SAVING THE WORLD BY SAVING ITS CHILDREN:

**THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN CHILD WELFARE AGENCY
AND THE CHILDREN'S HOMES OF THE NATIONAL BENEVOLENT
ASSOCIATION OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, 1887-1974**

by

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Table of Contents

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List of Abbreviations

Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)

Disciples of Christ (DOC)

National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ (NBA)

Saving the World by Saving Its Children:
The Birth of the Modern Child Welfare Agency
and the Children's Homes of the National Benevolent Association
of the Disciples of Christ, 1887-1974[1]

Abstract

by

ELISE C. HAGESFELD

The Civil Rights Act and the expansion of Title IV of the Social Security Act in 1962 vastly increased the number of children and families eligible for child welfare services in the 1960s. States and counties were able to offer a significant and sustained increase in government support for expanding existing institutional child welfare programs and creating new community based programs. The combination of increased demand and increased dollars resulted in the transformation of children's institutions from mostly custodial and residential charitable organizations to mostly therapeutic and community-based government-subsidized nonprofit organizations. This dissertation examines the history of three children's homes affiliated with the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ from their founding around the turn of the twentieth century to the passage of the Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act in 1974. These case studies demonstrate how federal legislation, state regulation, and the work of a national accreditation organization, The Child Welfare League of America, influenced the creation of modern child welfare agencies.

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[1] "Membership in the [National Benevolent] Association grew… "Save the children and you save the world!" was the rallying cry." Hiram J. Lester. *Inasmuch-- the Saga of NBA*. (St. Louis: National Benevolent Association, 1987), 28.

Introduction

The providers of many of today's child welfare programs are nonprofit child welfare agencies. In a preliminary survey of the largest child welfare agencies in 2005, 70% were founded as orphanages more than ninety years ago (see Appendix 1 for a list of agencies).[2] Now providing residential treatment, foster care placement and training, family preservation therapy, school based counseling, parenting classes, and other programs, they are the backbone of today's service network for dependent and neglected children (see Appendix 2 for definitions of programs). Our twenty-first century child welfare system has evolved from local networks of independent, religiously affiliated, nonprofit children's institutions that were created to meet the custodial needs of dependent children in the nineteenth century.[3] The focus of this dissertation is to examine the transition of children's institutions from sectarian, locally funded charitable organizations to being the providers of comprehensive, government subsidized child welfare programs. In particular, this study follows the journey of three orphanages affiliated with the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ that were established between 1887-1904, and how the Civil Rights movement and the War on Poverty transformed them into modern nonprofit child welfare agencies.

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[2] Data is from a survey of child welfare agencies with $5 million or more in revenues in 2005, in 13 of the largest Metropolitan-Statistical Areas, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Search was conducted in the Guidestar database of nonprofit organizations in November 2009. See Appendix 1 for a list of agencies.

[3] A "Children's institution" here refers to facilities that provided residential care for children and youth (0-18 yrs.) in a group setting who were not living with their families. Although these organizations are popularly known as "orphanages," I prefer the terms "children's home" or "children's institution" because the vast majority of children in these facilities by the 20th century were *not* orphans. Although a small percentage were half-orphans, with one parent living, and an even smaller group were true orphans, with neither parent living, most were children of single parent families who were unable to support them. Poverty and neglect were the main reasons that children entered institutional care.

In its broadest definition, child welfare encompasses all policies and programs that support the well-being of children, nurturing their physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual development. In public policy terms, the child welfare "system" deals almost exclusively with dependent children whose well-being is endangered by physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect.[4] I place the word "system" here in quotation marks because it is a misnomer. In the United States, no single, coherent system provides all services needed by dependent, neglected, and/or abused children -- or their families. Unfortunately, no good alternative terms exist to describe the agglomeration of programs sponsored by multiple agencies across federal, state and county governments that do provide services to this group. For a multitude of reasons -- parental poverty, addiction, mental illness, neglect, or abandonment -- the children and families in that system are in crisis. But the public-private networks that we have created to help them are at best struggling to offer preventive services with limited funding, and at worst fighting allegations of incompetence, mismanagement, and failure to protect children from injury or death.[5]

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[4] The most common reason for a child to be referred to the welfare system is for allegations of parental neglect. According to the Child Welfare League of America, neglect can be defined as "the failure of a parent, guardian, or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs." It can include failure to provide for a child's physical needs like food, clothing and shelter, medical needs like prompt medical attention for illness and injury, educational needs like ensuring children attend school regularly, or emotional needs like providing proper supervision. Child Welfare League of America, "Fact Sheet: What is Child Abuse and Neglect?" 2008, http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan.cfm [accessed September 23, 2011].

[5] Here is a sampling of the 637 articles returned in a NewsBank news search of the terms "child welfare agency" and "death" in the six months between October 1, 2016 and April 1, 2017: Bill Wellock, "Children and Youth Services Facing State Sanctions, Staffing Issues," *Standard-Speaker (Hazleton, PA)*, November 30, 2016; Nikita Stewart, *New York Times*, "State Orders Monitor for NYC Child Welfare," December 15, 2016; Steve Strunsky and Susan K. Livio, "State Knew of Abuse Allegations before Newark Boy's Death, Sources Say," *The Star-Ledger, (Newark, NJ)*, October 8, 2016; Amy Beth Hanson, "Report: 14 Montana Kids Died within a Year of Abuse Reports," *Associated Press State Wire: Montana (MT)*, January 4, 2017.

Far from having a standardized system for dealing with child welfare, the U.S. approach is decentralized, disorganized, and difficult to navigate. It involves complex interactions between various levels of government and their subsidiary agencies. On the federal level, Congress and agencies including the Administration of Children and Families and the Social Security Administration, set budget and program priorities. At the state level, governors and legislative bodies interpret federal mandates and funding by creating their own budgets, program priorities, and regulations, passing legislation, providing oversight, and collaborating with the agencies that manage public welfare and child protection. At the local level, public administrative agencies like county departments of Children and Family Services work to put policy in action through direct casework services with families, coordination with the juvenile and criminal courts, and contracting for delivery of services with numerous nonprofit service providers. All of these actors influence the system in different ways, but from the viewpoint of the child, the system is most commonly represented by his or her county caseworker and the individuals providing direct services to him or her from a nonprofit child welfare service provider.

Overview

The first White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children in 1909 marked the beginning of a federal interest in what had been an exclusively state and local business: child welfare.[6] This national forum brought together child welfare advocates

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[6] Hastings Hornell Hart, Francis J. Butler, Julian M. Mack, Homer Folks, and James E. West, *Proceedings of the Conference on the Care of Dependent Children: Held at Washington, D.C., January 25, 26, 1909. Special Message of the President of United States Recommending Legislation Desired by the*

focused on the plight of dependent children, many of whom were living in destitution at home or in an institutional setting. The conference attracted many prominent progressive reformers and politicians, and produced a series of proposals for President Theodore Roosevelt, including the recommendation to establish what became the Federal Children's Bureau in 1912.[7] The Children's Bureau became an early advocate for child and maternal health, spearheaded the campaign against child labor, and supported legislation including Mother's Pensions, the precursor to Aid to Dependent Children. In 1921, The Child Welfare League was founded, in part to advise state legislators on best practices in child welfare funding and regulation. Later on, it would become an accreditation organization, consulting with individual agencies, but it remained a vocal advocate for policies supporting dependent children and families in institutional and foster care. It was not until the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 that legislation mandating standard guidelines for state systems for the care of dependent children would have the full force of the federal government behind it. In the absence of federal control, one of the most significant providers of services to dependent children and families were children's institutions, which were often religiously affiliated. Especially in times of national crisis, these local agencies developed interdependent relationships with county and state government that both expanded their funding and services and restricted their autonomy in determining the nature of those services.

Conference...and Transmitting the Proceedings of the Conference. Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress on February 15, 1909 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1909).
[7] *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2013).

The first of these crises was the Great Depression, which saw the passage of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, a shift in public policy and programs that is recognized by historians of social welfare as having a major impact on child welfare and children's institutions. The creation of Aid to Dependent Children in Title IV of the 1935 Social Security Act, was intended to support poor children by maintaining families in their homes, averting the need for institutionalized child care altogether.[8] Title V, section three of the Social Security Act provided block grants to states "for the protection and care of homeless, dependent, and neglected children, and children in danger of becoming delinquent," especially in rural and high poverty areas.[9] Together, sections IV and V of the Social Security Act provided the first federal funds for income support of dependent children and their mothers, and for state welfare agencies to develop programs providing services to children in need of protection.[10]

The second period of national crisis was the decade of the 1960s, when the Civil Rights Act created the requirement for public agencies to serve all Americans without regard to race, and the Social Security Act was amended to expand Aid to Families with Dependent Children and supports for Child Welfare activities as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. Together, these major legislative changes increased the number of families eligible to receive income support, and provided a new source of dollars to subsidize child welfare programming, including institutional and foster care

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[8] Linda Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890-1935* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

[9] Social Security Act of 1935, Title IV - Grants to States for Aid to Dependent Children, § 401-406 (1935), https://www.ssa.org/history/35activ.html; Social Security Act of 1935, Title V - Grants to States for Maternal and Child Welfare, § 601-687 (1935), https://www.ssa.gov/history/35act.html#TITLEV [accessed September 6, 2017].

[10] Robert H. Bremner, "Title IV of the Social Security Act of 1935," in Children and Youth in America, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), vol. 3, pt. 1:4:531-33; Katherine B. Oettinger, "Title V of the Social Security Act: What It Has Meant to Children," *Social Security Bulletin*, August 1960.

and community based services.[11] To date, the impact of the Great Society legislation on children's institutions has escaped the attention of historians. Incorrect assumptions about the history of orphanages and their role in providing children's services have led many historians to overlook how federal mandates to provide social services to people of all races and to every family eligible for public assistance transformed children's institutions into child welfare agencies.

Our child welfare systems were created out of national crises -- economic and moral -- that intensified the interplay between public and private organizations, government subsidy and individual philanthropy, and public mandate and private mission. Given America's federal political structure, national mandates defined a broad scope of activity and state governments responded individually. Instead of using these moments as opportunities to centralize, standardize and streamline child welfare services, state legislatures and administrative agencies turned, in the 1930s and again in the 1960s, to their county government apparatus, working with private, nonprofit and often religious-affiliated agencies, to determine how best to meet the challenge.

Facing state pressure to comply with new federal mandates in order to qualify for new sources of federal funding, counties turned to the institutions with the most experience dealing with struggling children and families: private orphanages. During the 1930s, this approach increased the number of children receiving services, but resulted in

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[11] Amendments to the Social Security Act in 1967 moved child welfare funding from Title V of the Act to Title IV B, which consolidated child welfare services
and support for out of home placements (in foster care or institutions) under the state agency administration of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. See: "Chapter 11: Child Welfare," in *Green Book: Background Material and Data on Major Programs within the Jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2016).
http://greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/2012-green-book/chapter-11-child-welfare/legislative-history [accessed September 6, 2017].

overcrowding and institutional stress, as children's institutions struggled to meet the demand for care with rapidly shrinking resources. Increased government support came largely from local authorities, even after the New Deal was passed, and it was not sufficient to offset the losses in charitable and fee income most children's institutions experienced during the Depression. Many institutions did not survive, or merged in order to create some economies of scale.[12]

In the 1960s, with new mandates to provide welfare services to all eligible families using an income test, regardless of race or ethnicity, states again turned to county administrators to produce results, and local government turned to local children's institutions. Writing in 1966, Ralph Kramer explained why public funds were often used to purchase services in the foster and institutional care of dependent children: "In general, purchase of a service is based on the belief that a voluntary agency can provide the service more appropriately, efficiently, and economically. The *prior existence* of a specialized and often sectarian service designed for small population groups for whom there is a public responsibility seems to constitute a presumption in favor of purchase" (emphasis added).[13] He also argued that government contracting with nonprofit agencies provided an advantage in flexibility both when beginning new programs and when terminating them, another compelling reason for counties to invest in existing agencies when trying to get new programs off the ground with the least amount of risk.[14]

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[12] Marshall B. Jones, "Crisis of the American Orphanage, 1931-1940," *The Social Service Review* 63, no. 4 (December 1, 1989): 613–29.

[13] Ralph M. Kramer, "Voluntary Agencies and the Use of Public Funds: Some Policy Issues," *Social Service Review* 40, no. 1 (March 1966): 15–26.

[14] Ibid., 17.

The federal government vastly increased the number of children and families eligible for child welfare services in the 1960s, and unlike the 1930s, counties were able to offer a significant and sustained increase in government support for expanding existing child welfare programs and creating new ones. The combination of increased demand and increased dollars resulted in the transformation of children's institutions from mostly custodial and residential charitable organizations to mostly therapeutic and community-based government subsidized organizations. While the crucible of the Depression reinforced the role of traditional children's institutions, the Great Society legislation ultimately turned children's institutions inside out. Instead of focusing on residential care for children on a campus, the residential function of the children's institution became less important, and new community-based programs like counseling, family preservation services, and foster care placement expanded.

From the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s, individual children's institutions reexamined their missions and values. Traditionally attached to a specific ethnicity or denomination, most children's institutions recognized that racial integration and serving their immediate geographic communities (rather than just their co-religionists) could be seen as part of their religious mission. The Child Welfare League of America accelerated these changes by surveying the current methods of children's institutions across the country and recommending improvements. Although their recommendations hadn't changed significantly since the 1950s, suddenly agencies that had wanted to change now had the resources to do so. Slowly, practices that had been largely unchanged since the 1930s began shifting: children's institutions modernized. They began to hire trained social work staff, expanded their client population to include minorities, accepted greater

numbers of county referrals, began to provide therapeutic support to children in their

care, started outpatient counseling programs for children and families in crisis, and began

developing foster care programs. But these efforts were uncoordinated and dependent on

the will of the administration of each institution. Although changes occurred in response

to federal, state, and local government pressures, each children's institution determined

its own program for the future based on its own timeline.

The modern child welfare agency was born out of the disjointed metamorphosis

of federal, state, and local policy around social welfare in the 1960s and the interaction of

those policies with individual, independent agencies on the ground. The role of the Child

Welfare League in these changes was largely as a catalyst: providing individualized,

concrete advice that the management of children's institutions could follow, once the

opportunity presented itself.

Historical Problems

Although the second chapter of this dissertation provides a historical overview of

child welfare from the colonial period to twentieth century America, the focus of this

dissertation will be on the period from 1935, immediately after the passage of Aid to

Dependent Children, to the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in

1974, the first federal legislation attempting to standardize child welfare activities

nationwide. Focusing on this period highlights several historical problems in the literature

surrounding social welfare policy in the United States, and particularly in the field of

child welfare. The most significant issues to be addressed here are: 1) literature on child

welfare largely focuses on Progressive Era reforms leading up to the New Deal and

neglects the postwar period; 2) there is a lack of research connecting national policy changes, including Civil Rights and the Great Society legislation, to the evolution of child welfare institutions; 3) current scholarship fails to recognize the continuing role of children's institutions in providing the bulk of child welfare services through the twentieth century; 4) the role of religious organizations in shaping the field of child welfare services and delivery systems is largely unrecognized.

Much historical work on women and children and social policy has focused on the Progressive Era and the Great Depression, examining the role of reformers in changing the ways in which dependent mothers and children were treated by the state. In the Progressive Era, reform agendas resulted in the advancement of foster care, the implementation of child labor laws, and the passage of legislation establishing mother's pensions, a state administered precursor to ADC that provided income support for poor widows, abandoned wives, and their children.[15] During the Great Depression and its aftermath, many of the goals of Progressive reformers came to fruition in federal legislation, including the establishment of Aid to Dependent Children and support for child welfare services in the Social Security Act of 1935. Partly in reaction to the

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[15] Examples include LeRoy Ashby, *Saving the Waifs: Reformers and Dependent Children, 1890-1917* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1984); John Ehrenreich, *The Altruistic Imagination: A History of Social Work and Social Policy in the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985); Joanne L. Goodwin, *Gender and the Politics of Welfare Reform: Mothers' Pensions in Chicago, 1911-1929* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Linda Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled*; Molly Ladd-Taylor, Molly, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930*, Women in American History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood: The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-1946* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Suzanne Mettler, *Dividing Citizens: Gender and Federalism in New Deal Public Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992); and Susan Tiffin, *In Whose Best Interest? Child Welfare Reform in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982).

attention paid to the history of the reform movement and its policies in the national arena, there has been a surge of literature about individual child care institutions since the 1990s that has sought to bring the focus down to the level where those policies were implemented, and how they affected children, families, and communities.[16]

Many of these histories are excellent monographs of the life of specific institutions and their inmates, internal conflicts and community relations. Few attempt to link these institutions to the broad national context of changing social welfare policy, social work professionalization, or cultural attitudes about children, women, and families. In addition to being generally limited in geographic space -- focusing on a single institution or multiple institutions in a single urban area -- the major histories of orphanages and other child welfare institutions have also been limited in time, largely ending between 1920 and 1940. Although the history of delinquency has begun to attract attention, the history of institutional care for dependent children and the evolution of orphanages into general child welfare organizations in the period after World War II is a fairly open field.[17]

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[16] See, for example: Hyman Bogen, *The Luckiest Orphans: A History of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Edward J. Cashin, *Beloved Bethesda: A History of George Whitefield's Home for Boys, 1740-2000* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2001); Kenneth Cmiel, *A Home of Another Kind: One Chicago Orphanage and the Tangle of Child Welfare* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Phil Craft, and Stan Friedland, *An Orphan Has Many Parents* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Pub. House, 1998); Reena Sigman Friedman, *These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880-1925* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1994); Howard Goldstein, *The Home on Gorham Street and the Voices of Its Children* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996); Ira Greenberg, ed., *The Hebrew National Orphan Home: Memories of Orphan Life* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2001); Timothy A. Hacsi, *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Gary Edward Polster, *Inside Looking Out: The Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum, 1868-1924* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1990); and Nona Mock Wyman, *Chopstick Childhood: In a Town of Silver Spoons* (San Francisco, CA: China Books and Periodicals, Inc., 1999); Nurith Zmora, *Orphanages Reconsidered: Child Care Institutions in Progressive Era Baltimore* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994).

[17] See Cmiel, *A Home of Another Kind*, 4; Eve Smith and Lisa Merkel-Holguin, *A History of Child Welfare* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1996); and LeRoy Ashby, *Endangered Children:*

Another issue in this area of study, one that comes directly out of the disconnect between scholarship on individual institutions versus scholarship on the national policy debates, is a problem in the timeline represented as normative in the field. Authors write as if orphanages disappeared after the passage of ADC in 1935, or that surviving institutions immediately hired professional social workers and specialists and became therapeutic residential treatment facilities.[18] In the postwar period, while many orphanages closed due to the decrease in demand, others transformed themselves into residential treatment facilities as a way to respond to the decline in overall population and to meet the needs of what was seen as a corresponding increase in the "troubledness" of the children who were placed in their care.[19] Far from disappearing, many children's institutions continued to serve primarily custodial functions like traditional orphanages, some until the late 1960s.[20] Since local and state governments began to take greater control of and responsibility for dependent children in the 1930s, they must have been aware of the nature of the facilities to which they were referring children and which received their direct financial support. Orphanages responded to demands to modernize

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Dependency, Neglect and Abuse in American History (New York, NY: Twayne Publishing, 1997), Ch. 1. Ashby's history is comprehensive and well written, but he follows the bulk of dependent children into the foster care system after the 1930s. In an attempt to focus attention on the poor outcomes and problematic organization of services for dependent children through the 1990s, he almost entirely neglects the continuing role of institutional care throughout the century.

[18] See, for example, Matthew A. Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage: A Prehistory of the American Welfare System* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); Tiffin, *In Whose Best Interest*; and Ashby, *Endangered Children*.

[19] Alfred Kadushin, *Child Welfare Services*, 3rd edition (New York, NY: MacMillan Publishers, 1980), 616; see also Marshall B. Jones, "Crisis of the American Orphanage: 1931-1940," *The Social Service Review*, 63 (1989): 613-629; Marshall B. Jones, "Decline of the American Orphanage: 1941-1980," *The Social Service Review*, 67 (1993): 460; Marion J. Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages: Cleveland, 1851-1996," *Catholic Historical Review*, 88 (2002):65-89.

[20] Brewer, *A Century of Caring*, 144. Colorado Christian Home did not hire its first intake social worker until 1965, and Cleveland Christian Home did not make progress toward significant professionalization of its staff until after 1962. Only in 1970 was the "Babies Department" of the Cleveland Christian Home closed due to changing state regulations. See Hiram J. Lester and Marjorie Lee Lester, *Inasmuch, The Saga of NBA* (St. Louis, MO: National Benevolent Association, 1987), 144-145.

by building new facilities and increasingly hiring professional social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists to facilitate the shift from custodial to therapeutic care. But these changes were slow in coming, and often were not implemented until the 1960s, when children's institutions began to offer additional services that were desired by the state or county governments responsible for the welfare of dependent children. To continue to argue that practices changed nationwide by 1940 because of the passage of the New Deal in 1935 is deeply problematic, and ignores substantive evidence to the contrary.

