling which resulted in degrading and sexist midnight raids on the homes of mostly single black mothers. The Sixties were a time of more protest of Civil Rights Movements which resulted in massive welfare expansions and more rights for marginalized groups as well. However, during this time, resistance against welfare programs like AFDC grew rapidly as well within political spheres and in the public. The big role of the media cannot be neglected in this case. There has been a structural overrepresentation of black families and especially black single mothers in articles that were negative on welfare.

In the forming of the Family Assistance Plan, a dominant role of the concepts can be seen as well. The forming of FAP was dominated by discussions about work incentives. The administration was afraid of the welfare stigma’s and “white backlash” of Nixon’s voters, which resulted in a switch to the white employed poor. The inclusion of work incentives was made as to push welfare recipients towards work, of which the administration was convinced they did not due otherwise. This was an incentive fuelled by a negative view on the poor.

Nixon’s speech heavily relied on the growing negative view by the public on AFDC, of which the Family Assistance Plan could only do a better job as alternative. The plan was also framed as a crusade against marital breakups and a defender of American family values.

However, protest grew slowly but steadily in the months after the announcement as organizations like the National Welfare Rights Organization mustered support against FAP. Organizations like the NWRO were in these months busy with preparing a plan to influence the political arena. They played an important role in the defeating of the plan in the Finance Committee of the Senate.

During the several debates in the political arena, the important role of the concepts can be seen. This can especially be seen on the basis of repeating arguments and discussions concerning the Family Assistance Plan. First, there was a willingness to expand welfare for anyone but the undeserving poor, as welfare expansion plans for the deserving poor in the form of the aged, blind and handicapped were passed unanimously and without debate. This underlines the fact that there was no unwillingness in monetary terms, but an unwillingness in mostly principal terms. Arguments that underlined the concept of the undeserving and deserving poor can also be found within discussions about the American moral and the American standards of welfare which were mentioned as well. It was seen as Un-American to put non-working poor and working poor together in one group, because the non-working poor were generally seen as undeserving while the working poor were deserving. Here the American tradition of categorization can be seen clearly. Second, considering the concept of gender, many arguments were formulated on a gender-biased basis. Unlike with men, who needed to work under the plan, there was much discussion about the role of women and work. It can be seen in the discussions that women on welfare did not have to work if they had a man in the house that could. Most of the Representatives and Senators did not have a problem with this. Only a few politicians mentioned the hypocrisy of this plan in that single mothers did have to work in order to receive welfare. Here the ideal of the male-head of house with a wife who did not have to work can be clearly seen. This family tradition was an important aspect of this plan. There was also an extreme focus on marital stability in the discussion. Single mothers who had not married the father of their child were seen as undeserving and unworthy of welfare. Politicians argued that these mothers had made the wrong choice by not marrying, and would inevitably raise a child in a broken home. It cannot be more clear from the discussions that the ideal of the women was to stay in a financially dependent role of the man, while being financially independent as a woman was seen as unnatural and unworthy of welfare. However, opponents to FAP were not convinced that marital stability would be better under FAP than under AFDC because single mothers would still receive welfare.

The role of race was dominant as well in the discussions, albeit more implicitly than on the other two concepts. This can be seen in the discussion whereas a much stated argument

against FAP was that it had huge economic consequences in the Southern states. Here, the labour-intensive low paying jobs were frequently occupied by black people. Because they would get federal payed welfare, their monetary situation would improve massively, making the low paying jobs much less favourable. While this was a good thing for the black people in the South, this was not the dominant aspect of the discussion, rather the consequences for the businesses in the South was the worrying aspect for the Republicans and Southern Democrats. The financial independence of black people was something that some politicians were deeply against. The discussion which underlined the thinking of some politicians on the Culture of Poverty was mostly aimed at black single mothers. They were occasionally called “lazy breeding machines” with “broken homes” and ideals. There was much resistance as to FAP giving money to these women.