The continuity of government relationships with religiously affiliated orphanages in implementing child welfare policy is another area largely ignored or misinterpreted by prominent scholars. Matthew Crenson, for example, argues that foster care placement in New York and elsewhere was developed in part to sidestep contentious church-state relations that had been endemic between city and state boards of charities and religious non-profits that dominated orphanage care. In his view, first mother's pensions and then the New Deal eliminated the need for children's institutions, and ultimately ended the perceived stranglehold that religious groups had over political decision-making on the municipal and state level.[21] I argue against this position, providing evidence that ongoing relationships between children's institutions and local governments were mutually beneficial for the most part, that orphanages did not simply evaporate after the passage of Aid to Dependent Children, and that foster care placement continued to be shaped by religious and cultural expectations through the mid-1970s.

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[21] Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage*, Ch. 11.

Timothy Hasci, in an otherwise excellent book, overlooks the reality that in many communities, foster care placement and parent recruitment remained essentially sectarian activities until the 1970s; Nurith Zmora credits private, sectarian orphanages with making the transition to providing foster care placement, but neither ties this information to a national narrative, nor explores the ways in which these affiliations may have shaped services to children.[22] On the contrary, I argue that in most large cities, the transition from orphanage to residential treatment and general child welfare provider was linked directly to sectarian concerns, which often determined which agencies cared for which children. Religion, while always a sensitive issue for institutions, became even *more* important when dealing with foster care, not less.[23] To place a Catholic child in a Protestant foster home, for example, was seen as an act of open hostility by many Catholics, regardless of the shortage of Catholic foster homes in a given community.[24] In the narrative about the creation of a public welfare system and the assertion that orphanages were variously "abandoned," "discarded," and "stopped functioning" once New Deal legislation was passed, scholars overlook the persistence of children's institutions and the faith traditions that supported so many of them.

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[22] Hasci, *Second Home*, 217; Zmora, *Orphanages Reconsidered*, Ch 7.

[23] Race was also a major issue in child placement, but was often dealt with by completely excluding black children from any institutional option, with the exception of the few communities with a functioning black orphanage. Black children were not widely served by the child welfare system until the 1960s – and much later in some communities. The expansion of public child welfare services to include black children has not necessarily resulted in more positive outcomes for black families. For more information on this aspect of the child welfare system, see Andrew Billingsley and Jeanne Giovannoni, *Children of the Storm: Black Children and American Child Welfare* (New York, NY: Harcourt College Publishing, 1972); Dorothy Roberts, *Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002); and Marion J. Morton, "Institutionalizing Inequalities: Black Children and Child Welfare in Cleveland, 1859-1998." *Journal of Social History*, 34 (2000): 141-162.

[24] Dorothy Marie Brown and Elizabeth McKeown, *The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), Ch. 3; Marion J. Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages"; and Mary Oates, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), Ch. 2.

The religious origins and affiliations of American child welfare institutions are also largely absent from the growing literature on the history of social work as a field. The professionalization of social work occurred alongside the expansion and change of child welfare services in the 20th century. Many social work students had their field placements in sectarian agencies and looked forward to working in social welfare organizations that may have been affiliated with Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish communities. Histories of the profession largely grapple with the questions of how social work became a profession and whether that profession has deviated from its mission to serve the poor.[25] While they may address the conflict between incoming social work professionals and the "untrained" volunteers and staff they must learn to work with in social welfare organizations, they tend to overlook the significance of religious motivation to volunteer and staff in child welfare agencies; and the fact that most staff and volunteer leadership at child welfare agencies were not trained in the field of social work. I argue that rather than dismissing the religious affiliation of nonprofit children's institutions, it is worth examining the ways in which faith traditions shaped the culture, governance, and self-perception of child welfare work. In addition, religious communities -- churches, temples, social clubs, and schools -- were essential to the continuing existence of these institutions during periods of fluctuating government support. These communities were made up of deep networks of individuals who provided volunteer labor and who donated money and materials.

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[25] See Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930* (New York, NY: Atheneum, 1972); Leslie Leighninger, *Social Work: Search for Identity* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987), Phillip Popple and P. Nelson Reid, "A Profession for the Poor? A History of Social Work in the United States," in G.R. Lowe and P.N. Reid (eds.), *The Professionalization of Poverty* (New York, NY: Aldine De Gruyter, 1999), 1-28.

To recap, the issues I aim to address in the historical literature include the problem of periodization that erroneously links the end of the orphanage to the passage of Aid to Dependent Children in 1935, the failure to situate the history of individual institutions within national child welfare policy, the absence of institutional child welfare in child welfare history of the postwar period, and the lack of serious examination of the role that religious affiliations have played in the field of child welfare.

Method and Sources

By examining a group of three related childcare institutions, this dissertation will show how national policy debates have interacted with government regulations, professional standards, community needs, and cultural attitudes to influence the actual delivery of care to dependent children and their families, and how these institutions have responded to changing expectations and environments. Founded between 1889 and 1906 as orphanages, with the capacity to house 350 children at their peak, and affiliated with the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ (NBA), the institutions studied here are children's homes affiliated with the Disciples of Christ (DOC), a mainline Protestant denomination. The homes are located in St. Louis, Missouri, Cleveland, Ohio, and Denver, Colorado. Both the Cleveland Christian Home and the Colorado Christian Home continue to provide direct services to children and families with a residential facility at their core. Unfortunately, due to financial mismanagement by the NBA, the home in St. Louis closed in 2011, and its assets were sold to pay off debts left over after bankruptcy.[26] Examining the history of these three institutions between

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[26] Patrick L. Thimangu, "National Benevolent's Cindy Dougherty Has Strong Board Support Despite Turmoil," *St. Louis Business Journal*, October 24, 2004 http://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/stories/2004/10/25/story2.html [accessed September 6, 2017]; Paul J.

their founding and 1974 offers a comparison of how government regulation and funding

effected different child welfare agencies, the impact of social work professionalization

and accreditation on agency administration, and the role of religion in carrying out their

child welfare mission.

Why choose institutions affiliated with a small Protestant denomination as case

studies? Unlike many Protestant denominations which supported local welfare

institutions with exclusively local dollars, the Disciples used the NBA as a national social

service coordinating agency for all of their affiliated welfare institutions – orphanages,

nursing homes, institutions for the mentally handicapped, and hospitals.[27] While founded

in St. Louis, Missouri, the NBA eventually gained national reach, including institutions in

thirty-one states, from Pennsylvania to Oregon, and from Alaska to Texas. Luckily, they

also archived much of their documentary material in the Disciples of Christ Historical

Society in Nashville, TN. From the founding of the NBA, correspondence between its

officers and member institutions, board communications, promotional materials, financial

records and institutional censuses and evaluations are available in one location. Within

the last ten years, the DOC Historical Society has also come into possession of additional

records from the St. Louis, Cleveland, and Denver Children's Homes as all reached (or

surpassed) their hundredth birthdays and recognized that photos, letters, ledgers, and

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Ricotta and Leonard Weiser-Varon, "When Debt Confronts Charitable Mission," *The Bankruptcy Strategist*, August 2005.

[27] The only scholarly examination of the NBA and its children's homes I have been able to locate is a chapter in LeRoy Ashby's book *Endangered Children*, which cites almost no secondary sources in relation to the homes themselves. All other sources of information about the NBA and the Christian Homes I have found have been published by the Disciples of Christ religious press, or self-published monographs of specific institutions, including Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch,* and Brewer, *A Century of Caring*.

home movies living in basements and attics had historical value.[28]

Because many institutional records are lost or poorly stored, and because no current organization exists to control and monitor the use of records that contain confidential information, historians rarely have the opportunity to study a single child care organization over time, and almost never have the opportunity to consider the development of multiple organizations in different parts of the nation.[29] Because of the richness of the archival collection for the NBA, there is evidence to support a shared a religious and organizational culture between the Christian Children's Homes in St. Louis, Cleveland, and Denver, resulting from being part of the Disciples of Christ. This shared culture between NBA institutions helps to highlight regional differences arising from variable state regulation, rates of professionalization, and local community dynamics.

For the purposes of understanding the NBA, it is important to note that just as each individual in Disciples theology has a right to follow his or her autonomous conscience, so each institution was given autonomy to administer its own programs. In other words, management of the children's homes was not generally from the top down -- from NBA to the homes -- but was rather an ongoing collaboration (or endless negotiation) between the children's homes and the NBA leadership. This democratic national structure translated into a fairly egalitarian institutional structure, with many avenues for influencing decision-making. Suggestions from the members of the women's auxiliary might be considered alongside ideas from board members, staff, and

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[28] Conversation with Sara Harwell, Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Archivist, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, May 2009.

[29] LeRoy Ashby, *Saving the Waifs*, Ch. 1. For the particular problems inherent in tracing African-American institutional history, see Gunja Sengupta, "Elites, Subalterns and American Identities: A Case Study of African American Benevolence," *American Historical Review*, 109 (2004): 1107-1110.

administrators. Many of the children's homes employees and volunteers referred to each other as "brother" and "sister," as the early Christians had in the Bible. This language also reflected a more egalitarian view of women's capabilities and skills than general American society reflected at the time. The egalitarian and democratic theological positioning of the children's homes administrations also affected their treatment of children. Throughout the language of the children's homes -- in newsletters, fundraising materials, internal communications, and news articles -- staff and administrators emphasize the importance of treating each child as an individual, a unique soul who is loved by God. Many of the workers at the children's homes clearly understood the transmission of the message of Christ's love to the children under their care as the underlying reason for all of their work.

All three homes had consistent leadership between the 1930s and the 1970s, and all remained members of the NBA; all three began to make the transition from orphanage into residential treatment facility in the 1960s; all three accepted referrals of children from their respective county family services departments. These similarities help to highlight some of the regional differences in state legislation and county resource allocation, and in the progress of the social work profession and national standards through the upper Midwest, the South, and the West.

In order to provide context for each of the Christian Homes, and to examine the role of the Child Welfare League in spreading professional standards throughout the field, I visited the Social Welfare History Archive of the University of Minnesota, where the archives of the Child Welfare League of America are kept. Using CWLA surveys of other children's institutions in Cleveland, Denver, and St. Louis has helped to illustrate

when the Christian Children's Homes have been ahead, behind, or on par with their contemporary peer institutions. For example, in 1960, a researcher at CWLA sent out a survey to various agencies who had replaced their babies' department with placing infants in foster care. The purpose of the survey was to determine whether any of the agencies that had ended the practice of keeping infants in a babies' ward had regretted their decision. The agencies wrote that their experience with foster parents caring for infants was overwhelmingly positive. The correspondence from 10 agencies in 7 different states showed, however, that several of these agencies had only just stopped the practice of caring for infants in their institutions, and that there were still agencies in their various communities that had baby wards. [30] I was shocked – the thought of infants still being kept in institutional care in 1958 or 1959, much less continuing the practice through 1960, seemed incredible – research on the damage of institutional care for children younger than 2 years was available in the mid-1940s. Incredibly, the purpose of the survey was to help this CWLA researcher persuade other agencies that going to a foster care model for infants was indeed better for everyone, especially for the children. Within this context, while the Cleveland Christian Home was no early adopter, it was also not a complete outlier just because it closed the Baby Department in 1962. By placing each of the Disciples' Children's Homes within a network of child welfare service providers, all undergoing similar changes between 1935-1974, a clear pattern emerges that links local institutional change to national policy change.

The Rockefeller Archives Center has provided invaluable support and material on

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[30] Nursery Survey, 1960. Child Welfare League of America Collection. Social Welfare History Archive, University of Minnesota.

the early professionalization of social work and the precursor to the Child Welfare

League of America. The papers of the Russell Sage Foundation, a vigorous advocate of

social work practice and theory, and a direct funder of children's agencies during the

period in question, the Commonwealth Fund papers, which include material from the

Child Welfare League of America, and the Rockefeller Foundation papers, which include

material on early funding of departments of social work and their curricula across the

United States, have also provided context for the DOC children's homes and the

environments in which they functioned.

Tracking changes in the relationship of government to the provision of child

welfare services and the advancement of the profession of social work, I have also

researched relevant state regulations in Ohio, Missouri and Colorado, and changes in

federal child welfare policy. Social work literature on child caring institutions, the role of

modern child welfare agencies, and literature on best practices in child welfare

departments has also provided context and richness to this exploration of policy and

practice in the American child welfare system.[31]

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[31] On the law of child welfare see, for example: Susan Gluck, *Pitiful Plaintiffs: Child Welfare Litigation and the Federal Courts* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000); Sanford Katz, Melba McGrath, and Ruth-Arlene Howe, *Child Neglect Laws in America* (Chicago, IL: American Bar Association, Section of Family Law, 1976); Harvey Schweitzer and Judith Larsen, *Foster Care Law: A Primer* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005); and Theodore J. Stein, *Child Welfare and the Law* (Washington, D.C.: CWLA Press, 2006).
On child caring institutions, see, for example: Thomas Young, Martha Dore, and Donnell Pappenfort, "Residential Group Care for Children Considered Emotionally Disturbed, 1966-1981," *The Social Service Review* 2 (1988): 158-170; Lydia F. Hylton, *The Residential Treatment Center: Children Programs, and Costs* (New York, NY: Child Welfare League of America, 1964); Susanne Schulz, ed., *Creative Group Living in a Children's Institution: A Symposium* (New York, NY: Association Press, 1951); Gabriel D'Amato, *Residential Treatment for Child Mental Health: Towards Ego-Social Development and a Community-Child Model* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1969); George H. Weber and Bernard J. Haberlein, eds., *Residential Treatment of Emotionally Disturbed Children* (New York, NY: Behavioral Publications, 1972); and Anthony Maluccio and Wilma Marlow, "Residential Treatment of Emotionally Disturbed Children: A Review of the Literature," *The Social Service Review* 46 (1972): 230-250.

Conclusion

Historians of child welfare have interpreted the shift from orphanage to residential treatment center as a way to respond to a decrease in the number of children entering institutions, and an attempt to meet the needs of a small group of increasingly troubled children.[32] It is my hypothesis that the largest drivers of these changes were federal policy decisions that provided massive financial incentives for states to comply with Civil Rights legislation across public programs – from education to child welfare. In order to demonstrate compliance, state Bureaus of Child Welfare pressured county governments, which in turn pressured local child welfare agencies to broaden their services due to demand from increasing numbers of families in the welfare system, and to meet nationally set social work standards. In the process, children's residential institutions were required to accept a smaller number of the children most difficult to place in foster care: those considered too old to adopt or adjust to family foster care, and those with emotional and behavioral problems. The incidence of minority children in both of these categories was disproportionately high.

In the decades following the 1960s, the influx of government funding from an expanded Title IV provision of the Social Security Act overwhelmed all other sources of income for children's institutions. This reality transformed children's homes into residential treatment facilities, local organizations into regional service providers, religious organizations into non-sectarian community organizations, and ultimately

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[32] Kadushin, *Child Welfare Services*, 616; See also Jones "Crisis of the American Orphanage: 1931-1940," 613-629; Jones, "Decline of the American Orphanage: 1941-1980," 460; Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages: Cleveland, 1851-1996," 65-89.

reduced autonomous nonprofits to dependence on government funding. This process may have begun in the 1930s, with the proliferation of municipal public-private partnerships aimed at child welfare provision, but it did not accelerate significantly until federal legislation mandated state action. President Johnson's War on Poverty and the Civil Rights movement came together in the expansion of federal government spending and regulation through Aid to Families with Dependent Children, broader Social Security coverage, and Civil Rights legislation. Between them, they provided states with the incentive and the means to significantly expand the number of children and families served by their welfare systems. These new systems were defined, not by community standards or religious morality, but by state level bureaucracies which demanded compliance with basic professional standards, desegregation of facilities, and family based services for the growing welfare population. These demands have shaped our current child welfare agencies in positive and negative ways, by requiring them to serve children and families from all kinds of backgrounds, and by limiting what kinds of services are considered reimbursable, by supporting a breadth of community based services and by restricting their independence and flexibility.

Chapter 1

A Brief History of Child Welfare and the Child Welfare League of America

This chapter contains a historical overview of two of the most influential

institutional actors in the field of child welfare: public policies regarding dependent

children from the colonial period through the last quarter of the 20th century, and the

Child Welfare League of America, an independent accreditation and advocacy

organization that has shaped government regulations and individual child welfare agency

practice. Infants, children, and youth who have lived in out of home care, whether in

institutions or in substitute families, are referred to as dependent children. They are

children for whom family resources have failed, leaving them reliant on charitable or

public support. The vast majority of children in the United States who have lived in out

of home care from the nineteenth century through to the present have been poor.[33]

Although today's dependent children are no longer separated from their families

because of poverty itself, poverty continues to be a major contributing factor to

involvement in the child welfare system.[34] While government funded social safety net

programs like Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or the Supplement Nutrition

Assistance Program can assist with basic income and food, many families in poverty are

single parent households that struggle with stable housing and employment. The ongoing

stress of managing a family in these circumstances can have negative effects on an

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[33] Teena M. McGuinness and Kristina Schneider, "Poverty, Child Maltreatment, and Foster Care," *Journal of American Psychiatric Nurses Association* 13, no. 5 (October 2007): 296-303.
[34] Megan Martin and Alexandra Citrin, "Prevent, Protect & Provide: How Child Welfare Can Better Support Low-Income Families," First Focus State Policy Advocacy and Reform Center, Center for the Study of Social Policy https://www.cssp.org/policy/2014/Prevent-Protect-Provide.pdf [accessed August 31, 2017].

adult's mental health and parenting abilities.[35] Dependent children from the past or the present are children who have experienced family crisis of some kind, most often due to a severe lack of resources. Other reasons for needing help from the community might be a parent's illness, unemployment, or addiction to alcohol or drugs. Although some dependent children have been victims of physical or sexual abuse, the greatest number have (and continue to be) victims of neglect – children whose caregivers fail "to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision to the degree that the child's health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm."[36]

This chapter will address the ways in which public policies from the colonial period onward have changed from addressing child welfare as a category of general social welfare dealing with all dependent children and families to a much narrower definition of child welfare as dealing with children who cannot live at home with parents or guardians for reasons of abuse or neglect. The role of the CWLA, which becomes active in the twentieth century, is in part to support the expansion of state income supports for dependent children and families like mother's pensions and Aid to Dependent Children, but also to advocate for improved child welfare legislation and regulation at the state and local level while assisting individual nonprofit agencies to meet their strict accreditation standards.

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[35] Ibid., 1.

[36] Child Welfare Information Gateway. "Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect." *Child Welfare Information Gateway*, April 2016. https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/define/. See also "The AFCARS Report: Preliminary Estimates of FY 2015 as of June 2016," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, June 2016 https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport23.pdf.

Public Policies Regarding Dependent Children

The importation of British approaches to social welfare law throughout the

American colonies placed child welfare -- or the care of dependent, abandoned,

neglected, or abused children -- within the context of general social welfare. The

Elizabethan Poor Law situates the responsibility for care of dependent children, the sick,

and elderly directly in the hands of the established church, and as a result, the unit of

government responsible for the care of the poor in colonial America was the parish.[37] The

parish system of governance that gave church and municipal officials the power to

allocate resources to the poor, remove poor children from their families if necessary, and

to provide for the support of orphans in other families.[38]

At a time when there were no nursery schools or other out-of-home care options

for young children, single parenthood for poor men and women was devastating to their

ability to earn a living and keep their family together. A poor woman alone with young

children had few opportunities for paid work, and if she could find work, paying someone

to watch her children was not an option. Similarly, a poor man alone with young children

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[37] "The Elizabethan Poor Law, 1601," in *Making the Nonprofit Sector in the United States*, David C. Hammack, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 9-13.
[38] See Ruth Wallis Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1971); John K. Alexander*, Render Them Submissive: Responses to Poverty in Philadelphia, 1760-1880* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980); James Marten, ed., *Children in Colonial America* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), Chs. 5 and 9; Nian-Sheng Huang, "Financing Poor Relief: In Colonial Boston," *Massachusetts Historical Review* Vol. 8 (2006), 72-103; Tim Lockley, "Rural Poor Relief in Colonial South Carolina," *The Historical Journal* Vol. 48, no. 4 (December 2005), 955-976; Kathleen D. McCarthy, ed., *Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

was unlikely to be able to afford to pay for someone to watch his children while working outside the home. Single parents were often forced to choose between leaving infants and toddlers in the care of siblings as young as five or six, leaving their children in the care of neighbors who may have been unreliable or only able to periodically "check in" on the children, or applying to the community for support.[39] The act of applying for support often resulted in the community choosing one of the following strategies for supporting dependent children: outdoor relief, boarding out, indenture, or apprenticeship.[40] In well-established cities like Boston, New York, and Charleston, an almshouse or work house was also available from the seventeenth century onward, but conditions were notoriously bad, and before the nineteenth century, institutional care was a small part of the ways in which most communities dealt with dependent children.[41]

Congregationalist magistrates in the Northeastern colonies, and Church of England vestrymen and wardens had the power to levy taxes for the support of the poor, and the responsibility to distribute those funds to the best advantage of the community.[42] Appeals were made directly to church officials by the poor themselves or by magistrates or community members intervening on a family's behalf. Support for poor families could come in the form of outdoor relief, subsidized housing, placement in the poorhouse (where such facilities existed), or through the indenture of dependent children, thus reducing the number of mouths to feed in a given family. Assistance, like today, was contingent on residency in a given parish, and as early as the 1750s, poor families were

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[39] Judith A. Dulberger, "Mother Donit Fore the Best": Correspondence of a Nineteenth-Century Orphan Asylum (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996).
[40] LeRoy Ashby, *Endangered Children: Dependency, Neglect, and Abuse in American History* (New York, NY: Twayne Publishers, 1997), Ch. 1.
[41] Ashby, *Endangered Children*, 6; Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 30-31.
[42] Walter J. Fraser, Jr., "The City Elite, 'Disorder,' and the Poor Children of Pre-Revolutionary Charleston," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* Vol. 84, no. 3 (July 1983): 167-179.

"returned" to their parish of origin, usually the head of household's birthplace, in order to receive charitable support.[43]

Decisions about whether poor families with dependent children would remain together and receive outdoor relief, most often in-kind supports of food, clothing, furniture, or housing, were contingent upon the perceived character of the parent or parents. Because the distribution of relief was wholly within the framework of the church and carried out by church members, the causes of poverty, disease, and familial disintegration were viewed as a reflection of personal virtue rather than environmental factors like economic cycles or working conditions.[44] Both the method of providing relief and the generosity of that relief depended upon the mercy of magistrates.

Outdoor relief involved leaving children at home with one or both parents and providing some subsidy directly to the family, whether material support like clothing, food, fuel, or monetary support. The duration and amount of support was indefinite and tailored to the family's circumstances.[45] It could be withheld at any time if the church or town authorities decided that the obligation belonged to another locality (where the mother was born, for example), that the recipient of charity was no longer worthy (if a parent was seen frequenting a saloon), or that the original problem had been resolved (parent recovered from illness or injury and was now able to seek work). Support could

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[43] Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans*, 5.

[44] Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans*; Alexander, *Render Them Submissive*, and William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 169. Although discussing the period of the early nineteenth century, thus post-colonial, Novak argues that the treatment of the poor was determined by community consensus of morality: "The power of summary procedures, local discretion and 'character' evidence in 19th Century morals regulation reflects the tenacity of traditional conceptions of public power and community order. This regulatory regime embraced notions of criminality, constitutional right, and the relationship of public and private radically different from twentieth century liberal constitutionalism."

[45] Jennifer Turner, "Almshouse, Workhouse, Outdoor Relief: Responses to the Poor in Southeastern Massachusetts, 1740-1800," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* Vol. 31, no. 2 (Summer 2003).

also be reduced if demand was particularly high or the authorities decided that ample employment was available.[46]

Boarding out, primarily for infants and young children, provided a substitute family that received a monthly stipend in return for providing room and board and benefitting from whatever little labor a child could contribute. This could include grandparents, aunts or uncles, or other relatives of the child if they were unable to bear the financial burden on their own until the child was of age to be indentured or apprenticed. Material support for the boarding family might include food, fuel, or even the use of a cow or the promise of its progeny.[47] In several New England towns, there are records of a benefactor donating a cow to support the poor. The cow's milk and its offspring could be used as payment to families that agreed to take dependent children, elderly, or ill people into their homes.[48]

Indenture, or being "bound out," provided a substitute home for children usually over the age of six, in which the county or magistrates contracted with another family to provide room, board, and basic education in exchange for the child's labor for a fixed period -- most often until the age of sixteen or eighteen. *Apprenticeship*, which for children over the age of twelve or thirteen, meant that they were allowed room and board with a family in exchange for their labor, with the added benefit of learning a trade. Both indenture and apprenticeship agreements involved unrelated individuals paying a fee and signing a contract promising that they would provide food, shelter, clothing, and a basic

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[46] Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans*.
[47] Charles R. Lee, "Public Poor Relief and the Massachusetts Community, 1620-1715," *The New England Quarterly* Vol. 55, no. 4 (December 1982): 564-85.
[48] Lee, "Public Poor Relief," 568-69.

vocational education in exchange for that child's labor.[49] LeRoy Ashby points out that this system "generally protected dependent children from homelessness and vagrancy" but that it incentivized masters to keep children separate from their own families in a position of servitude, and at risk of overwork and abuse. In his view, at its heart, indenture "was always a business deal."[50]

In the New England colonies, church magistrates made provision for these children, often giving direct subsidy to poor widows with young children so that they could be cared for at home, and placing children over the age of eight in apprenticeships. In the Southern colonies, county commissioners dealt with large numbers of orphaned white children that resulted from the yearly outbreaks of typhoid, malaria, and yellow fever among early settlers. It was not uncommon for children to have lost both parents and a number of siblings during epidemics, so dependent children most often were placed in other families with a small stipend from the county until they reached the age of apprenticeship.[51] Former colonies continued their traditions of dealing with dependent children and families once America gained its independence.

The first almshouses, workhouses, and orphanages were founded in the early seventeenth century in cities like New Orleans, New York, Boston, Charleston, and Atlanta, but they remained a rarity through the eighteenth century.[52] Beginning in the 1820s, the asylum movement gained popularity and introduced the institutions of the poor house and the asylum to a much broader geography. The impetus behind this move was two-fold: first to separate the deserving poor, those unable to work -- aged widows,

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[49] Ashby, *Endangered Children*, 8-11.
[50] Ibid., 10.
[51] Ibid., 6-8.
[52] Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 30-31.

dependent children, the crippled -- from the undeserving poor -- individuals perceived to be unwilling to work, immoral and intemperate, and second, to separate dependent individuals from the corruptions of society so they could be rehabilitated and made useful again when possible.[53]

The first congregate institutions were almshouses, which housed the destitute and disabled of all ages. This meant that young children and pregnant women might share space with the insane and chronically ill. Conditions at these institutions were reported to be chaotic and unsuited for the kind of sober guidance that dependent children required to develop into useful men and women.[54] By the 1850s a movement grew to segregate children of the poor from the beggars, the chronically ill, the intemperate, the petty criminals and prostitutes that came to populate these institutions. Beginning in the 1830s, orphanages were founded across the country to shelter, educate, and train dependent children away from the moral pollution of poor urban neighborhoods and their residents.[55] Although the number of orphanages expanded rapidly from the 1830s to the 1910s, they did so in an environment of rising criticism from those who came to believe that there was no substitute for a family environment – or replacement for the nurturing that a mother could provide – and that institutions were creating a generation of mindless, emotionally stunted automatons unable to function as productive citizens upon their release into society.[56]

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[53] Susan Tiffin, *In Whose Best Interest: Child Welfare Reform in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 63; Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 188.
[54] Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 196.
[55] Ibid., 210.
[56] Tiffin, *In Whose Best* Interest, Ch 3; Matthew Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

One of the most vocal critics of institutional care for children was Charles Loring Brace, one of the founders of the New York Children's Aid Society, an organization that embarked upon a program of "placing out" dependent urban children with rural farming families in the 1870s. The intention was to replace degraded tenements, intemperate parents, and the Catholic religion for wholesome air, hard work, and Protestant Christianity.[57] In essence, Brace was advocating for a rejection of the orphanage and a return to the indenture system, but far removed from the fetid urban neighborhoods where the children came from. In this, he was similar to the original proponents of the orphan asylum. A necessary part of his plan for dependent children was separation from a morally and physically polluted environment.

Forced to go farther and farther outside of cities to place an increasing number of dependent children, the Children's Aid Society pioneered what came to be known as "orphan trains," which consisted of groups of dependent city children shipped westward with the hope that they could be matched with a desirable family at one of the stops along the way. The practice of relocating dependent children, many of whom were the offspring of Catholic immigrants from Irish, Slavic, and Italian backgrounds, created a backlash of its own from both the receiving communities, which complained they were being used as dumping grounds for incorrigibles, and from Catholic activists in New York and Boston, who viewed the Children's Aid Society as stealing their children. Regardless, the inability of CAS to follow up on most of these placements ultimately made the practice untenable. Reports of exploitation, runaways, and abuse were seized upon by social

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[57] Marilyn Irvin Holt, *The Orphan Trains: Placing Out in America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992); and Stephen O'Connor, *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

workers and opponents of the practice to demonstrate the CAS' ultimate irresponsibility to the children it claimed to be helping.[58]

In her recent book, *Fostering on the Farm*, Megan Birk argues that the shortcomings of rural placements were obvious, not only in far off states as with the Orphan Trains, but also in rural areas outside of major cities. The standard indenture contracts introduced uncertainty about whether children were being welcomed into family life or into an existence of drudgery and abuse, and the sheer distance between a child placing organization's offices and the sites where children were living created difficulty in providing appropriate oversight. These issues would support the shift toward the largely urban and suburban foster care model, in which families were paid standard per diem boarding fees. Direct subsidy to caretakers, it was hoped, would remove the perverse incentive to rely on children's labor to pay for their keep. It also made oversight much easier because caseworkers could visit homes on a regular basis, and children weren't as isolated as they were in farm country, where neighbors might be miles away.[59] In the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth, advocates for placing dependent children in family settings rather than in rural communities or in institutions continued to place pressure on policy makers. Their campaign culminated in the 1909 White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, in which reformers and early social workers agreed that "a foster home, even if inadequate, was…better than the best institution."[60]

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[58] O'Connor, *Orphan Trains*, 247.

[59] Megan Birk, *Fostering on the Farm: Child Placement in the Rural Midwest* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015).

[60] Alfred Kadushin, *Child Welfare Services*, 3rd edition (New York, NY: MacMillan Publishers, 1980), 586; and Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood: The US Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-1946* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

As a result of the consensus among reformers, institutional care for children fell out of favor in the twentieth century. While orphanages would continue to gain population through the 1930s, non-institutional approaches to child welfare expanded. Mother's Pension legislation spread across the United States between 1910-1925. These laws made provisions for direct cash subsidies to widows and women with children without access to male support. Mother's Pensions were intended to prevent family dissolution in the event that a father died or abandoned his family, leaving a dependent mother and her children. This was a method of keeping families intact, keeping children out of orphanages, and preserving the dignity and respectability of motherhood. By 1925, forty-two states had passed mother's pension laws, a cause championed by women's groups across the country.[61] The political will behind the mother's pension movement eventually drove the creation of federal support for similar measures, what became Aid to Dependent Children, part of the Social Security Act of 1935. The fundamental and underlying purpose of AFDC was (and remains) to provide enough support for families to be able to care for their children at home, regardless of poverty.[62]

At the same time that income supports were being made available for a limited number of poor families (see Chapter 4 for more on Aid to Dependent Children), institutional care and foster care placement were still available. For those children whose families were broken up by abandonment or divorce, whose parents were unfit, abusive

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[61] Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), Ch. 8.
[62] The first of the four major goals of the Federal Government's Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 is to "provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes." Department of Health and Human Services, Major Provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, December 16, 2009, http://library.findlaw.com/1997/Apr/28/130301.html

or neglectful, foster care became the preferred option, if it was available.[63] In many

states, however, provisions for the recruitment of foster parents and for placing children

in foster homes remained inconsistent and insufficient. In a 1941 report that CWLA

produced for the St. Louis Board of Children's Guardians, children placed in foster care

included "1187 children who are in boarding homes and only 310 in wage homes, free

homes, with their own parents or relatives, or some in hospitals."[64] There was not

consensus about whether it was preferable to have free homes for foster children as

opposed to paid homes for foster children until the mid-twentieth century. The debate

over whether and how much to pay foster parents made it difficult to recruit and retain

families, and oversight of foster families was often lacking. The St. Louis Board of

Guardians struggled under large caseloads and foster children were only followed up with

"three or four times a year."[65]

The population of children in institutions began to decline drastically in the

1960s. Until then, most children who entered institutional care were placed there by

parents or guardians, who were struggling to raise them in difficult circumstances.

Unmarried and abandoned mothers, widows and widowers, families beset by injury,

illness, or unemployment, parents struggling with addiction or mental illness, or family

members concerned for the welfare of children if left in the care of their parents often

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[63] It is important to note that definitions of what constitutes parental unfitness, abuse, and neglect have shifted significantly over time. Physical abuse, for example, was "rediscovered" in 1961 by Dr. C. Henry Kempe, who used radiological evidence to argue that approximately 10% of childhood emergency room visits were the result of parental abuse. This "discovery" of Battered Child Syndrome led to the requirement that doctors and nurses must report suspected abuse to authorities. C. H. Kempe, Frederic N. Silverman, Brandt F. Steele, William Droegemuller, and Henry K. Silver, "The Battered Child Syndrome," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 181 (1962): 17-24.
[64] Henrietta L. Gordon, "Report of Field Visit to the Board of Children's Guardians, St. Louis, MO," March 1941. Child Welfare League of America Collection, Series 4.7 Surveys 1918-1988. Social Welfare History Archive.
[65] Ibid., 5-6.

decided to place a child or sibling group in institutional care. Adult family members in the early twentieth century viewed the orphanage as a preferable alternative to sending young children to work, leaving them unattended while the parent worked, or placing them in the care of unreliable (and often unscrupulous) but affordable child care providers. Ideally, children's institutions offered basic education, consistent nutrition, and (in most instances) a safe place to stay for children whose parent or parents could not provide those things temporarily. Most children remained in contact with their families while in institutional care and ultimately returned to them when things were more stable. The minority of children who had been removed from their families by court action due to allegations of abuse or neglect were housed alongside "normal" poor children in institutions, and most did not receive any specialized care to help them cope with their experiences. Today, the majority of children living in out-of-home care are also from poor backgrounds, but all have been forcibly removed from their families by the state and placed into foster care.

Outcomes for children in foster care are notoriously poor, and approximately 500,000 children were in out-of-home care in the United States as of 2008.[66] Approximately 10% of the general foster care population is in congregate care, which includes "Residential Treatment," a form of intensive 24-hour care for children who are unable to function in a family foster care setting, group homes, commonly for teens aging out of the foster care system, or coping with behavioral and mental health problems. In 2004, over 50,000 children resided in over 3,500 different children's institutions across

[66] Dr. William P. O'Hare, "Data from Children in Foster Care from the Census Bureau," Annie E. Casey Foundation Report, June 2008, 5.

the country.[67] The capacity to provide residential facilities for children is at the center of many of the largest child welfare service providers, and is an outgrowth of their origins as orphanages.

From 1935 to about 1965, many children's institutions remained closer to the "cottage plan" institutional design advocated by reformers in the 1910s, than the "therapeutic residential treatment center" that contemporary social work experts began to advocate for in the late 1930s. The cottage system was an attempt to replace traditional congregate care in large institutions with more individualized care. It was a movement to make the children's institution as close to a real home and family as possible. In congregate care, dependent children were housed in groups of 25-100, slept in open wards, had a regimented schedule, and often attended school within the institution. The cottage plan reorganized the institution around units of children in smaller groups of 15-25, housed in separate cottages on a large campus or in units within a single large building, each of which had its own house parent. Children generally attended public schools, went on field trips out into the community, participated in chores, and may have seen a social worker periodically. The residential treatment center, by contrast, was an institutional model designed for children with serious emotional and behavioral problems. It excluded "normal" dependent children, and offered short-term (12-18 months) intensive individual and group therapy to help stabilize difficult children so they

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[67] See the reports "Number of Licensed, Approved and Certified Homes and Facilities, 2004" and "Number of Children in Out-of-home Care, by placement setting, 2006" from the National Data Analysis System of the Child Welfare League of America, http://ndas.cwla.org, September 15, 2010. These reports provide the most recent national data available, and they are estimates at best. Eighteen states did not report any data for residential institutions in the 2004 report, and in 2006 there is no data for the state of Massachusetts.

could be placed back out in the community with a foster family or returned to their parents.

During the Depression and its aftermath, counties and states were less interested in reforming the child welfare system than in meeting the immediate needs of a population in economic crisis. Part of the Social Security Act in 1935 provided federal matching funds for states to provide out-of-home services for the care and protection of dependent children. In every major urban area during the Depression, homeless, abandoned, and neglected children posed a threat to order and public safety as well as a rebuke to the public conscience. County officials, ultimately accountable to the state, generally preferred to provide those services by contracting with the "experts" already in their counties – the many orphanages that had been working with the children of the poor for decades. The tradition of nonprofit activity in American civil society made it natural for county departments of child welfare to negotiate contracts with children's institutions for the provision of shelter and care for children in county custody. Although the vast majority of these organizations were religiously affiliated – Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Jewish, even the "non-denominational" institutions were Protestant – their status as independent nonprofit corporations, governed by volunteer boards of directors and supported by philanthropic community members, made them logical recipients of government funds to support public policy objectives, in this case, the activity of providing food and shelter for poor children.[68]

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[68] Ralph M. Kramer, "Voluntary Agencies and the Use of Public Funds: Some Policy Issues," *Social Service Review* Vol. 40, no. 1 (March 1966): 15–26; Steven Rathgeb Smith, *Nonprofits for Hire: The Welfare State in the Age of Contracting* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

In addition to providing orphanages with new sources of income, these public-private contracts also provided them with social capital, reinforcing their legitimacy in the eyes of the public while simultaneously reinforcing the divisions between the religious, ethnic, and racial communities they served. Most children's institutions were founded by specific groups to minister to "their own" children. Catholic and Jewish orphanages were built with the express purpose of saving their children from Protestant proselytizing, and preserving religious values in the next generation. Ethnic groups and racial minorities also built orphanages, often motivated by fear that their children would not be treated fairly in mainstream institutions. In all of these institutions, however, there were multiple avenues for children to be admitted. Parents, relatives, and clergy, in addition to the county, all had the right to petition that the case of a particular child or sibling group be considered for admission. Many children's institutions not only encouraged regular parental visitation, they also collected fees to support the room and board costs of children from relatives and friends. These fees never came close to covering the actual expenses of running a children's institution, but they are a concrete demonstration of the continued link between many children in residence and their families, and they could amount to 10% or more of institutional income.[69]

It is important to note that the vast majority of institutional care for children from the nineteenth century to the 1960s did not serve African-American, Asian, or Hispanic children, or any other "non-white" children. In 1890, out of a total of six hundred and

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[69] See *Family Welfare Agencies: Children's Group* (Cleveland, OH: Welfare Federation of Cleveland, 1925), Cleveland Christian Home Private Collection; Edith M. H. Baylor, *A Study of Intake and Case Work Service in the Protective Agencies of the Child Care Group of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland* (Cleveland, OH: Welfare Federation of Cleveland, 1933), F 34 ZSD B358. Western Reserve Historical Society; Colorado Christian Home Financial Records. 39 DIII 95-98. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, Tennessee, and St. Louis Christian Home Reports. 39 DI 1-10. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, Tennessee.

forty-four orphan asylums in the census of benevolent institutions, seventy-six percent (490) identified as white only institutions. Only four percent (27) identified themselves as non-white (which could include African-American, Native American, or other ethnic minority children). Nineteen percent (120) of institutions identified as open to all races, but in practice, majority white institutions had few black residents. By 1933, the total number of children's institutions had more than doubled to 1,321. Among them, fifty percent (663) identified as white only, seven percent (90) identified as non-white, eighteen percent (239) identified as open to all races, and twenty-five percent (329) were unknown.[70] Although there was growth in the total number of nonwhite institutions during the period, they remained less than ten percent of the total landscape of children's homes.

The institutions that were created by minority groups, most often African Americans, were often short lived, financially unstable, and politically unpopular.[71] Access to white donors and philanthropic institutions were critical to long term success.[72] There was also a continuing debate among African Americans about whether founding private institutions for dependent black children functionally relieved the state of the need to take seriously its responsibilities toward serving minorities.[73] In the gap between

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[70] Timothy A. Hasci, *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 147.

[71] Andrew Billingsley and Jeanne M. Giovannoni, *Children of the Storm: Black Children and American Child Welfare* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1972), 27, 51-54, 75-79.

[72] Ibid., 30.

[73] For more on African-American children and child welfare, see Billingsley and Giovannoni, *Children of the Storm*; Sandra M. O'Donnell, "The Care of Dependent African-American Children in Chicago: The Struggle Between Black Self-Help and Professionalism," *Journal of Social History* Vol. 27, no. 4 (July 1, 1994): 763–776; Thomas Thirlkel, "The Forgotten Children: African American Children and Child Welfare Reform in St. Louis, 1890-1930," Ph.D. Dissertation, American Studies, University of Kansas, 2010; Erich E. Dietrich, "Tuskegees of the North: African American Orphanages in New York, 1890-1940," Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 2007; Jessie B. Ramey, "A Childcare Crisis: Poor Black and White Families and Orphanages in Pittsburgh, 1878-1929," Ph.D. Dissertation, ProQuest, 2009.

private institutions and changes in public attitudes toward segregation, the most

vulnerable children and families were left to fend for themselves. The collaboration

between governments and existing agencies to provide for dependent children prior to the

1960s generally solidified the exclusion of minorities. This pattern was reinforced by the

administration of Aid to Dependent Children during this period, which in almost every

state discriminated against minority applicants to the program.[74]

The specialized residential treatment model began to be adopted by the most

progressive children's institutions in the 1940s. It wasn't until the late 1960s, however,

when Civil Rights legislation forced states to find a way to provide care for *all* of their

dependent children (including minorities), Aid to Families with Dependent Children grew

to accommodate a much larger proportion of the eligible population, and local

departments of children and family services assumed central control of all institutional

intake, that the majority of children's institutions began the transition to residential

treatment. The state demand for accountability in the disbursement of funds originating

from the federal government ultimately required counties to keep track of each dependent

child receiving welfare services (a number that exploded between 1966 and 1974),

leading them to close all lines of referral into children's institutions outside of county

agencies. Once the county department of child welfare was the only entity with the right

to send a child into institutional care, county social workers used their discretion,

informed by the understanding that institutions were the "last, worst, option," to direct the

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[74] Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse : A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York, NY: BasicBooks, 1996), 266-267; Claudia Lawrence-Webb, "African American Children in the Modern Child Welfare System: A Legacy of the Flemming Rule," *Child Welfare* Vol. 76, no. 1 (February 1997): 9-30.

majority of dependent children into other arrangements.[75] Only then did institutions face

rapidly and irreversibly declining rolls.