The role of Republicans and Southern Democrats in sinking FAP was huge. In the Finance Committee this happened with help from Williams and Long. In the Senate there was also a role for Talmadge and Fannin in their conquest against FAP. They were helped by the administration who, when correcting some of the critique of Williams as to the notch effects of the plan, had made the plan more restrictive and less beneficial, which resulted in more resistance from the left side of the political spectrum as well. As a result, only a minority of the Senators, with Ribicoff as their leader, were convinced of the positivity of FAP, also because the NWRO through personal stories of black single mothers in the North, had convinced politicians on the left side, like McCarthy, that the plan was not beneficial for these mothers. The plan stranded in the Senate in 1972, whilst expansions on the aged, blind and handicapped were accepted a short period after the rejection of FAP.

During President Carters term, a plan was proposed which could be seen as the revival of FAP, the Program for Better Jobs and Income. There were however, some changes in the circumstances surrounding PBJI compared to FAP. The most important being that the results of the four experiments were now widely shared. Although the results differed massively, not per experiment but per research group, the most negative results were quickly framed by Anti-Guaranteed Annual Income politicians as proof that this plan indeed led to more marital breakups and broken homes. There was an overall slight increase in marital breakups, this was however open for discussion as to how negative this was. The increase of marital breakups was due to the fact that women received welfare and could be financially independent from the man. It could therefore also be framed positively by politicians in favour of the plan. As well as results on the experiment that brought more nuance and proved that the changes in work incentives and marital breakups were not significant at all. This however, would never

happen and the plan was brought down by politicians.

With these answers on the sub-questions, an answer can be give on the Research question. The question is: *What was the influence of ideas about gender roles, Race and the undeserving poor in the eventual rejection of the Family Assistance Plan by the government of the US in 1972?*

In writing this Thesis, it has become clear to me that the history of US welfare politics and the Family Assistance Plan specifically cannot be seen without taking the role of the concepts of gender, race and the undeserving poor into account. Throughout my chronological chapters, the influential role of these concepts can be clearly seen. From the beginning of my analysis in the Thirties the obsession of US welfare politics with categorizing different groups of people as to have control over who was more deserving than others was clear. Exclusion from welfare for black people happened frequently and was a recurring theme until the Sixties as well. Stigmatizing welfare was mostly fuelled by racist and sexist policy on welfare of the Southern States. These concepts were also important topics of discussion in the forming of the plan. It was mostly out of fear for “white backlash” that the working poor became the most important group of the plan. The growing concern throughout the Administration as to the unrest in society that welfare was nothing more than giving money to undeserving black people was the most important incentive. This can be clearly seen in how the plan was framed by Nixon. Interesting to see is the dominant role of these concepts throughout the discussions in all the political institutions. The same arguments and themes were recurring in all these institutions: The hugely important role of marital breakup of which the responsibility was set on the woman, economic consequences in the South because of more economic security for black people, the subservient role of the woman towards the man on the basis of income and work, the negative view on the poor in general with a big group seen as undeserving, the focus on families instead of singles and single parents and the unanimous approval of programs for the aged, blind and handicapped at the same time, while the group considered the undeserving poor in the end did not get a welfare expansion.

The influence of these concepts was considerable on the discussion and the eventual rejection of the Family Assistance Plan. The aim of my thesis was to analyse the role of these concepts as an alternative on the argument that the plan was rejected because it got no support from the left or the right of the political spectrum. Simply because it was too costly argued by people on the right or not doing enough for the poor argued by the left. I think this research proves that this argument is too superficial, as the discussions and implications of this plan were complex and would have altered the US welfare system on ethical and moral ground as

well. The discussions concerning these concepts explain these implications in a more clear and accurate manner. The matters of race, gender and the undeserving poor have been a red line through American welfare from the Thirties to the Seventies and arguably before and after this period as well. As shown in this thesis, discussions about the division between black and white people, men and women and the prejudiced view on poor and jobless people, dominated these debates about FAP. race, gender and the undeserving poor are all connected with each other and cannot be seen as different phenomenon's. During the time period analysed in this thesis, women and black people were groups of undeserving poor who did not fit in the traditional American culture and were therefore disadvantaged in traditional public views and through governmental policy, of which welfare policy was the focus point in this thesis. Black women in particular were the main target of prejudice as they fitted in both these groups. This strong culture of negative viewpoints on the able bodied poor resulted in discussions and decisions based on gut feelings and prejudice instead of rational arguments and facts. These cultural views have had a very big impact in the eventual rejection of the Family Assistance Plan and the Program for Better Jobs and Income, in which this thesis has provided many examples to underline this argument.

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