Family preservation, often in homes receiving public assistance, and foster care

for children at immediate risk of abuse or neglect became the preferred options for

dealing with children and families who had come to the attention of authorities.

Residential children's institutions became the providers of highly specialized, expensive,

therapeutic treatment for children with severe emotional and behavioral problems who

were unable to function in family foster care. These preferences matched county needs in

terms of cost (family-based care and foster care were much cheaper than residential care)

and in terms of public perception. In the midst of the anti-institutional sentiments of the

1960s and 1970s, county and state governments did not want to be seen as unnecessarily

institutionalizing children who could function in less restrictive settings. At the same

time, children's institutions, struggling to hold onto their relevancy and responding to

critiques from the Child Welfare League of America and state standard-setting agencies,

expanded non-residential services like foster care placement and permanency planning,

outpatient therapy for children and families, and family preservation services. In so

doing, they worked to meet the rapidly expanding needs of county and state officials,

who became the primary source of funding for increasingly expensive programs that

required professional expertise and administration.

Responding to these pressures fundamentally changed the institutional *culture* and

structure of children's institutions nationwide. In the process of transforming themselves

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[75] The phrase "the last, worst, option" is taken from the report on the White House Conference on Dependent Children in 1910, and describes the feelings of social workers toward institutional child care. From the earliest days of the social work profession, family based care has been the preferred approach to helping dependent children.

into "residential treatment facilities" with a broad range of children's services that could compete for county referrals, organizations professionalized their staff and procedures, updated facilities, loosened their denominational ties, and began to accept children from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. They reoriented themselves from serving their own small communities to serving the public at large. The Child Welfare League played a unique role in the transformation of hundreds of children's institutions across the United States.

The Child Welfare League of America

The history of the Child Welfare League of America is linked to the most prominent philanthropic foundations in the nascent field of social work in the first quarter of the twentieth century: The Russell Sage Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund. Leaders in the field included Hastings H. Hart, a longstanding reformer involved in the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, an organizer of the First White House Conference for the Care of Dependent Children in 1909, and the director of the Child Helping Department of the Russell Sage Foundation. The connection between the influential individuals in the field of child saving and social work reform and the philanthropic resources of major foundations set the League up to be immediately influential and to play a prominent role in the space between policy makers and implementation of those policies on the ground. The League emerged out of the confluence of the movement for scientific philanthropy and the earliest iterations of social work, expressed through the settlement house movement and the founding of new schools of social work to train reformers in Mary Richmond's revolutionary casework

method.[76]

In 1915, Carl C. Carstens, the Chairman of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, and the Superintendent of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, delivered an influential speech in which he called for standardization of child welfare policies and programs across the United States. After endeavoring to conduct a survey of state and local policies dealing with dependent, neglected, delinquent, and physically and mentally handicapped children, he and the committee of other experienced practitioners and advocates in the child welfare field concluded that the "diversity of children's laws and children's institutions" was "positively bewildering." "The time has come," he said, "for giving shape to some general plan which shall have gathered together the successful experiences of various states and cities," and to "weave them into a harmonious whole…to provide for the proper safeguarding of the children's interests."[77]

At the time, child welfare laws, policies and funding sources were entirely dependent upon local circumstances and varied widely. Some states determined policy and provided oversight of child welfare agencies using voluntary committees with statewide responsibilities but few resources.[78] Other states were largely dependent on county authorities to make policy, and in others, individual municipalities governed funding policy in child welfare.[79] Across the country, arrangements for funding were inconsistent. Some states had a network of public children's institutions that were

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[76] Elizabeth N. Agnew, *From Charity to Social Work: Mary E. Richmond and the Creation of an American Profession* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

[77] C.C. Carstens, "Report of the Committee: A Community Plan in Children's Work" (Chicago, IL: Hildmann Printing Co, 1915), 92-93.

[78] New York, Ohio, and Colorado, for example.

[79] Many Southern states allowed counties great leeway in funding children's services. Large metropolitan areas sometimes had their own oversight committees and discretionary funds.

commonly and chronically underfunded by the taxpayers. In many states, counties

depended upon the charitable organizations providing services (orphanages, reform

schools, almshouses, and asylums) to accommodate children in need, however, they may

or may not have subsidized those services using public dollars. That left the vast majority

of charitable organizations dependent upon their fundraising acumen to support the

children in their care.

The variability of funding and oversight in the child welfare field created vast

inequalities in the level of services that children received based on their geographic

location, religious affiliation, and race. While model institutions might be well-supported

with public and private funds and progressive in their treatment of children, others were

scraping by on a pittance from local government and inconsistent charitable support, and

were barely able to feed their charges. Institutions that were consistently funded and on

the progressive end of the spectrum provided care that was in many ways materially

superior to what most intact families living in poverty could have done for their own

children. These institutions provided three square meals a day in buildings with sufficient

heat, recreational facilities, and infirmaries offering the best available health care.

Administrators believed children should appear well-groomed and "normal" to their peers

(rather than poverty-stricken and institutionalized) – they outfitted children with a variety

of freshly laundered clothing and individual toiletries to maximize hygiene. The best

institutions also encouraged children to complete some level of secondary education and

supported their engagement with the broader community through summer camps, church

attendance, scouting, or other social activities.

Struggling institutions, however, could be terrible and dangerous places for

children. Children were chronically underfed, and buildings were often in disrepair.

Shortages of heating fuel were common, and children suffered from high rates of

infectious disease.[80] Shabby uniforms and close-cropped heads (to control the spread of

lice) marked these children as institutional inmates in the community, where their peers

often shunned or bullied them. With scarce resources, poor organizations often required

children to share towels, combs, and toothbrushes, and emphasized vocational training in

place of elementary education. The worst of these institutions were functionally death

sentences for young children. In New York state, during the 5 years between 1909-1913,

of 28,210 children admitted as infants at eleven large institutions, 11,918 died before the

age of 2 years, an infant mortality rate of 42% -- five times the rate in the general

population of the state. In one of these institutions, 57.6% of the babies admitted died

before their 2nd birthdays.[81]

   Amongst children's institutions were a tiny minority of agencies with

professionally trained social workers on staff.[82] Most child welfare institutions were

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[80] During a particularly harsh winter in 1918, a black orphanage in financial straits, the Brooklyn Howard Colored Orphan Asylum, had their pipes burst and the central heating break. Two children got such severe frostbite their feet were amputated – an event which precipitated the closing of the orphanage. Gunja Sengupta argues in part that the employment of a black matron as part of the management of the institution left it in a particularly vulnerable financial situation. Wealthy white donors could not overcome their stereotypes of black individuals as prone to laziness, inefficiency and financial mismanagement, and were loath to support an organization in which black individuals participated in the running of the institution. Although the physical plant was aging, and the facility was somewhat overcrowded, investigators had commented on the level of camaraderie and warm familiarity between the children and the staff. Gunja Sengupta, "Elites, Subalterns, and American Identities: A Case Study of African American Benevolence," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 109, no. 4 (October 2004): 1104–39.

[81] Philip Van Ingen, "Infant Mortality in Institutions," Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction at the 42nd Annual Session held in Baltimore, Maryland, May 12-19, 1915 (Chicago, IL: Hildmann Printing Co., 1915), 126-131.

[82] The scope and requirements of that training were largely undefined -- in the early part of the 20th century, the social casework method of social work, pioneered by Mary Richmond, was percolating through the community of individuals and agencies coming out of the Charity Organization Society movement for scientific philanthropy, the National Conference on Charities and Corrections, and the fledgling schools of philanthropy and social work that were just taking root. Even as late as 1936, the Child Welfare League, in its published standards for child protection agencies, could not require that all agencies employ social workers with at least one year of formal social work education. That was unavailable to

headed by clergy or religiously motivated individuals who were well-intentioned, but lacked the modern training needed to deal with children's individual needs, according to Carstens. Love was no longer enough of a qualification for doing the work of child welfare.[83] The enthusiasm which greeted this speech among those in the child welfare field led to the foundation of the Bureau for Exchange of Information Among Child Helping Agencies (BEI) in 1915, initially under the auspices of the Russell Sage Foundation's Child Helping Department.[84] The purpose of the Bureau was to conduct a survey of child welfare legislation across state governments, and make recommendations for a standardized, modern set of child welfare laws. In the process of conducting the survey, Carstens and other researchers at the Russell Sage Foundation came across state legislators who were eager for guidance about how best to accomplish reforms in the systems for dealing with dependent and delinquent children.[85]

After the initial survey report detailed inconsistencies between states in the classification of dependent children, disparate levels of mother's aid pensions, the failure of the adult court system to deal with children in a humane way, poor regulation of adoption and foster care, and other glaring problems, Carstens recommended the establishment of a permanent organization for the development and promotion of a

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many newer workers in the field, and was viewed as unreasonable by seasoned professionals. Paul Gerard Anderson, "The Origin, Emergence, and Professional Recognition of Child Protection," *Social Service Review* Vol. 63, no. 2 (June 1, 1989): 222–44; and *The Child Welfare League of America's 1936 Standards for Child Protective Organizations* (New York, NY: CWLA, 1937).

[83] *The Child Welfare League of America's 1936 Standards for Child Protective Organizations* (New York, NY: CWLA, 1937), 95-96.

[84] David C. Hammack, Stanton Wheeler, and Russell Sage Foundation, *Social Science in the Making: Essays on the Russell Sage Foundation, 1907-1972* (New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), 22-23; John M. Glenn, Lillian Brandt, and F. Emerson Andrews, *Russell Sage Foundation, 1907-1947* (New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1947), 112-114.

[85] Hastings Hart Correspondence, Record Group IV4B1: Early Office Files, Sub-series 155, Box 14, Folder 122, Rockefeller Archives Center, New York.

national child welfare reform agenda, that would work closely with states and counties and interested institutions to effect modern social work standards. The BEI became an independent association in 1920: the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA). Under Carstens' leadership, it was to become the major power in setting accreditation and regulatory standards for both public and private child welfare agencies nationally.[86]

The role of the CWLA was to research, produce and disseminate information on modern child welfare practices, to educate legislators on the state and local levels about issues relevant to child welfare, and to serve its accredited member agencies as a consultant on how, when, and why to make programmatic or administrative changes. After its establishment as an independent nonprofit organization in 1920, the CWLA carried on the practice of the social science survey which was seminal to the work of its initial funders, the Russell Sage Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund. The CWLA expanded on their pioneering work in the use of the survey as a tool in the field of child welfare, and was deeply invested in the idea that correct measurement of an issue would lead to a clear diagnosis and prescription for addressing that issue. It was instrumental in doing basic research about the state of services in the field – covering everything from the necessity for quality child care for working mothers, to the challenge of providing child welfare services to growing black populations in urban areas in the aftermath of World War II, to issuing new standards for the criteria used to place children in foster care.[87] The results of its research findings were disseminated in pamphlets and

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[86] Marshall B. Jones, "Decline of the American Orphanage, 1941-1980," *Social Service Review* Vol. 67, no. 3 (September 1993): 459-480; "Child Welfare League of America," Social Welfare History Project, University of Minnesota Social Welfare History Archives website: http://www.socialwelfarehistory.com/programs/childwelfarechild-labor/child-welfare-league-of-america/ [accessed October 14, 2015]

[87] Child Welfare League of America, *Child Care Facilities for Dependent and Neglected Negro Children in Three Cities: New York City, Philadelphia, Cleveland* (New York, NY: Child Welfare League of America,

newsletters to its members, and to the scholarly community in schools of social work through its journal, *Child Welfare*.

Along with its progressive peers, the CWLA sought to define the scope of social problems with the goal of identifying structural, legal, or social changes that needed to be made, often by public agencies in partnership with nonprofit organizations. It also furthered the progressive agenda to expand the role of social case work as a legitimate and desirable helping profession. As Alice O'Connor argues in her book, *Poverty Knowledge*, one of the main goals of the social science research survey in the Progressive Era was to spur political action that would result in policy change to remediate social welfare problems. The CWLA was an active participant in this kind of advocacy.[88]

From its origins as the Bureau of Information Exchange, working closely with individual state governments to identify areas of needed policy change, the CWLA remained focused throughout the twentieth century on policy advocacy at the state and national level around children's issues, much of which would come to be implemented through public/private partnerships. The main avenues for this kind of collaboration was the work that CWLA did to standardize state legislation around child welfare program funding and oversight, to educate county child welfare boards of state policy changes and modern standards of social work practice, and to act as consultants to individual child welfare agencies – both public and private – which needed guidance to comply with new policy changes and to implement program reforms that were consistent with modern

1945); Child Welfare League of America, *Standards for Day Care Service* (New York, NY: Child Welfare League of America, 1960); Child Welfare League of America, *Standards for Child Welfare Agencies Placing Children in Foster Care* (New York, NY: Child Welfare League of America, 1948).
[88] Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 3-24.

social work practice. This multi-level approach to education, reform, and accreditation meant that the CWLA simultaneously advocated on a national and state level around major policy changes and sent individuals to implement those standards in specific nonprofit child welfare institutions.

The CWLA brought the survey process to each individual agency that applied for membership. Each agency would be visited by a CWLA investigative team, which would meet with board members, administrators, staff, residents of the institution, and community agencies with which it worked in order to develop an accurate picture of the functioning of the organization internally and its reputation in the community. Teams usually did this work in person during a short but intense visit. After they left, the investigators would write up a survey report of findings and recommendations. Each of these reports is from 25-100 pages long, and is broken into a formulaic review of almost every possible detail of the agency and its programs, culture, funding, management, and expertise. The Cleveland Christian Home's 1962 survey, for example, ran to 36 pages, and offered 19 specific recommendations of changes to be made, including replacing the retiring Matron, who had worked with the agency for over 40 years, with "a qualified administrator…with professional training in child welfare," closing the babies' department and replacing it with a day care to provide services to the immediate community, and to remodel facilities and reduce the number of children in custodial care.[89] The language in the reports is consistent across agencies and decades. As experts, the CWLA surveyors had no qualms about bringing modern standards of social work into

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[89] Don DeMuth, *Report of a Survey of The Cleveland Christian Home for Children, Cleveland, Ohio* (New York, NY: Child Welfare League of America, May-June 1962), 34-36.

agencies seen as old fashioned or behind the times.[90]

An example of one of those standards was the CWLA's position that intake for children's institutions should be conducted by workers trained in the method of social case work, a stance the agency held from its inception. Intake was the first place to ensure that institutional care was only provided to children when it was absolutely necessary. At the state level, the organization tried to get legislators to add regulations that would require all orphanages or children's institutions to employ at least one social worker who would be responsible for checking the family background and circumstances of each child applying for a place in institutional care. By conducting a careful investigation of each individual family, the institution could refer worthy parents (mostly mothers) to services that might assist them to stabilize their income, like Mother's Pensions, or to increase their access to work by linking them to safe and reliable day care at a settlement house or day nursery. In other words, social case work could provide preventive services that would avoid removing children needlessly from families that were mostly struggling with poverty and needed a little extra help. This, in turn, helped to preserve family bonds, reduce delinquency, and increase the number of spaces available in children's homes for those who needed to live away from their families as a result of parental absence, abuse, or unfitness due to physical or mental illness or addiction.

In states like Ohio and Missouri, which had systems of public county-run orphanages and networks of private sectarian nonprofit orphanages in major urban areas, the conflicting jurisdictions, lack of educational resources, and internal agency resistance

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[90] I have reviewed more than 20 of these reports written between 1935 and 1974 covering various children's institutions, departments of public welfare, and foster care placement agencies across multiple states in the Archives of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and the Social Welfare History Archives.

made implementation of this recommendation impossible until after the postwar period. The Cleveland Christian Home and the St. Louis Christian Home, for example, retained their volunteer admissions committees made up of church members, almost exclusively women, who undertook investigations of children's circumstances until the 1960s. All of the Christian Homes had very active volunteer Boards of Trustees, and the most active volunteer committee was the Admissions Committee. Although the agencies used modern methods of investigation, they were certain that the individual concern, charitable spirit, and religious faith of the Christian Home's committee members would ensure that the children coming in to their care were placed appropriately.

In the Admissions Committee report of October 30, 1956, for example, it was reported that 66 outside visits had been made, 56 office interviews conducted, 1,093 telephone calls placed and 784 letters had been written over the past 6 months.[91] But regardless of the time and effort put in by these church ladies, it was clear that their work did not meet modern case work standards. Their lack of appropriate training meant that this volunteer labor, however well-intentioned, was viewed as redundant and wasteful. The CWLA Report of the Survey of the St. Louis Christian Home, issued in 1969, takes the Board of Trustees to task for continuing to allow its Admissions Committee to interfere with the judgment of the social work staff: "This committee…met 23 times during the last fiscal year. Its function is to review and make decisions on all applications, i.e., for children's admission to the Home or for other agency services...However, now that the agency does have qualified professional staff it is inappropriate for a board committee to review individual applications and make decisions

[91] See Board Meeting Minutes of the St. Louis Christian Home, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN, 39 D:I 64.

on admissions."[92]

Even with the CWLA's growing network of professional social workers, agencies and legislators, change was slow to come. Although the organization began advocating for intake social workers in the 1920s, it was not until the 1960s that most states began to require that children's institutions have at least one licensed social worker on staff. At that time, state child welfare officials begin to hold agencies accountable by threatening to withhold funds or licensing if appropriate staff wasn't hired. And herein lies the conundrum of the CWLA – with the multiple demands on legislators, financial constraints on state and county budgets, and the general inertia of agency bureaucracies – even with all its resources, the CWLA often worked for years with few systemic results. Instead, much of the work that the League ended up doing was slowly laying the foundation over many years for changes that would happen rapidly due to larger forces at work that would come to fruition with the Great Society legislation of the 1960s.

Conclusion

The history of public policies toward dependent children reflects shifting attitudes about the nature of poverty, the causes of dependence, and the role of childhood. Colonial strategies sought to keep poor children within a family unit through provision of outdoor relief, placement in a boarding home, or permanent placement as an apprentice or through indenture. Nineteenth-century strategies of care were influenced by the asylum movement and the impetus to isolate children from the pernicious influences of the poor communities in which they lived – either through placement in an orphanage or placing

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[92] Report of the Survey of St. Louis Christian Home, St. Louis Missouri, March 1969. Child Welfare League of America. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN. 39 D: I 59.

out in rural communities like the Children's Aid Society model. By the early twentieth century, the White House Conference for the Care of Dependent Children provided a forum for advocates of new kinds of child welfare reforms that sought to separate children and families struggling with poverty from those in which children could not or should not remain at home. The movement for Mother's Pensions began to provide governmental solutions for preserving families suffering from the loss of the main breadwinner through direct subsidy to widows and abandoned wives with children. At the same time, the foster care model, in which children are placed in a substitute family within a limited geographic area, began to gain popularity for children who needed to live outside their biological family unit for reasons of family crisis or unfitness. Children's institutions attempted to address the criticisms of institutional life by decreasing regimentation, adopting the cottage plan of organization, and integrating institutions into the communities of which they were a part. The work of the Child Welfare League of America advanced the standardization of child welfare legislation, research on public policies, and the individual improvement of child welfare standards at individual agencies through accreditation.

Chapter 2

Institution Building for the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of

Christ and Its Children's Homes, 1887-1935

> Away from the city's crowded thoroughfares, out among
> the trees and flowers on a broad, green lawn, stands upon a
> hill a house which is called "The Children's Home." Into
> this home come children from the congested portion of our
> city, from the so-called "homes" where frequently the
> mother is forced to spend the day in the factory, leaving her
> little family alone, or in the care of a small daughter -- a
> child mother…These are the dependent children which
> come to us, some left without natural family support…To
> all of the little ones the Home on the Hill extends a warm
> welcome and a helping hand. There is another side of this
> work, the most gratifying of all. When the little ones can be
> returned to the broken homes, and we can feel that the
> discords of the past are wiped out by the great harmony of
> love and good will, and that our wards are trained to do
> their part in the rebuilding of the home, then our joy is
> indeed complete.[93]

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the National Benevolent Association
and its children's homes in the context of its foundation and early years. To begin at the
beginning, it will revisit the cultural conversations surrounding "child-savers" in the
Progressive era, and situate the group of women who founded the NBA within them. It
will go on to introduce some of the individual women who founded the NBA and their
early struggles gaining legitimacy for their organized benevolence from the General
Assembly of the Disciples of Christ. A brief overview of Disciples' theology provides
religious context for that struggle and the manner in which the NBA grows as an
institution and manages its constituent relationships with multiple children's homes.

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[93] J.C.B. Stivers, "Home on the Hill," *Cleveland Enterprise Newspaper*, May 28, 1921.

Major influences on the early NBA include the Progressive movement, the changing roles of women and children in the late nineteenth century, the social gospel movement and the charity organization movement, and the desire to preserve their religious tradition in face of growing Catholic outreach to dependent children. Within these intersecting visions, the administrators of the NBA successfully raised a new organization from birth to maturity between 1887 and 1935.

Much of what has been written about institutional care for dependent children in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is a lesson in extremes. The history of orphanages, and later, residential treatment facilities, tends to focus on the largest, the best, or the worst examples.[94] In trying to capture the most inspiring or shocking story, scholars have overlooked what was happening in the majority of institutions. The children's homes affiliated with the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ were neither the largest institutions of their kind, nor the most progressive or primitive in their treatment of children. These institutions were instead characterized by their representation of majority of small to midsize sectarian institutions caring for

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[94] Examples: Reena Friedman, in *These Are Our Children*, focuses on Jewish orphanages, which were by nature large institutions that served regional populations. Jewish orphanages were among the largest institutions in the country, second only to Catholic orphanages. Friedman examines the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York City, with capacity for 1,200 children, the Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum, with a capacity of 500 children, and the Jewish Foster Home in Philadelphia, with a capacity of 230. See Friedman, *These Are Our Children, Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880-1925* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994), 24-25. Kenneth Cmiel's *A Home of Another Kind* examines the history of Chapin Hall in Chicago, an exceptional children's institution that held progressive values and had access to resources that enabled it to be an early adopter of trained social workers and social work practices. Chapin Hall sold its physical plant in 1985 and invested its endowment in creating a center of child welfare research at the University of Chicago. See Cmiel, *A Home of Another Kind: One Chicago Orphanage and the Tangle of Child Welfare* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Susan Tiffin's *In Whose Best Interest?* focuses almost exclusively on the egregious practices of children's institutions with the caveat, "I will not attempt to give an aerial view of institutional life but rather to point out some of the more harsh elements, which were encouraging criticism of the system." See Tiffin, *In Whose Best Interest?: Child Welfare Reform in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 67.

children in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States. What

their story tells us is that the most common narratives about the history and role of

orphanages in the child welfare system of the United States have left out significant parts

of the story. While scholars have tended to focus on institutional failures, on the national

child-saving debates among Progressive reformers, and on the death of the orphanage

after the New Deal, the Children's Homes of the Disciples of Christ call us to pay

attention to the advantages of midsize institutions, how institutional founders and

managers interpreted child-saving rhetoric through what they saw as religious action, and

how institutions continued to persist largely unchanged for 30 years after ADC was

passed.

Scholars of social welfare and child welfare, including David Rothman, Timothy Hasci,

Nurith Zmora, Marion J. Morton, and Kenneth Cmeil argue, like many of the child-savers

of the Progressive era, that institutional care is the last, worst option for the care of

dependent and neglected children.[95] In their view, institutions were generally

overcrowded, underfunded, regimented -- and were unhealthy places for children

physically, socially, and emotionally. They also represent orphanages as a means of

social control, an attempt to overcome the low origins of many of these children so as to

keep them from lives of sin, crime, and further expense to society. Although some of the

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[95] *Proceedings of the Conference on the Care of Dependent Children: Held at Washington, D.C., January 25, 26, 1909. Special Message of the President of United States Recommending Legislation Desired by the Conference, and Transmitting the Proceedings of the Conference. Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress on February 15, 1909* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1909); Timothy A. Hasci, *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Nurith Zmora, *Orphanages Reconsidered: Child Care Institutions in Progressive Era Baltimore* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994); Marion J. Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages: Cleveland, 1851-1996," *Catholic Historical Review*, 88 (2002): 65-89; Kenneth Cmiel, *A Home of Another Kind: One Chicago Orphanage and the Tangle of Child Welfare* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

institutions these scholars profile do not fit this description, the context in which these writers place those institutions makes it seem as though they are unusual, exceptions to the rule, and as a result, unable to be used as examples of larger trends.

Scholars have much too often accepted the contemporary arguments of Progressive reformers as clear representations of what was happening in institutions nationwide, rather than as part of a debate with the purpose of goading the federal and state governments to take responsibility for the welfare of children more broadly. As a result, reformers who were proponents of mother's pensions tended to be against any organization or institution that would remove children from the bosom of the family. Even children who couldn't remain in the care of their biological mothers deserved the care of a tender maternal influence, even if it was from a foster mother. The Progressives' agendas were also influenced by anti-Catholic and nativist sentiments that focused on the closure or drastic reform of the largest institutions, which were Catholic and located in major metropolitan areas. David Rothman, Susan Tiffin, and Matthew Crenson in particular tend to overlook the power of anti-Catholic sentiment in the politics of the period, and thereby underestimate its influence on the debates surrounding child welfare issues.

Scholars dealing with child welfare argue that even if some orphanages had redeeming qualities, they were made obsolete by the passage of Aid to Dependent Children in 1935, and the increasing preference for foster care versus institutional placement of children requiring out-of-home care.[96] LeRoy Ashby states this concisely: "A major federal

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[96] See David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 2002); Matthew A. Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage: A Prehistory of the American Welfare System* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); LeRoyAshby, *Saving the Waifs: Reformers and Dependent Children, 1890-1917* (Philadelphia, PA:

program, Aid to Dependent Children, hastened the decline of traditional orphanages and marked a watershed in child welfare."[97] ADC, an outgrowth of mother's pensions, was supposed to enable mothers to keep their children at home with them by providing an income floor. At the same time, rhetoric among child welfare reformers promoted foster care placement above institutional care at every turn. It seems obvious that these two trends together must have spelled the demise of the orphanage as an institution.

But these arguments fail to acknowledge the resilience of the orphanage as an institution, the usefulness of orphanages to local governments and families, and the failure of government programs like ADC to provide the kinds of benefits to eligible families that would have actually been able to prevent family disintegration under the stresses of poverty. Orphanages changed with the times and responded to external and internal demands to continue to provide children and families with needed services in new funding environments, even after 1935.

The history of Disciples of Christ Children's Homes demonstrates that far from disappearing after 1935, these institutions continued to pursue their mission of "Saving the World by Saving its Children," as did many other institutions across the country. Their persistence is not unique, but typical of what was to become a cornerstone of child welfare provision in the twentieth century: the independent, nonprofit, child welfare agency. Orphanages were founded for many reasons, including to shelter children and provide families with emergency support, to preserve religious values, to demonstrate

Temple University Press, 1984); LeRoy Ashby, *Endangered Children: Dependency, Neglect, and Abuse in American History* (New York, NY: Twayne Publishers, 1997); Zmora, *Orphanages Reconsidered*; Dorothy M. Brown and Elizabeth McKeown, *The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1997); Andrew Billingsley and Jeanne M. Giovannoni, *Children of the Storm: Black Children and American Child Welfare* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1972).

[97] Ashby, *Endangered Children*, 112.

religious commitment, and to provide an outlet for women's philanthropic efforts. Most orphanages in the country were small (with fewer than 100 children), and focused on short term care for children whose parents could not care for them due to poverty, death, illness, incarceration, or addiction. Most often, children were reunited with their families upon the remarriage of a parent or the reestablishment of a family household with extended relatives. The children's homes of the National Benevolent Association (NBA) in Cleveland, Denver, and St Louis all were close to the average in terms of institutional size, the kinds of care that they offered, and the sources of referrals of the population of dependent and neglected children that they served.

The chart below, taken from the 1910 Census of Benevolent Institutions, shows the variation between Ohio, Missouri, and Colorado in the number of children's institutions, the average size of the institution, and the share of children living in institutions rather than foster homes:[98]

State	# of Children's Institutions	Average Inmates per Institution	Total # of Children in Care	# of Children in Institutions	% of Children in Institutions	# of Children in boarding or foster homes	% of Children in boarding or foster homes
OH	154	85	12,206	8,479	70%	3,727	30%
MO	32	92	5,030	2,865	57%	2,165	43%
CO	14	111	1,740	1,329	76%	411	24%
USA	3,788	77	151,441	111,514	74%	39,927	26%

Each institution housed between 50-100 children on average, their residents attended

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[98] United States Bureau of the Census 13th Census, 1910; Edwin Munsell Bliss, Joseph Adna Hill, and John Koren, *Benevolent Institutions, 1910* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913), 26-35 http://books.google.com/books?id=v4ih7hx7BnQC.

public schools and local churches, stayed an average of 2 years or less, and were most often reunited with family members rather than being placed in adoptive or foster homes.[99] In the vast majority of states, most children's institutions were religiously affiliated, with a greater number of Protestant institutions with fewer children in care on average, and a smaller number of Catholic institutions with more children in care on average.[100] States like Ohio and Massachusetts were exceptions to this rule, with a large number of publicly funded orphanages, each assigned to serve a county or group of counties.[101] In other words, the NBA children's homes were typical in many ways -- neither the largest or the smallest, the richest or the poorest, neither the best nor the worst.[102] The NBA's Christian Children's Homes were organizations that worked hard to care for kids by endeavoring to provide a safe and nurturing environment in the best way they knew how. Many Protestant denominations sponsored orphanages: Lutherans, Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc., but almost all were independent endeavors, supported by a small number of congregations. What makes the NBA homes unique is the nature of their affiliation with the national administrative umbrella of the National

[99] 1910 Census of Benevolent Institutions, 26-33; Annual Reports of the Orphan Section of the Duke Endowment, 1924-1934.

[100] Many organizations that reported themselves as "secular" would have been more accurately designated as "non-denominational Protestant Christian." Homes run by fraternal and civic groups, or by local organizations of concerned citizens, were actively engaged in providing religious education to their residents, but they considered themselves secular since they were not officially affiliated with a religious denomination. The Jones Home in Cleveland is an example of an institution that did not affiliate with a specific denomination, but in its charter identified as a Protestant institution for healthy white children. See "Jones Home for Children," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History* https://case.edu/ech/articles/j/jones-home-of-childrens-services-inc/ [accessed September 1, 2017].

[101] Ohio passed a law in 1866 that enabled each county to found its own orphan home by popular vote and with a board of trustees appointed by county commissioners. This accomplishment is attributed to the work of Catharine Fay, from Marietta, Ohio, who was a child advocate and reformer. In 1883, like many other states at the time, Ohio passed legislation requiring children to be removed from living among the general population in poor houses and work houses. This created a surge of interest in building institutions for children. By 1904, the state had fifty-five county-run orphanages. See Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage*, 55-58.

[102] The three institutions studied here were rarely the subject of negative media coverage, and never the subject of serious state inquiry during the period between 1887-1975.

Benevolent Association. What makes them useful as case studies is that their experience transforming from Protestant Christian children's homes to full service child welfare agencies mirrors the transition that the majority of midsized, nonprofit, religiously affiliated orphanages went through across the country in the 1960s and 1970s.

The founders of the NBA were women at the confluence of multiple movements at the turn of the century. They were activists in the mold of the increasingly vocal Women's Christian Temperance Union, crusading child savers determined to rescue children from godless poverty-stricken lives, passionate Christians seeking a more just society and the practical application of God's love in the modern world, and social reformers convinced of the necessity for scientifically administered philanthropy in confronting the vast new scale of urban problems. They were deeply religious Christians whose faith drove their zeal for reform. And just as Christ's love was transformative in their lives, they believed that sharing that love with dependent children would be healing. And wedded to that belief was the progressive view that children were not made for labor, but for love.

The dramatic shift in middle class attitudes toward children in the late nineteenth century moved them from being viewed primarily as economic assets and the "property" of their parents, to being seen as innocents who deserved to be shielded from the adult world while they pursued moral and intellectual education guided by nurturing adults.[103] These new ideas of childhood as a special time for physical and character development motivated Progressive era reformers to push for the creation of public playgrounds, kindergartens, and child labor laws. For many poor families, orphanages made this view

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[103] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004); Claudia Nelson, *Little Strangers: Portrayals of Adoption and Foster Care in America, 1850-1929* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

of their children somewhat possible. While a parent or caretaking family member struggled to overcome a crisis, the orphanage provided room and board and access to education. It gave concerned parents or relatives a way to ensure that a child was protected from the world of work, and that his or her schooling would continue for the duration of the family's inability to care for the child.[104] For many families, orphanages provided temporary shelter for children during an emergency, and they were often reunited once the crisis was resolved. As early as 1910, national statistics indicated that the NBA Children's Homes fit within this model, attempting to provide a nurturing family-like environment for children who could not live with their parents either temporarily or in the long term. For those children unfortunate enough to need their help, the NBA homes tried their hardest to be their "other family."[105]

The Founding of the National Benevolent Association

Sarah Matilda "Mattie" Hart Younkin, founder of the National Benevolent Association, was herself a half-orphan. Born in 1843, her father died during her childhood in rural Illinois, and she was married by the age of fifteen to a classmate at Abingdon College. Her husband would go on to become a physician, and they moved to St. Louis with their two children in 1875.[106] Used to the close knit society of mutual help centered in churches and family in small towns, she was deeply affected by the plight of individuals

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[104] See Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum*; Ashby, *Endangered Children*; and Hacsi, *Second Home*,194.
[105] "Your Other Family" is the title of the Cleveland Christian Home newsletter. References to each of the NBA homes as a "family" are found throughout the promotional literature, internal correspondence, and board meeting minutes of all of the NBA children's homes. It was an early goal of the administration and volunteers to provide the most family-like atmosphere possible for the children in their care.
[106] Now Eureka College, Abingdon College was founded by a group of abolitionist Disciples from Kentucky in 1855. They were the third college in the U.S. to institute a coeducational admissions and academic policy. See http://www.eureka.edu/discover/historicec.htm [accessed November 5, 2010].

without those supports in the city. After a powerful religious experience during a reunion at Abingdon College in 1886, she resolved to take action. Mattie and five close friends, some of them also alumnae of the college, gathered in the First Christian Church in St. Louis to pray over how to meet the needs of the poorest in their community. They envisioned an organized outreach of the Disciples of Christ movement that would bring together the best of the social gospel and scientific philanthropy. They would build a national benevolent association for the many ministries of the Christian Churches, to harness the evangelism and generosity of their coreligionists to support the homeless and indigent.[107]

The Disciples of Christ churches had a tradition of female preaching and activism in the early nineteenth century that largely disappeared after the 1830s. Fifty years later, with women's groups in many Protestant churches organizing foreign and domestic missions, temperance societies, and Sunday Schools, Younkin and her friends decided to take their idea out to other Disciples' congregations.[108] While their initial vision was broad, they

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[107] LeRoy Ashby, *Saving the Waifs: Reformers and Dependent Children, 1890-1917* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1984); Hiram J. Lester and Marjorie Lee Lester, *Inasmuch -- The Saga of NBA* (St. Louis, MO: National Benevolent Association, 1987), 21-56; David Edwin Harrell, *A Social History of the Disciples of Christ: Sources of Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1865-1890, Volume 2* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 64-69; Debra Beery Hull, *Christian Church Women: Shapers of a Movement* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1994), 135-39.

[108] The role of women in the Disciples of Christ is complicated by the division of the Stone-Campbell movement from which it originated into three factions in the early twentieth century. The first of these divisions was driven by differences in interpretation of scripture, including the question of ordination of women. The ordination of Clara Babcock in 1889 by the Disciples of Christ was one of the factors that caused the more conservative Churches of Christ (1906) to assert their support of a more literal reading of the New Testament, in which women's activities were to be restricted to the domestic sphere. They also insisted upon total congregational autonomy. The Independent Christian Churches (1927) also rejected women's public participation in preaching and church governance as well as denominational hierarchy of any kind (including the Christian Missionary Society and the National Benevolent Association). The most divisive issue for them was the admission of unbaptized individuals to church membership by the Disciples of Christ churches. The movement to which the National Benevolent Association remained allied from 1886 onward was the Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches), here referred to as the DOC, and the most theologically liberal of the three Stone-Campbell movements. Loretta M. Long, "Christian Church/Disciples of Christ Tradition and Women," in *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in North America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 296-306.

ultimately settled on a concrete first step: to organize an orphanage in St. Louis.

Eventually they sought to build lasting institutions for the care of the most forgotten in the nineteenth century city: dependent children and the elderly. Patterned after the Christian Women's Board of Missions (founded in 1874) in its broad fundraising appeal and outreach to women who could support services through their own organization and labor (bake sales, speaker's bureaus, sewing circles, etc.) the women of the NBA began their campaign to fund this new venture in earnest.

The NBA emerged out of charitable impulse, in response to the needs of individual families and children, and also as an attempt to protect the religious and cultural values the founding group of church women shared. Although the women of the NBA began their work in St. Louis, incorporated by the state of Missouri in 1887, their ultimate goal was to create a coordinated *national* network of institutions to support the poor, the sick, and the abandoned. One hundred years later, this network had spread across 25 states to include child welfare institutions, hospitals, a home for mentally disabled young people, and assisted living and nursing facilities for the aged. The first major struggle of the NBA, however, was to get the national assembly of the Disciples of Christ to formally affiliate with them. This was a difficult task due to the nature of the theology and culture of the Disciples themselves.

An outgrowth of the Stone-Campbell evangelical movement in the early nineteenth century, the Disciples of Christ, also known as the Christian Churches, were (and continue to be) radically democratic and anti-institutional in their structure. As discussed in the first chapter, each church functions as an autonomous unit connected to a regional council of churches, but without a hierarchy of command. Even today, the Disciples of

Christ are careful in the language they use to describe their governance above the congregational level. Each church is considered to be in "covenantal relationships in congregational, regional and general ministries. Each expression is considered equal rather than pyramidal and each has its protected rights and identified responsibilities."[109] In 1887, the year that the National Benevolent Association was founded, the General Assembly of the Disciples of Christ was an exercise in consensus-building between groups of clergy and lay leaders with diverse agendas. It was a large tent movement, known externally as a Protestant sect, not a denomination, and internally as a brotherhood of like-minded Christians. There were significant theological divisions among the membership, particularly around the playing of music in church. Even the establishment of the Disciples of Christ's evangelical work through missionary societies was contentious: "From the beginning, Disciples were fiercely free and anti-institutional...their churches and leaders were pragmatically opposed to para-church societies because they recognized that these early associations tended to fall under clergy control and become instruments of sectarian pride and expansion, no matter how ecumenical and democratic had been their origins."[110] It was the imprimatur of this amorphous, democratic, and egalitarian movement that the NBA desired.

As historians Lori Ginzberg, Suzanne Lebsock, and Kathleen McCarthy have discussed, the formation of charitable corporations in the nineteenth century provided women with an opportunity to engage in activities often prohibited to them as individuals.[111] Without

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[109] http://disciples.org/our-identity/the-disciples-today/ [accessed September 7, 2017].
[110] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 22.
[111] Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990); Suzanne Lebsock, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860* (New York, NY: Norton, 1984); and Kathleen McCarthy, "Parallel Power Structures: Women and the Voluntary Sphere," in *Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

compromising their femininity, the women of the NBA bought and sold property, negotiated contracts, created budgets, and convinced their coreligionists to support their efforts with donations of every kind. These activities fit within the boundaries for appropriate social and public conduct for women in the nineteenth century because they were seen as avenues for the expression of maternal care for the unfortunate. The creation of the NBA generated a way for DOC women to gain power to organize and effect change within the existing gendered hierarchy without directly confronting men. The problem came with their insistence on having the National Assembly of the Disciples of Christ sanction their efforts through formal affiliation with the National Benevolent Association.

Without the official recognition of the National Benevolent Association by the Disciples of Christ, the ambitious vision of Mattie Younkin and the other founding women of the NBA would never be realized. Only by bringing together the fundraising and management of disparate Disciples' benevolent efforts could individual institutions be released from the inconsistent and inadequate support of local congregations and freed to solicit help from their entire region. With the official acceptance of the NBA as a DOC affiliated organization in 1899, the Benevolent Association was able to strengthen Christian institutions across the country, ensuring that their philanthropic work would not fail because of local conditions.

It took twelve years and six meetings of the General Assembly for the NBA to be officially recognized as the fourth affiliated organization of the DOC in 1899.[112] During

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[112] The three other affiliated bodies were the American Christian Missionary Society (1849), the Christian Women's Board of Missions (1874), and the Foreign Christian Missionary Society (1876).

those years, Mattie Younkin, who became the first woman ordained as a minister in the

Disciples of Christ in 1895, struggled to convince church leaders that helping dependent

children, the elderly, and the destitute were as important as saving individual souls.

Younkin traveled across the country to state church conventions, where she often could

not get on the formal agenda. Her strategy was to pass out literature, speak to individuals

about the work of the Benevolent Society, and to hope that someone might cede her some

time on the convention floor to speak to the entire gathering. Finally, in 1897, the

Benevolent Association was allowed to display pamphlets in the basement of the church

hosting the National Assembly, and one of the clergy gave Younkin ten minutes of his

allotted time in which to speak. In 1898, Emily Meier, the new President of the

Benevolent Association, was granted ten minutes on the agenda to address the National

Assembly. In 1899, the activities of Orphan Homes and Kindred Benevolences were

given an entire conference session of their own, and the National Assembly finally voted

to formally recognize the National Benevolent Association as an organization of the

Disciples of Christ.[113] Unfortunately Mattie Younkin had died of breast cancer a month

before. Her daughter blamed the disease on Younkin's exhaustion from years of travel

fundraising for and promoting the NBA, and the relentless physical pressure of binding

corsets.[114]

Anne Scott's analysis of women's groups in the nineteenth century suggests that the

women of the Disciples of Christ were not at all unusual in facing opposition from male

authorities within their church. In describing attempts to found women's boards of

missions, she writes, "Over and over the men voted them down. These campaigns [to

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[113] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 33.
[114] Ibid., 34.

found women's groups] came to mirror, in language and spirit, the secular drive for woman suffrage."[115] In denying women a voice and a place in religious leadership, many denominations actually created the conditions in which women came to understand that they had common interests apart from the men in their religious lives. The social gospel movement, which linked religious belief with social responsibility, dovetailed with contemporary ideas about gender which held that women were especially suited to transform their maternal feelings into action on behalf of the disadvantaged and vulnerable. Together, these ideologies supported social welfare as a legitimate arena for "women's work," separate and apart from the traditional male arenas of economics and politics, power, and statecraft.

During their long struggle for national recognition, the women of the NBA did not sit idly by. Instead, they immediately began to raise funds to rent a house for the purpose of beginning the hands-on work of caring for children. The Christian Orphan's Home in St. Louis opened its doors in 1889 in a rented residential home with 5 rooms. Its first admission was the infant son of a single woman who had been hired to be the cook, and who also lived in the house. Three months later, having served 13 children in small quarters and turned away many more, they moved to a large house with 8 rooms that also became overcrowded. Demand was far greater than the women had anticipated, exceeding the capacity of their resources.[116] Over the next eleven years, while waiting for their denomination's stamp of approval, the NBA relocated the Christian Orphan's Home twice more and finally constructed a building of its own in 1893 that was capable of

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[115] Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 93.
[116] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 27-29.

accommodating about 45 children. They also opened a facility for destitute mothers and infants, and developed a successful model for church-based fundraising.

Born in Woman's Loving Heart…Led by Woman's Skillful Hand[117]

Within the next 10 years, the NBA grew rapidly, both by founding new institutions in St. Louis, and also by encouraging existing charitable institutions across the country to join them. Each of the children's homes was founded by local Disciples of Christ, and sustained by dedicated volunteers, donors, and staff. Upon joining the NBA, each gained access to administrative expertise, the cachet of belonging to a national organization, and the support of a much broader pool of donors. This voluntary model of growth meant that institutions retained their own boards of directors and a great deal of independence even after becoming members of the NBA, and that they were keenly aware of the advantages membership had to offer. The combination of autonomy and centralized denominational support that the NBA offered was very attractive for small organizations that had been struggling to remain afloat while caring for needy children, and the NBA benefitted by seeing its reach expand from St. Louis and its immediate environs to covering communities of Disciples across the United States.[118] From 1899 to 1915, the NBA's St. Louis Christian Children's Home was joined by the Cleveland Christian Home (1903), the Colorado Christian Home (1910), the Southern Christian Home in Atlanta, Georgia

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[117] Ibid., 55; The quote is from a 1914 issue of the *Christian Philanthropist*.
[118] With the exception of the Northeastern United States and Hawaii, at some point in the first half of the twentieth century, there were Disciples Children's homes covering the Southeast, Midwest, Plains, Northwest, Southwest, and Alaska. The children's homes in California, Alaska, and Oregon were short-lived, but demonstrated the vitality and ambition of the DOC churches and their willingness to aid dependent children.

(1905), the Omaha Child-Saving Institute (1911), and the Juliet Fowler Home in Dallas, Texas (1903).

The Disciples Children's Home in Cleveland, for example, struggled to support itself on donations from just a few congregations in Northeast Ohio after being founded by Reverend Timme and his wife. Although the Home participated in a Thanksgiving clothing and food drive coordinated by the Cleveland City schools in 1902, sporadic donations of in-kind goods and meager financial support from churches still left the Home in an unstable position. Joining the NBA in 1903 provided the home with the ability to engage in fundraising in congregations throughout Ohio, Indiana, Western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Membership in the NBA meant access to the privilege of fundraising throughout the congregations of a home's multi-state region. Regions followed the denomination's organizational lines. The Cleveland Christian Home's leaders traveled throughout the region to make presentations to churches and women's groups, bringing along talented children who entertained with recitation or singing, and retelling the most heartrending stories from among the Home's residents to demonstrate the amount of good the Home was doing. After each presentation, donations would be collected. The NBA was careful to maintain one children's home in each DOC region, ensuring that there was not competition between homes for scarce resources.

Not Controlled, but Coordinated: Managing the Growing Institutions of the NBA

The NBA's rallying cry was to "Save the World by Saving Its Children," advancing its goal of gathering children into physically and emotionally safe environments while bringing their souls to Christ. Once their affiliation with the DOC-Christian Churches

was official in 1899, small independent children's homes, often run by ministers or their wives, began to contact the NBA from across the country. By 1906, there were ten affiliated institutions, six of which served dependent children.

It is at this point that leadership of the NBA shifted from the hands of the women who founded it. James H. Mohorter became a member of the board of NBA in 1904. Himself a half-orphan and a graduate of Hiram College, he had preached at his graduation about Christian socialism and had gone on to serve as an urban pastor in Cleveland and Boston, where he earned a reputation for his sermons and hard work in social outreach. His dedication to the cause of the poor was never questioned, but his ascent to the office of general secretary of the NBA carried some controversy. Fannie Ayars was the previous secretary general, and as she described it in 1908, "Brother Mohorter decided that the Benevolent Association had gotten to be too big for the women to control; that it needed a business man at the head of it, and by maneuvering that would do credit to Tammany Hall they succeeded in having elected a man as president and as first vice-president, also as treasurer and himself as general secretary. So instead of a Board of women, as it had been for almost twenty years, the officers now are five men and two women."[119] In Denver and Dallas, charitable gifts of land and money launched new homes for dependent children with the cooperation of the NBA. Together, this group of six institutions, some home-grown, and others founded in conjunction with the NBA, claimed to have served over 9,000 dependent children by 1918.[120]

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[119] Lester, *Inasmuch*, 55.

[120] Disciples of Christ and American Christian Missionary Society, *Year Book of the Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches)* (Indianapolis, IN: International Convention of Christian Churches, 1918), 53.

The NBA children's homes functioned like many orphanages of their time. They provided shelter, food, and education to a range of children from varied circumstances. A minority of the children were full orphans, but most had at least one parent living, and a few still had two parents who were unable, for reasons of illness, insanity, addiction, or abuse, to care for their own children. The one common thread throughout all of the children's backgrounds was poverty. In describing the mission of the children's homes The Disciples of Christ Yearbook wrote that the National Benevolent Association

> seeks to serve the orphan and other unfortunate children needing care, regardless of the religious affiliation of the parents. It boards children whose mothers…must earn their living. It boards children who have lost their mothers, and whose fathers…can not provide for them proper care…It places children, surrendered to its care, in Christian homes for adoption. It aids in keeping worthy mothers and their children together, by employing mothers as workers in its homes for children. It gives special care and training to defective and deformed children that can not be placed in family homes, with a view of making them self sustaining.[121]

In this description, the children's homes provided a refuge of last resort for the homeless, reliable child care for single parents who could not afford other child care arrangements, respectable employment and shelter for pregnant women and young mothers without a partner, and vocational training and guidance for children who were physically and developmentally disabled.[122] It is important to note that the NBA's description of "worthy mothers" here is meant to convey to its readers that these young pregnant women were married when their children were conceived. While they might no longer have a partner through widowhood, illness or abandonment, they were not' immoral' women who would give birth to bastard children.

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[121] Ibid., 53-54.
[122] *The Registration of Illegitimate Births: a Preventive of Infant Mortality; a Paper Read Before the American Public Health Association at Rochester, New York, September 7, 1915* (New York, NY: Department of Child-Helping, Russell Sage Foundation, 1916), 15-19.

In an impassioned essay written in 1916, Hastings H. Hart, director of the Child Saving Department of the Russell Sage Foundation, argued that the unmarried mothers of illegitimate children should also be eligible for this kind of ongoing support in the time between their pregnancies and the first year of their child's life. Infant mortality among illegitimate children could be significantly reduced with birth registration, community support for unwed mothers and their children, and encouragement for mothers to bond with their children through breastfeeding rather than abandoning them to asylums. This debate was also active within the Disciples community.

One of the earliest efforts of the NBA was the establishment of the Mothers and Babies Home by Fannie Ayars in 1899. She sought to separate expectant mothers, new mothers, and their infants from the general population at the Christian Orphan's Home in order to better serve their unique needs. A report from 1900 states the new facility had found work for twenty-five new mothers, provided short term shelter to thirty-one, and placed fifteen infants for adoption – exactly the kind of assistance that could keep more children alive and more mothers with their children. The Mothers and Babies home ultimately closed at least in part because of controversy among the NBA Board about what kind of mothers should be able to take refuge there. Ayars accepted the reality that unmarried destitute women needed a safe place to deliver and nurse their children just as widows and abandoned wives did. She would not turn away women in need, regardless of the circumstances under which their children were conceived. In a financially strained environment – the Christian community around St. Louis was being asked to support both

an orphanage and a Mothers and Babies Home – the NBA Board withdrew support from Ayars' institution, forcing the doors to close permanently in 1911.[123]

The Cleveland Christian Home was founded by Rev. Timme and his wife as the "In His Name Orphanage" in 1901. Originally a mission to provide Sunday schooling for German youngsters on the west side of Cleveland, the orphanage grew out of the desperate need of the children who came to those Sunday schools for food, clothing, and shelter in addition to education and spiritual guidance. While most of the children who attended the Sunday schools came from poor households, some children were without homes altogether.[124] After taking in one or two homeless boys, people began bringing children to the Timmes' doorstep. Soon, the Timmes ran out of room at their house and purchased the property next door. In less than two years, In His Name Orphanage had expanded from 10 children living in the house next door and tended to by Mrs. Timme, to a rambling residence that eventually housed 43 children with live in staff. This expansion was supported by the In His Name Orphanage's merger with the NBA in 1903, and which resulted in their new name, The Cleveland Christian Home for Children. With the support of the NBA, the Cleveland Christian Home was able to expand their operation from serving children in the immediate neighborhood, to serving (and soliciting offerings from) churches and families in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Indiana.

The Colorado Christian Home began as the philanthropic impulse of John and Mary Warren, a pious couple who were both schoolteachers with no children of their own. The Warrens deeded their farm of 229 acres outside of Loveland, Colorado, to the National

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[123] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 41, 54.
[124] Henry K. Shaw, *Buckeye Disciples: A History of the Disciples of Christ in Ohio* (St. Louis, MO: Christian Board of Publication, 1952), 304-306.

Benevolent Association in 1902 for the purpose of building an industrial school on a working farm. There is some indication that initially, the NBA was considering adding the industrial school as part of its network of institutions, and sending older children from other homes to learn agricultural trades on the farm.[125] The first building was completed in 1905, a "perfectly modern house" of brick with eight rooms: the Loveland Christian Orphanage.

While the location seemed idyllic in theory, in practice it was difficult to manage. From the beginning, congregations from around Denver had expressed their desire to have the facility located nearer to the city. The Loveland Christian Church, which had taken the lead in what was supposed to be a $10,000 fundraising campaign, raised little more than $3,000 by the time the building opened, enough for construction, but nothing else. The building was a shell, entirely without furniture and household items which were ultimately supplied by donations garnered through requests in the *Colorado Christian Herald*: "Besides food, our most pressing needs are for rugs, chairs, beds, bedding, writing desk, sofa, dressers, dishes, knives, forks, spoons, towels, picture books, etc."[126] In addition to weak financial support from local congregations, internal conflicts began to emerge as congregation members from the Loveland Christian Church argued with the Warners about the proper use and placement of additional buildings for the property, including the new dormitory, which was to house twenty-five children. The arguments created enough bad feelings that members of the administration of the NBA in St. Louis were aware of them. A letter from Fannie Ayars to Mary Warren mentions that she had

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[125] F.W. Henry, "Colorado Christian Home: A History," unpublished manuscript, 1953, 12. 39D III 160, Disciples of Christ Historical Society.
[126] M.V. Warren, *Colorado Christian Herald*, January to May, 1905. Quoted in F.W. Henry, "Colorado Christian Home: A History."

heard through Donnie Hansbrough how the Warners were being "persecuted" by their congregation when they had "tried to do so much."[127] This is not only an indication of the depth of feelings involved, but also the tight-knit nature of the Disciples community. Don Brewer's pictorial history of the Colorado Christian Home states that the main reasons for the Home's relocation to Denver in 1905 were financial and educational. J.H. Mohorter, the General Secretary of the NBA, felt that being based in Denver would help the home appeal to churches throughout the state and region, and that it would be able to give its children access to excellent public education rather than limited agricultural training.[128] Mohorter was also aware that a rural farm could not be a functioning concern without hiring outside help, which somewhat defeated the purpose of having the orphanage on a farm. The institutional planners intended for the sale of crops from the farm to help the orphanage become financially self-sufficient. As LeRoy Ashby and David Rothman have noted, the intentions for children's labor to support the work of an industrial school, farm, or reformatory were seldom realized.[129] Mohorter came to a similar conclusion in 1905: "Younger children were not strong enough to do the hard labor required on the farm at Loveland, nor did they have the dexterity required for many tasks. Older children from urban backgrounds needed intensive training before they could be really useful at farm chores, and the nature of the orphanage's population was transitory." By the time children were trained in a skill, they were often reunified with family or ready to move out on their own. In addition, the farm was located too far from

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[127] Correspondence from Fannie Ayars to Mrs. Mary Warner, October 26, 1905. Quoted in F.W. Henry, "Colorado Christian Home: A History."

[128] Don Brewer, *A Century of Caring: A Pictorial History of Colorado Christian Home* (Denver, CO: Friends of Children, 2004), 16.

[129] Ashby, *Saving the Waifs*, and Rothman, *Discovering the Asylum*.

medical care to help manage the ever-present dangers of childhood diseases and accidents, and it needed access to public education facilities for children ranging in age from 6 to 16. In 1907, only two years after opening the Loveland facility, the NBA sold the farm and relocated the orphanage to a rented house in Denver. Although too small to meet the growing demand, it was near a Christian Church, public schools, and a hospital. In the end, the city was the best place to provide proper care for children's bodies, minds, and spirits.

Like the orphanages in Cleveland and St. Louis, the Colorado Christian Home would relocate several more times before building a more permanent home. Although it struggled with a false start, it immediately began to reap the benefits of having access to a large group of churches to provide financial support. After its move to Denver, the Loveland Christian Orphanage was renamed The Colorado Christian Home, and like the other NBA homes it served a multi-state region, including all of Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah.[130] The NBA's ministry to children was augmented by the Child Saving Institute of Omaha, Nebraska, the Juliette Fowler Home for Children in Dallas, Texas, which was built, like the Colorado Christian Home, using the generous bequest of land from a philanthropic Disciple, and the Southern Christian Home in Atlanta, which had been functioning on its own since the 1880s, but was glad to finally have the support of the denomination at large.

Together, the Christian Childrens' homes of the NBA had the capacity to house approximately 450 children by 1911. Each of these homes envisioned itself as an

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[130] See the Tennyson Center for Children at the Colorado Christian Home website: http://www.childabuse.org/page.aspx?pid=220 [accessed July 23, 2012]; Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*; and Brewer, *A Century of Caring*.

extended family of sorts. Between administration, staff, residents, and church members who donated time and money, the homes talked about themselves using language that emphasized close-knit family ties. The homes' newsletters reflect this sensibility: Cleveland sent out "Your Other Family" to church supporters every quarter, and St. Louis mailed its "Family Talk" to Sunday Schools each month. What made this language persuasive was not necessarily the relationship between children and staff in the homes, but the relationship between the homes and their constituent church communities.

It is important to emphasize that every child experienced the Christian homes differently. Having spoken informally with a number of alumni of the Cleveland Christian Home since 2003, I am aware that for some adults, their time living at the Home was positive overall, and they appreciated the support of the staff and camaraderie of other children whom they met. For others, their memories are marked most clearly by their sense of abandonment and loss as they struggled to cope with separation from their families, and they have only vague memories of the children and staff they met. For others, their time at the Home was marked by feelings of fear and alienation, and in some instances allegations of physical and psychological abuse. Since I have not engaged in systematic interviews with alumni from Denver, Cleveland, and St. Louis, I am unable to comment on the lived experience of their residents. And since children's records are confidential, I cannot evaluate the individual case records of those who passed through the homes. What I can do is examine the written records as they are available, from correspondence between the homes and the NBA, to board meeting minutes, newsletters, photographs, reports of independent accreditation agencies, media accounts, and state records, and describe more generally the culture and activities of the children's homes as institutions.

Naturally, this emphasis yields a largely institutional history. It will be for another to reach out to the children of the NBA homes to document their lived experiences.

While many of the children living in the NBA's children's homes were far away from their families, the Disciples of Christ churches that supported the homes had extraordinary ties to "their" children's homes. The sense of ownership, of ministry, of being part of an extended church family was integral to the ultimate success and longevity of each of the homes.

Although the women of the early NBA demonstrated solidarity and dedication to their feminine mission to nurture needy children, they did not hold on to its leadership for many years once it was adopted as a denominationally affiliated organization. In 1906, James H. Mohorter was named General Secretary of the NBA, and remained in that position until he died in 1929. During his tenure, the work of the NBA continued to grow, but so did the role of men in the board of trustees and in the staff of the organization. While his dedication to the cause was tireless – he was known to the children of the Christian Homes as "Uncle Jimmie" – the increasingly dominant role of men in what had been a women's mission did not go unnoticed.

In *Saving the Waifs*, his profile of the Progressive Reformers, child welfare historian LeRoy Ashby includes the founders of the NBA as notable contributors to the child saving movement primarily because of their persistence in the face of male obstructionism and their ambitious vision to create a church philanthropic organization with national scope. By 1910, however, within 15 years of the establishment of the Christian Orphan's Home in St. Louis, the founding women's approach would be

considered out-of-date by the emerging field of child welfare experts.[131] The NBA

reflected the tradition of "friendly visiting" that the settlement house movement and the

new profession of social work aimed to reform around the turn of the 20th century.[132]

Trained social workers were to replace the religious and class-based judgments made by

"friendly visitors" (usually members of a charitable society), with a neutral and

sympathetic effort to match available resources to family needs. The aim was to

encourage poor families to seek help rather than to shame them and thus discourage their

efforts to find needed help.

The women of the NBA were engaged in living out the social gospel, and they were

steadfast in their belief that a religious purpose was at the heart of their charitable

mission. Not only the motivation to do service, but the nature of the services themselves

were to be determined by their accordance with Christian belief. The women of the early

NBA worked together in solidarity toward a cause that was rightfully feminine and truly

Christian – the care of needy children and the aged – and in so doing they built a network

of institutions that was to become one of the fifty largest charities in the United States.[133]

Context: Urbanization, Immigration, Nativism and Anti-Catholicism

So why were Mattie Younkin and her friends so inspired to help the poor of St. Louis?

Like other major urban centers in the U.S. during the latter part of the 19th century, St.

Louis was transformed from a busy town to a major metropolis in the years after the Civil

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[131] Ashby, *Saving the Waifs*.

[132] John Ehrenreich, *The Altruistic Imagination: A History of Social Work and Social Policy in the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), Ch 2; Philip Popple and P. Nelson Reid, "A Profession for the Poor, A History of Social Work in the United States," in *The Professionalization of Poverty: Social Work and the Poor in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1999).

[133]"The 50 Largest Charities Ranked by Total Income," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 6, 1999, Business & Money, 18.

War. Freed slaves fearing vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan, and eager to establish

homesteads in Kansas, came to the "Gateway to the West" from Kentucky, Tennessee,

and Virginia.[134] They joined predominantly Catholic immigrants from Germany, Ireland,

and Italy flooding into St. Louis for jobs as steamship traffic increased and factories

sprang up to process the flow of raw materials from the North and South.[135] Between

1870 and 1900 the city almost doubled in population to over half a million inhabitants,

making it the fourth largest city in the country.[136] As the city swelled, so did the size of

its government and the scale of its corruption, which became notorious under the scathing

pen of the famous muckraker Lincoln Steffens at *McClure's Magazine*.[137] The increasing

disorder in St. Louis was blamed largely on this influx of immigrants and unskilled labor,

as in many other rapidly growing urban areas. Often living in makeshift housing near

employment sites or concentrated in city slums, newcomers were visible reminders of the

inability of the municipality to handle the great need for more housing, better

transportation, public health, and garbage collection. Seen as dispossessed, rootless, and

unconnected to the religious morals and democratic values of American society, these

new urbanites were marginalized and vilified.

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[134] For more about the migration of blacks through St. Louis in the aftermath of the Civil War, see Bryan M. Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007).

[135] Gary Ross Mormino, *Immigrants on the Hill: Italian-Americans in St. Louis, 1882-1982* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); William Barnaby Faherty, *The St. Louis German Catholics* (St. Louis, MO: Reedy Press, 2004); Margaret LoPiccolo Sullivan, "Ethnic Elites and their Organizations: The St. Louis Experience, 1900-1920," in *Immigrant America: European Ethnicity in the United States* (New York, NY: Garland, 1994).

[136] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Table 13: Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1900"; U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Table 10: Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1870."

[137] Todd H. Wetmore and Lincoln Steffens, "Tweed Days in St. Louis" in *Shame of the Cities* (New York, NY: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1905).

At its core, this fear of encroaching foreignness was not only linguistic, racial, political,

and cultural, but also religious. Nativism and anti-Catholic sentiment ran deep throughout

the U.S. in the nineteenth century and provided the impetus for many Progressive Era

reforms, from municipal anti-corruption probes to expansion of public schools, settlement

houses, and child labor laws.[138] Many American Protestants erroneously believed that

Catholicism was in direct conflict with democracy, replacing individuality and freedom

with communalism and submission to the will of a foreign dictator in the person of the

Pope.[139] This fear was helped along by the general belief that in their ignorance and

illiteracy, immigrants from Catholic countries were more easily controlled by priests or

political bosses. In St. Louis, with a long history of French Catholic settlement, Catholics

ran the largest children's institutions and had the greatest outreach in poor communities, a

major source of concern for the women of the NBA, and one that resonated within their

organization during the first fifty years of existence.

In a manuscript entitled, "Great Moments in Benevolence," the founding story of the

NBA includes an anecdote about the impetus for beginning a children's home affiliated

with the Disciples of Christ. In 1886, Mrs. Sophia Kerns found a small child wandering

the streets of St. Louis, apparently without family or a home. At first, she took him to the

Police Department for help, and was told to bring him to a Catholic orphanage: "She said

to herself that if the Catholics could support an orphanage, there was no reason why our

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[138] For more on nativism, anti-Catholicism, and Progressive reformers see: Peter Schrag, *Not Fit for Our Society: Immigration and Nativism in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), Ch.2; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), Chs. 3-4; Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums:Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974); Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*, Vol. 1 (New York, NY: Knopf, 1955).
[139] See Peter Schrag, *Not Fit for Our Society*, 43 for a particularly concise statement to this effect from the *North American Review* in 1879.

church could not support one, so she called several of her lady friends of the church to her home and they discussed the possibilities of such a project."[140] The subsequent meeting at First Christian Church in St. Louis included Mattie Younkin in this group of lady friends, and Younkin's enthusiasm and dedication to raising the funds necessary for such a project launched the NBA.

The link between providing an alternative to Catholic child welfare providers and fundraising is in evidence even forty years later. In an appeal for funds to maintain and expand the NBA's children's homes written in 1928, J.H. Mohorter asserts that "The Catholics are very active in their work for children. They often procure Protestant money with which to build and sustain homes for children. They fill them with children and turn them all out members of the Roman Catholic Church."[141] In other words, not only was it likely that dependent Disciples' children would be lost to another Protestant denomination if they needed help, it was probable that they would end up in Catholic institutions, here portrayed as evangelizing machines. This fear of spiritual peril was accompanied by a widespread criticism of Catholic children's homes: "In Colorado, where the population is only about 20% Catholic, they have invested $850,000 in children's homes, while all the Protestants together have invested only $260,000. The Catholics have 1,039 beds for children, and all the Protestants have only 370 beds."[142] Catholics were viewed as taking advantage of the desperate situations of parents and families for their own political and religious gain, consuming limited state resources for

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[140] "Great Moments in Benevolence," undated, circa 1961. Cleveland Christian Home Private Collection. Digital Files: CCH Materials 63-69.jpg.
[141] James H. Mohorter, "An Army of Hungry Children," Draft of article for publication in *WorldCall*, 1928, p. 6. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, RG 39A.16. Nashville, TN. Digital files: CCH Materials 131-135.jpg
[142] Ibid., 6.

the care of dependent children while cultivating a new generation of Catholics in warehouses for children that were rigid and disciplined but lacking in love.

The common stereotypes of orphanages among child welfare reformers as huge, cold, industrial facilities for raising "little automatons," capable only of obeying and never thinking for themselves, were almost exclusively based on their critiques of the largest Catholic orphanages on the East Coast. These children's institutions were very large, a fact that makes a great deal of sense when considered within the governance structure of the Roman Catholic Church and the demographics of its members at the turn of the century.[143] Catholic organizations within the diocesan hierarchy are organized so that authority is concentrated in the archbishop and flows to the clergy. In Gilded Age New York, for example, a city with an exploding population of orphaned, abandoned, and neglected children, the Church responded to their needs within a long tradition of building centralized institutions staffed by specific religious orders. By 1910, The Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum in the Bronx, NY was a five story building on 28 acres of land with over 1,600 beds, an on-campus school, and a full pipe organ in the large chapel. The Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum had grown out of an original orphanage founded by the Sisters of Charity in the 1840s, which expanded in response to the growing city's needs.[144]

The size of Catholic orphanages and their tendency to be structured as total institutions were not seen as evidence of the success of Catholics in the United States or the

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[143] Mary J. Oates, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Brown and McKeown. *The Poor Belong to Us*; Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages."

[144] "Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum," http://www.nycago.org/Organs/Brx/html/RCOrphanAsylum.html [accessed October 13, 2010]; "Catholic Orphan Asylum. A New Extensive Site Is Selected on Fordham Heights," *The New York Times*, November 22, 1898.

determination to provide care for their coreligionists. Instead, they were viewed by

outsiders as concrete examples of everything that was wrong with the Catholic Church:

they were cold, impersonal places filled with poverty-stricken children of Catholic

immigrants, closed institutions indoctrinating their charges with Papist conspiracies, and

all the while taking advantage of public subsidies. Many Protestant groups were active in

the criticism of Catholic orphanages, which they viewed less as providing a charitable

service and more as organizations designed to produce non-thinking, anti-democratic

followers of Catholic religious leaders. These misconceptions gave even more impetus to

the anti-orphanage stance of Progressive reformers in general, and to the impassioned

church ladies supporting the NBA's children's homes, which it is clear, they did not view

as orphanages, but as alternative families for dependent children.

Gifts of Love

The regional network of churches that supported each home provided much more than

proceeds from the special charitable collection (also known as an offering) on Easter, and

smaller monetary donations throughout the year. Churches also provided the majority of

children who came to live in the Christian Homes. Parents and pastors were the major

source of referrals of children to the Christian Homes, and often they coordinated their

decision making. For example, this story is taken from the Admissions Committee Report

from the Colorado Christian Home.

> Admissions: 3
> Michael (age 3 ½) Stanley (9) and Gene (11), the Harris boys from Pratt
> Kansas came to the Home on December 31. Rev. Ely had brought this
> case to our notice several months ago. The mother died and altho [*sic*] the
> home was suggested as a place for the children, the family tried living
> with various relatives for some time. This did not prove satisfactory, a

visit was made to Denver just before Christmas, and the Home sold itself.[145]

When this family ran into trouble finding child care after the boys' mother died, their pastor stepped in to recommend that they consider sending the boys to the Colorado Christian Home. Once the boys came to live at the home, they provided a tangible link between their home congregation and the institution. It was not unusual for pastors to provide letters of recommendation or character references for families seeking admission for their children. At times, pastors would correspond with administrators at a given home to negotiate for admission of a particular family, or they would give a letter to the mother or father to take with them when they applied for admission for their child/children in person.

This connection between congregations and institutions created a bond between the two. Providing support for the Christian Home in your region was not nameless, faceless, charity. It was helping out families and children in your community who had nowhere else to turn. The Children's Homes provided another tool for the pastor to use in ministering to the congregation, one that was especially useful in the many rural districts in which Disciples churches were often located. The homes provided real benefits to DOC congregations, who could demonstrate to adherents that 1) the Disciples take care of their own from cradle to grave, 2) individual families have an insurance policy against family crisis (indigence, injury, unemployment, family breakup, etc.), and 3) the home provides a tangible outlet for charitable activities that stay within the community and reinforces its values. Each year the homes reported in their annual reports how many of

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[145] Josephine C. Svenson, Chairman, "Report of the Admissions Committee for the Month of December, 1946," National Benevolent Association Collection. 39A. 52: Colorado Christian Home Historical, 1942-1962. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN.

the children in their care had been united with the church (had voluntarily taken communion in a Disciples congregation.) Ultimately all of this gave each church a sense of ownership of "their" Children's Home.

This powerful feeling of connection also drove church groups to visit the homes, to donate goods and funds. Churches organized sewing and knitting projects, quilting bees, coordinated afternoons dedicated to canning fruits and vegetables, and hosted events to raise money for the Homes. In the early years, fundraisers including strawberry festivals and boat trips on the Mississippi River were conducted to supplement the individual donations that began to come in from the distribution of its earliest promotional publication, "The Orphan's Cry."[146] In turn, church members felt their efforts were needed and valued. Every home publicized the generosity of its donors by thanking them publicly. In the Colorado Christian Home newsletter, an article entitled "Fruit is Nice!" celebrates the donors of many pounds of fresh and preserved produce to the home.

> Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Bond, minister and wife, of the Paonia Christian Church, gave the Home a pickup truck load of shiny, juicy, Jonathan apples...The Churches at Clifton and Palisade have always been good to the Home. There are no better peaches anywhere than in that valley. They always remember the Home with lots of Elberta peaches, pears, and plums. They also can many barrels of peaches and pears for use during the winter and spring at the Home. Our good friend at Delta remembered us with extra nice red raspberries.[147]

In an annual report of the St. Louis Christian Home, there is a description of in-kind donations including over a thousand wrapped Christmas gifts, candy for Easter, and birthday gifts for individual children: "This speaks admirably for the spiritual growth of the church. If the number of jars of canned foods, bushels of apples, peaches, pears,

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[146] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 31-32.
[147] Colorado Christian Home, "Fruit Is Nice!" *The Visitor*, Fall and Winter 1957, 39 A: 52. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

vegetables, potatoes, chickens, and eggs are indications of the work our friends have done in their communities for the children in this Home, we are sure there has been little idle time."[148] Not only the NBA publications, but the main mouthpiece for the Disciples, *The Christian Evangelist*, was full of the work of the homes in religious terms and celebration of the charitable members of the church. The NBA and its constituent homes came to play an important role in shaping how Disciples saw themselves as Christians in the world. These efforts were expressions of their faith and demonstrations of the healing power of God's love in the world.

The women of the NBA engineered a system in which in-kind giving and volunteering were valued, and these traditions allowed even fairly poor families to make a contribution to the cause and to feel needed. Every donation, however humble, counted. This was especially important in a denomination made up primarily of farmers and modest businessmen. In St. Louis, and later in every NBA Children's Home, catalogues of in-kind gifts included everything from a bushel of cabbages to home sewn graduation dresses, industrial washing machines, butchered hogs, and intercom systems. Volunteers helped tend to the grounds, raise funds for student scholarships, cook in the kitchen, and mend clothes. These donations of time and goods not only cultivated a sense of satisfaction and personal investment to donors, they also contributed a substantial amount to the yearly budgets by reducing the number of items and services the institutions had to purchase in cash. These traditions continued into the 1970s.

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[148] Bettie R. Brown, "Annual Report of Christian Orphan's Home, St. Louis, Missouri," July 1945. 39 D: I 1. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1.

The nature of each institution's relationship with the NBA was similar to the relationship between the churches and each regional children's home. True to the democratic and egalitarian traditions of the movement itself, each children's home retained a great deal of autonomy, and saw itself as making a mutually beneficial agreement with the NBA, a viewpoint that the NBA tried to respect. J.H. Mohorter wrote in 1924, "What we need in our ministry is not <u>controlled</u> homes, but <u>coordinated</u> homes. We must recognize that all these homes came into existence as local enterprises. They were not something superimposed upon a community or a state. It is in the interest of the best administration of the work and the securing of the largest support to retain and cultivate this local sentiment."[149] The NBA benefited by expanding the numbers of children it could serve in more parts of the country, thereby strengthening individual and community ties to the movement itself, while demonstrating God's love through charitable works. This demonstration was meant to be inspirational to church members and a strong statement of the power of Protestant Christian charity to the rapidly growing Catholic institutions across the country.[150]

On the other side of the equation, the children's homes benefited by taking advantage of better funding opportunities and administrative efficiencies. This arrangement, in which individual orphanages across the country *chose* to become members of the NBA, worked because each organization retained a significant degree of autonomy, including the right to respectfully argue with the officials at the NBA over everything from budgets to buildings. In other words, as long as these individual institutions felt that the NBA was

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[149] J. H. Mohorter, "Which Way Benevolence?" Draft of an article for publication in *WorldCall*, 1924, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 39.A.16, Nashville, TN.
[150] J.H. Mohorter, "An Army of Hungry Children," Draft of a fundraising letter, undated, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 39.A.16, Nashville, TN.

there to serve them, by promoting their interests nationally, they were willing to agree to be subordinate to some degree.

By 1910, the NBA's network of children's homes included institutions in Cleveland, Denver, and St. Louis. Over the next 25 years, each of these orphanages more than doubled its capacity. All of them raised money for and built new, modern facilities with hospital wings and steam laundries, recreation facilities and auditoriums, and, most importantly, enough room to segregate children by age and sex. Large, well-ventilated rooms with sanitary and spacious bath facilities replaced the cramped and worn interiors of residential homes converted to house up to 45 children. Instead of boys from 4 to 18 sharing a room, there was space to create discrete units for each developmental stage -- from early childhood through adolescence. In these new facilities boys and girls were divided by age, were all housed separately, but shared recreation and meals together daily. These new facilities were a huge accomplishment for the NBA Children's Homes, and a step toward demonstrating their permanency and legitimacy within the communities they served. By 1938, the children's homes of the NBA were able to house over 600 children in six institutions across the country.[151] The children's homes were celebrated nationally by the Disciples movement as a physical manifestation of the power of faith and dedication of this small Protestant sect, which never exceeded 2 million American members.[152]

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[151] Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch*, 92.
[152] Data from the National Council of Churches' Historic Archive CD and Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches.

Swimming Against the Tide

While revolutionary for the NBA Children's Homes, even the most modern of their new facilities were well behind the thinking of the most progressive (and wealthiest) children's institutions. All of these renovations were completed in the 1920s, and in the same decade, institutions like Beech Brook, in Cleveland, Chapin Hall, in Chicago, and the Children's Aid Society, in New York, were renovating or building from scratch new facilities based on the "cottage plan." The cottage plan aimed to transform the orphanage from an institutional space to a home-like environment. Orphanages built in this way most often contained large central facilities for dining, recreation and worship, and multiple cottages, each intended to hold between 12-15 children of a particular age and gender, with a set of live-in house parents.[153]

The resources necessary to build and maintain these facilities were enormous. An agency had to have access to acres of land, the projected income and intake of children to justify building duplicative structures, each of which required individual boilers, small kitchens, and large bathrooms. The goal of building on the cottage plan was to make orphanages less institutional – by designing each unit to accommodate a group the size of a large family, individual children would be provided opportunities to bond with each other and with house parents, to create relationships that would support and nurture their social and emotional development. While the Disciples' children's homes were thrilled to have divided their facilities into units of 20-25, larger organizations were a step ahead of them. This lag in adopting progressive policies – in external design and internal management – was to characterize the Disciples' efforts until the last quarter of the twentieth century.

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[153] Ashby, *Endangered Children*, Ch. 5; Crenson, *Building the Invisible Orphanage*, Ch. 5.

It was during the Depression, when demand for institutional space exploded, that several major changes occurred in child welfare across the country. In major metropolitan areas, child welfare issues became so visible and dire that municipal and county governments often created a single government agency to coordinate all private efforts. This move allowed counties to track the numbers of children in care and the kind of care they received, with the purpose of asking their state for increased funding in response to the local drain on resources. In Cleveland, the Cuyahoga County Child Welfare Board was created by co-opting the private, charitable efforts of the Humane Society and the Welfare Association for Jewish Children. One day, employees of these agencies worked for private charitable organizations, and the next, they were working for the county. Overnight, approximately 1,000 children who had been under their auspices became wards of the county.[154] Both entities were founded in 1911 in response to the original White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children.[155]

In New York City, state legislation passed in 1930 required the formation of the Board of Child Welfare, responsible for dependent children in all five boroughs of the city. This legislation was, in part, an attempt to require independent children's agencies to accept children they had previously refused, especially children of undesirable immigrant groups

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[154] The Cleveland Welfare Federation's Children's Bureau and the Jewish Children's Bureau continued to function independently even after the county agency was established. The county Child Welfare Board generally took on the cases of children who had disciplinary issues, were considered more likely to be in out of home care for the long-term, or who were African American. The Welfare Federation Children's Bureau and the Jewish Children's Bureau tended to handle children in need of temporary help, and could place them in either foster care or institutional care. This division of labor between public and private organizations ultimately created a two-tiered system, one for white Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish children largely from immigrant ethnic communities that was supported by community charitable contributions, and one for black and delinquent children, supported by public dollars. See Marion J. Morton, "Cleveland's Child Welfare System and the 'American Dilemma,' 1941-1964," *The Social Science Review*, Vol. 72, no. 1 (March 1998): 112-36.

[155] "Western Reserve Child Welfare Council," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History* https://case.edu/ech/articles/w/western-reserve-child-welfare-council/ [accessed September 7, 2017].

or those of different religious backgrounds.[156] Broadening outreach to Italian and Slavic

children, however, did not translate into an acceptance of state responsibility for

dependent African-American children and families, who remained largely excluded from

institutional child welfare facilities.

In the catastrophe that was the Depression, local governments turned to established

children's institutions to provide long term care to children with little hope of placement

in foster care or back into their destitute families. The institutions able to weather the

storm of overcrowding, epidemics, and eroding budgets ultimately built reputations for

providing quality care to dependent children. The successful children's institutions also

came to appreciate and depend on the role of a regular check from a government agency,

a level of reliable subsidy that many had not had before. During this period of crisis,

municipal and county governments were less concerned with methodology and more

concerned with whether children were sheltered and fed. At the same time, children's

institutions large and small gained legitimacy in the communities they served.

Community members were able to see the work of the orphanage as being integral to the

health and safety of their neighborhoods, since they kept homeless children off the streets

and in school. Even at the height of the Depression, however, the Cleveland Christian

Home never housed a majority of children from Cleveland. Instead, they continued to

take in sibling groups from their Disciples' region. This put them in an interesting

position vis-à-vis the county welfare office. The county records from 1924-1931 show

that the Cleveland Christian Home received fewer county dollars per capita than its local

counterparts. It also was more likely to keep sibling groups together and to house

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[156] "Want $8,000,000 Rise in Welfare Budgets," *New York Times*, August 26, 1930.

children for longer periods of time than most other children's institutions in Cleveland receiving county support.[157]

The rest of the children's homes of the NBA were no different. They had reputations for caring about children, although their methods were old-fashioned. In essence, the NBA homes provided the custodial care that orphanages had begun to offer in the mid-nineteenth century. Children were supplied with room and board, clothing, small entertainments, and participated in weekly religious services. They went to local public schools, and after graduation, the children's home they came from often provided scholarship funds to support matriculation at a trade school or college.

Conclusion

The first live-in matron of the St. Louis Christian Home was one of the ladies of the founding committee of the NBA. She was qualified to do the work because of her dedication, Christian values, and her small independent income. This enabled her to survive even if the NBA were unable to give her a salary each month. The very nature of these women, their volunteerism, and the generosity of the communities that supported the work of the Christian Homes, illustrate their religious commitment: the neglected and dependent children they served were living in buildings, wearing clothing, and eating food that – to them – was concrete evidence of the Christian love by which they were surrounded. At the same time, the women who founded the NBA believed both in the transformative power of Christian love and in the new ideologies of Progressive reform.

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[157] Edith Baylor and Edith Foster, "A Study of Intake and Case Work Service in the Protective Agencies of the Child Care Group of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland," 1933. F 34 ZSD B358, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

They hoped that by marrying the religious mission of the social gospel with the practicality of scientific philanthropy and the charity organization movement, they could build a network of institutions that could help them -- lovingly and efficiently -- save the world by saving its children.[158]

Their success in transforming the NBA into a truly national organization came at the expense of the women's continued leadership. While individual Christian Homes had matrons and active women's committees, the day-to-day administration of the NBA was taken over first by J.H. Mohorter and a male board of trustees, and then passed on to a series of male general secretaries. The rapid growth of the children's homes of the Disciples of Christ between 1887-1935 demonstrated the continuing demand for institutional care for children at a time when the new field of social work was actively advocating for family based alternatives for the care of dependent children.

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[158] "Membership in the [National Benevolent] Association grew... 'Save the children and you save the world!' was the rallying cry." Lester and Lester, *Inasmuch,* 28.

Chapter 3

A Persistent Institution: The Expansion of the Children's Homes of the National

Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ, 1935-1960

The prominent narrative surrounding child welfare during and after the

Depression is that orphanages struggled to survive the intense financial pressures of the

period, then began a steep decline after the passage of the New Deal. Social insurance

and direct aid programs now supported the unemployed, the aged, the disabled, and

needy children – programs that would help to relieve the financial stress on poor families.

In this view, the establishment of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) in particular, meant

the inevitable demise of children's institutions, since more poor families would be able to

afford to keep their children at home.[159] The Depression also marks a turning point when

states and counties across the country begin to take direct responsibility for the care of

dependent children away from charitable organizations, and shoulder the burden for

placing children in foster care or institutional care. Of the two choices, many public

agencies favored foster care. As a result of this understanding of events, scholarship

dealing with child welfare in the United States after 1935 traces the impact of Aid to

Dependent Children and foster care while excluding or discounting the continued role of

institutional care.

The question of whether the Christian Homes slowly withered away after the

creation of (ADC) in 1935 is easily answered. They did not. In contrast, they grew

steadily to accommodate more children in a more modern way. The Colorado Christian

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[159] See Cmiel, *A Home of Another Kind*, p 4; Smith, Eve and Lisa Merkel-Holguin. *A History of Child Welfare*. Transaction Publishers, 1996; and LeRoy Ashby. *Endangered Children: Dependency, Neglect and Abuse in American History*. Twayne Publishing, 1997, ch. 1.

Home, the Cleveland Christian Home, and the St. Louis Christian Home had all undergone expensive relocations and expansions in the 1920s to create cottage plan institutions out of what had been traditional congregate orphanages. The financial strains of the Depression temporarily halted that growth, with the exception of a 20-bed hospital wing in Colorado.[160] But after World War II, rather than fading away, the homes all saw a wave of construction and renovation. "Like all good American communities, we have POST-WAR PLANS FOR IMPROVING OUR HOME" trumpeted Mrs. Bettie R. Brown, Superintendent of the St. Louis Christian Home in the annual report for 1945.[161] The Christian Homes not only grew to take in more children as a whole, but specifically the kinds of children who were not supposed to need their help anymore: poor white children who should have been supported at home by ADC or placed in foster care.

Expansion of the Christian Homes

The 1953 opening of the Babies' Wing of the Cleveland Christian Home coincided with the Home's 50th anniversary. The new wing provided sleeping quarters and play areas for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, and additional living space for the teens and for the staff. It enabled the home to care for 35 additional children, bringing the total to 135. In the draft copy of a feature article for World Call Magazine, the Disciples of Christ publication, Jesse Burke, the Publicity Director of the NBA, details the story of

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[160] The hospital wing was desperately needed. There was no place to isolate sick children at the Colorado Christian Home, so once one child was ill with a communicable disease (measles, mumps, strep throat, influenza) ALL of the children at the orphanage were prevented from attending school. In 1927, this resulted in the 51 school age children of the Colorado Christian Home missing 2,295 days of school, -- an average of 45 days per child! The money for this expansion in the midst of the Depression came from a bequest. Brewer, Don D. *A Century of Caring: A Pictorial History of Colorado Christian Home, 1904-2004*. Denver, Colorado: Friends of Children, 2004, 41-2.

[161] Bettie R. Brown "Annual Report of Christian Orphan's Home, St. Louis, Missouri," July 1945. 39 D: I 1. Disciples of Christ Historical Society. Emphasis in the original.

the new wing, beginning with the construction of the main campus in 1924 and the arrival of Anna Garver Thorpe, the Cleveland Christian Home's superintendent.

> Inflation followed the world's greatest depression, leaving little children as victims. The 75 rooms filled rapidly. Soon the Home needed more room. More room! … World War II came, and the Home was filled to overflowing, and for many years an average of 600 children were turned away annually. The building dream turned into a crusade.[162]

Whatever the national trends were, the regional demand for help supporting dependent children convinced the leadership of the National Benevolent Association and the Cleveland Christian Home that it was worth investing in the future of institutional care for children.

The expansion was covered by the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Cleveland Press, and both papers wrote about the Home in a supportive tone. "At 3 p.m., the home, which has given 3000 children from broken families new chances for happiness, will mark its golden jubilee" stated the Cleveland Press.[163] The Plain Dealer wrote that the addition "has been the center of attention for all the children during its construction. Like adult "sidewalk superintendents" who love to peek over fences at any new construction, the children have been "superintending" the new wing as it went up brick by brick." [164] Neither paper raised questions about whether children still belonged in institutions, or why there might still be need for such places. Instead, these were positive community relations stories, accompanied by pictures of smiling white boys and girls. The

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[162] Burke, Jessie M. "Draft: Cleveland Christian Home Celebrates Golden Jubilee Anniversary and Dedicates the New East Wing," June 7, 1953. 39 D: IV 19. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

[163] "'Sidewalk Superintendents' at the Cleveland Christian Home." *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. June 7, 1953, sec. Pictorial Magazine.

[164] Daerr, Marie. "Christian Children's Home to Dedicate Wing." *The Cleveland Press*. June 4, 1953. 39 D: IV 118. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

perspective on the Christian Home's expansion was that this important institution was a modern, progressive place, a member of the community that was working hard to produce happy, honest, and hardworking adults.

> "Today, training in home duties is still part of the Cleveland Christian Home schedule. So are music, church going, ball games, barbeques, parties, and all the things that make normal life for American children. Youngsters attend schools in the area … "Graduates" of the home have become doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers, dieticians, artists, secretaries, farmers, mechanics, builders, merchants, ministers, and businessmen."[165]

Far from being unnecessary or outdated, the children's home is treated as a community asset, providing an opportunity for a somewhat normal childhood for dependent and neglected children.

Other media coverage of the period in newspapers and magazines emphasized the close personal relationships between children and staff. They highlighted the warm and nurturing environments of the Christian Homes, and the dedication that staff showed in supporting children well into young adulthood. Here is a description of the Cleveland Christian Home in 1950, which emphasizes the good physical condition of the building, its attractive appearance and the fun and comfort of the surroundings:

> Surrounded and cut off from the city's traffic by a deep grove of trees and spacious flower gardens, its creeper clad brick walls give off a definite feeling of peace and security. The high front doorway, framed between cream colored columns and topped by a Grecian Arch, might be the entrance to a very comfortable suburban home in any American city…
> Out in back of the Home are the swimming pool, baseball diamond and basketball court, a brick barbecue pit for outdoor weenie roasts, a playground with swings and whirligigs for the "juniors" and a big fenced-in sand pile where Mom's [Director Anna Garver's] thirteen babies grow brown and lively in the warmer months.[166]

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[165] Ibid.
[166] Butterfield, Roger. "Life in an Orphan Home." *Ladies Home Journal*, December 1950.

This depiction of the Cleveland Christian Home conjures thoughts of sunny afternoons in the summertime, being outside playing with friends, engaging in the normal activities of childhood. Similarly, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, writing in 1962, introduced the Home in this way: "the term "institution" hardly applies to the complex of friendly buildings perched atop a pleasant knoll… Everything about the Christian Home is uninstitutional."[167] The perception that modern children's homes had succeeded in reforming themselves to the point that they no longer resembled institutions was evident in media accounts about all of the Christian Homes, which is interesting given that all of them cared for more than one hundred children by this point in their development.

The existence of ADC did not in and of itself eliminate the need for institutional care. The flexibility of the children's institution could also be important. For parents who needed help for a defined period of time, the homes could prevent what might otherwise become a crisis. In a 1957 report from the admissions committee of the St. Louis Christian Home a personal note stands out. "One of our most recent requests has come from a young mother whose husband was killed in an accident about a year ago. This mother has just one year of schooling and training until she will be eligible for an R.N. degree. Our help to her for a year will mean a happy united family."[168] In this example, rather than needing financial support, the parent needs child care to enable her to complete her studies, which might include working nights at the hospital in training

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[167] Wadovick, J. A. "Mom Thorpe Is Saying Goodbye." *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. March 12, 1962.

[168] Semi-Annual Report, St. Louis Christian Home, April 1957. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN, 39 D: I 1, 2.

shifts, or long hours studying for qualifying exams. In the same report, the committee

notes that at times the home is called on to care for the children of military families, or to

support a family during the serious illness of a parent.

In the semi-annual report of the St. Louis Christian Home in 1960, the director

wrote of the varied short and long-term needs that brought children into care.

> Most of them [the children] today come from broken homes, from homes
> where one parent has died, from homes where they have been neglected,
> from homes which need temporary child care because of illness, and from
> homes where they have been orphaned. Many children are referred to us
> by Juvenile Court, many cases are referred by our Ministers and still
> others are brought directly to the Homes by a parent seeking care for their
> children. During the last two months, 24 children were admitted. Two
> needed care while their mother went into the hospital to have a new baby.
> There was no one else to help except the Home. Several more were
> brought to the Home directly by fathers and mothers whose mate had
> deserted them and they could not both work and care for their children. [169]

Later on in the same report, the admissions committee reported that two girls were

admitted to the Home after their single mother, who had been boarding in the home of a

friend, discovered that her friend's husband had been molesting her eleven year old

daughter. The mother had a good job, but needed time to save money and move the

household to a new apartment. In this case, the admissions committee report concluded

"This will be a short term case, but we should be proud that our Home could and would

fill this need."[170]

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[169] "St. Louis Christian Home Board Meeting: Semi-Annual Report," April 5, 1960. 39 D: I 3. Disciples of
Christ Historical Society.
[170] Ibid.

Growth of The Christian Homes of the Disciples of Christ, 1903-1960

Year	Location	Description
1903	Cleveland Christian Home	Relocation to Bosworth Farm
1907[171]	Colorado Christian Home	Relocation to Decatur Street Home
1910[172]	Colorado Christian Home	Construction of Warren Hall
1925	Cleveland Christian Home	Construction of Lorain Avenue Campus
1926[173]	Colorado Christian Home	Wings Added to Warren Hall
1931	Colorado Christian Home	Construction of Henry Hall, a 20-bed Hospital Building
1939	St. Louis Christian Home	Construction of Stockton Hall for Junior and Senior Boys
1949	Colorado Christian Home	Construction of Mohorter Building for Preschool Children, 2-5 years old
1952	Colorado Christian Home	Construction of DeVita Hall for Junior (5-11 yrs) and Senior (12-18 yrs) High School Boys
1953[174]	Cleveland Christian Home	Construction of Babies' Wing for children 0-5 years old
1955	Cleveland Christian Home	West Wing for Hospital facility
1955	Colorado Christian Home	Remodel of High School Girls' Wing
1958	St. Louis Christian Home	Renovation of the building, expansion of the Senior Girls department, new laundry and playground for young children.

The Christian Homes were far from alone in their continuing growth through the period. In many ways, the thirty years from 1930-1960 are remarkable for their stasis.

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[171] Brewer, Don D. *A Century of Caring: A Pictorial History of Colorado Christian Home, 1904-2004*. Denver, Colorado: Friends of Children, 2004, 15-16.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Anniversary Celebration and Dedication Service: Golden Anniversary Fifty Years of Service to Children. Colorado Christian Home, Sunday, July 31, 1955. Pamphlet. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, National Benevolent Association Papers, 39.A.52.

[174] Golden Jubilee Anniversary and Dedication of the New East Wing, Cleveland Christian Home, June 9, 1953. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, National Benevolent Association papers, Jessie Burke's Notes and Correspondence, 1938-64, 39.IV.19.

Although the total number of children in institutional care declined significantly over the period, institutional care for children remained in use across the United States. In many states it continued to be used more often than foster care. The census of dependent children inside of institutions declined from 144,000 in 1933 to 77,000 in 1963, and in his work examining orphanages in South Central Pennsylvania from 1931-1980, Marshall Jones argues that the Depression was the beginning of the end for children's homes.[175] Yet of the fourteen institutions he examined in the largely rural and small-town region around Scranton, Pennsylvania, all fourteen remained open through 1960.[176]

In her extensive work on child welfare institutions in Cleveland, Ohio, Marion Morton writes that no orphanages closed during the 1930s. Relying on funding from the Welfare Federation, the Jewish Federation, and private in-kind donations of food and clothing, Cleveland orphanages made it through the financial crisis while housing more children than ever before.[177] After the Depression, institutions in the Catholic and Jewish communities consolidated, and the resulting seven children's homes continued serving children in the Cleveland area through the 1960s.[178] All of these organizations became full-service child welfare agencies, ultimately offering residential treatment services for disturbed children, foster care parent recruitment and training, outpatient counseling and

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[175] Jones, Marshall B. "Crisis of the American Orphanage, 1931-1940." *The Social Service Review* 63, no. 4 (December 1, 1989): 613–629; Jones, Marshall B. "Decline of the American Orphanage, 1941-1980." *The Social Service Review* 67, No.3 (September, 1993): 459-480.

[176] Jones 1989, 616.

[177] Morton, Marion J. "Surviving the Great Depression: Orphanages and Orphans in Cleveland." Journal of Urban History 26, no. 4 (May 2000): 438-455.

[178] All of these organizations became full-service child welfare agencies, ultimately offering residential treatment services for disturbed children, foster care parent recruitment and training, outpatient counseling and home and school based counseling, among other offerings. All of these agencies remained open and providing residential services through 2000, after which there was a wave of consolidations. For more information, see the Encyclopedia of Cleveland History Online ech.case.edu, *A History of Cleveland Ohio* by Samuel P. Orth, published by S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1910.

home and school based counseling, among other offerings. All of these agencies

remained open and providing residential services through 2000, after which there was a

wave of consolidations.

Children's Institutions serving Northeast Ohio Between 1930-1970

Name	Founded	Religious Affiliation	Description
Beech Brook	1853	Mainline Protestant	Founded as the Protestant Orphan Asylum.
Parmadale	1925	Catholic	Created by the merger of St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage of Cleveland, founded in 1851, and the St. Louis Orphanage of Louisville, Ohio, founded in 1875.
Bellefaire Jewish Children's Bureau	1868	Jewish	Founded by local chapter of B'nai Brith as the Jewish Orphan Asylum for orphans of Jewish Civil War veterans. Initially a Reform Jewish institution, it later merged with Orthodox institutions to serve the entire Jewish community
The Jones Home	1886	Protestant	Founded as a non-denominational Protestant orphanage for healthy white children.
Berea Children's Home	1864	German Methodist Episcopal Church	Founded as the German Methodist Orphan Asylum.
Children's Aid Society	1865	Nondenominational Christian	Originally, the Children's Aid Society supported the Cleveland Industrial School as a fundraising organization. In 1876, the Society took over the school and made it into an orphanage.
Cleveland Christian Home	1901	Disciples of Christ	Founded as the In His Name Orphanage, it joined the National Benevolent Association in 1903

In North and South Carolina, the Duke Endowment supported all orphanages. Its

published annual reports included detailed analysis of these institutions. Between its

founding in 1924, and a major change in its funding formula in the 1970s, the Duke

Endowment's Orphanage Section continuously supported between 40 and 43 children's

residential institutions in the two states. In other words, for almost 50 years, through the

Great Depression and beyond, the number of children's institutions in these states

remained largely unchanged.[179] Surveys of multiple children's homes in St. Louis,

Missouri, and Denver, Colorado, conducted by the Child Welfare League of America

during this period reveal similar patterns. Institutions that managed to survive the

financial stresses of the Great Depression continued to serve their communities by

providing largely custodial care to white children in the period after World War II.

Far from becoming modernized secular therapeutic institutions, many children's

homes retained strong religious affiliations through the 1950s. In a cover letter attached

to the St. Louis Christian Home's Semi-Annual Report in March of 1958, the

Superintendent of the home, Charles Palmer, wrote:

> As you and I seek to serve the Church through serving children, we first of all
> must be aware of their basic needs. Most of all, I think, if an individual is to be
> completely happy, he must be loved. Without love, life would surely be empty.
> Time and time again we read that Jesus looked upon the people and had
> compassion on them. As we admit children to the Home, we frequently learn that
> their emotional disturbances stem from the feeling of not being wanted. Recently,
> a boy said, "If I could just tell my mother what I think of her." And he said it with
> all the hate in his voice he could muster. A little four year old tells how his mother
> didn't want him, so he ran away. How would we react if no one wanted us? As we
> work with the unloved, the neglected, the needy, and the unwed, we share His
> love with them.[180]

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[179]Durden, Robert Franklin. *Lasting Legacy to the Carolinas: The Duke Endowment, 1924-1994*. Durham [N.C.]:
  Duke University Press, 1998. Duke Endowment, ed. *Annual Report of the Orphan Section*. Charlotte, N.C:
  The Endowment, 1926-40; Duke Endowment, ed. *Yearbook - Duke Endowment*. 1–14 vols. Charlotte, N.
  C.: The Duke Endowment; Duke Endowment, ed. *Annual Report of the Duke Endowment*. New York,
  1963-1973.

[180] Palmer, Charles M. "'His Love We Share', Semi-Annual Report of the St. Louis Christian Home,"
    March 1958. 39 D: I 2. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

Here, Palmer identifies God's love as a way of helping children overcome the trauma of their pasts. While he recognizes that the children have "emotional disturbances," it is faith and love that will help them heal. Closely tied to their sponsoring communities, most orphanages primarily cared for children from those communities. Across the country, children's institutions continued to provide traditional custodial care to children through the 1950s. Only then did the number of children in foster care finally surpass the number of children in institutional care.[181]

The leading reason for the continued growth of the children's homes in the twenty years after the passage of Aid to Dependent Children was that White families continued to need them. ADC's rollout was slow and uneven, and reached a small percentage of families living in poverty. State-directed administrative shenanigans to avoid spending money severely restricted benefits eligibility and payouts, and functionally excluded a majority of white families as well as most members of minority communities, including African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos.[182] The continuing commitment of orphanages to children who were brought there at the request of their own families and who came from their sponsoring religious communities meant that court decisions and county child welfare regulations had less impact than one might expect. At the same time, local authorities relied on children's institutions to be available to care for children who needed emergency shelter, those who had suffered abuse or neglect and had been removed from their homes, and children the overburdened foster care system could not

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[181] Jones, Marshall B. "Decline of the American Orphanage, 1941-1980." *Social Service Review* 67, no. 3 (September 1993): 459–480.

[182] The rollout of the Affordable Care Act, passed in 2010, is instructive here. Although the Federal government has done its best to incentivize states to enroll in the program voluntarily, five years after its passage, 25 states have opted out of Medicaid expansion, which means that for all intents and purposes, the Affordable Care Act does not exist for the uninsured in those states.

place. In addition, the field of social work was coming to recognize that a spectrum of services for children requiring of out-of-home placement was necessary in order to meet the individual needs of each child.[183] Together, these factors – the insufficiency of ADC, institutional commitments to supporting families and churches when they asked for help, the needs of local governments unable to find sufficient or appropriate foster care placements, and the changing views of social workers toward institutional care – explain why children's institutions continued to thrive through the 1950s.

The Failure of Aid to Dependent Children

The groundbreaking legislation establishing Aid to Dependent Children in 1935 was far from complete in its coverage. Written as a part of the new Social Security legislation, the law was uneven in its application and, because it required states to provide matching funds, was often interpreted as narrowly as possible as states undertook to keep their welfare rolls to a bare minimum. As early as 1940, the report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy stated that "about 35,000 families in the United States in the summer of 1940 were receiving aid from public funds for more than 800,000 children deprived of parental support or care by death, absence, or incapacity… the number who should be provided for is nearer 2 million."[184] Five years after passage, nine states continued to refuse to participate in the ADC program – regardless of federal financial incentives. In many states the levels of benefits remained far below the poverty line.

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[183] Mary Lewis, "Foster-family Care: Has It Fulfilled Its Promise?" The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 355 (Sept. 1964), 31-41.
[184] From the U.S. Department of Labor, White House Conference on Children in a Democracy: Final Report. Children's Bureau Publication 272 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1942), 127-133 as quoted in *Welfare: a Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*. New York: New York University Press, 2003, 94.

Other problems, including restrictive eligibility requirements that conspired to deny aid to the children of unmarried women and women of color, also limited the new program's reach. Fifteen years later, these problems had not gone away. According to a special social security bulletin published in 1955, only a fraction of eligible children were covered by ADC, and a large number of families were deemed ineligible because of divorce -- the incidence of which rose precipitously after the end of World War II due to "hasty wartime and postwar marriages."[185] The continued usage of moral tests to determine whether a woman and her children were 'deserving' of assistance allowed states broad latitude to deny benefits. "Moral" tests could include everything from whether children had been born out of wedlock, to the suspicion of an 'improper' relationship between a mother and a man who was not the father of her children, to blatant racial discrimination, to whether local officials believed the children belonged in the fields doing agricultural labor rather than attending school. The constellation of reasons for denial of claims varied in direct proportion to each state's budget and political will.[186]

As early as 1942, the Bureau of Public Assistance acknowledged the extent of race-based denial of ADC claims. The disparities in the rates of participation of white children in the program versus non-white children, given the high occurrence of factors contributing to poverty in the minority population, demonstrated clearly that in some states, minority children were being deliberately denied assistance. A report by the

[185] Social Security Bulletin, "Social Security Act: The First 20 Years" U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Vol 18, No 8: 1955.
[186] "'Suitable Home' Tests under Social Security: A Functional Approach to Equal Protection." *The Yale Law Journal* 70, no. 7 (1961): 1192–1204. doi:10.2307/794356.

Bureau also notes that states manipulated the number of children claimed for federal matching in order to meet federal requirements of minimum levels of benefits.[187] For example, the federal minimum at the time was $18 per month for one child, and $12 per month for each additional child. A family with five children would, in theory, be eligible for a minimum of $66 per month under federal guidelines. Under state administration, however, the public assistance agency might only include the two youngest children on benefits claim forms. This would make the family eligible for the state's unwritten budget of $30 per month per family, but would exclude providing federally mandated support for the three remaining children. In effect, these kinds of record-keeping tricks created the appearance of compliance with federal requirements while actually providing much less than the federally required minimum.[188]

This kind of record manipulation was often engaged in by rural Southern and mid-western states, and was justified by the attitude that younger children deserved support, but that children older than 10 or 11 should be out working in the fields with their mothers, like many other rural children whether or not they qualified for aid. Attitudes towards the labor of children were slow to change in many places, a reality reflected by the long fight to get federal regulation passed restricting child labor. Although such legislation was on the Progressive agenda from before the turn of the century, the Fair Labor Standards Act did not become law until 1938, and its protections did not apply to children working in agriculture. In 1942, a report on the status of social

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[187] From Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Public Assistance, "Families Receiving Aid to Dependent Children," Public Assistance Report no. 7 (1942). In Welfare: A Documentary History, 101-104.
[188] Ibid

welfare services in the state of Louisiana noted that many in the state "are not convinced that mothers of children should not also be forced to work in factories or fields if they are physically able to do so. Many are not yet convinced that a child's first job is to acquire an education although there is a shortage of labor to pick cotton, strawberries, and do other necessary jobs which are within a child's physical ability."[189]

Another concern about making welfare payments too generous was that they should never exceed or get too close to the wages of adult agricultural laborers because the incentive would then be to keep children and their mothers at home rather than available for farm labor. Welfare had the potential to disrupt the agricultural labor market, something that states went to great lengths to avoid. Edward R. Murrow's documentary, "Harvest of Shame," highlighted the conditions of migrant farm labor in the United States in 1960, and showed the conditions of poor whites and blacks trapped by little education and large families into lives of virtual servitude. Murrow made the point that children of farm workers had almost no access to schooling, poor overall nutrition due to poverty, and no awareness of or eligibility for ADC.[190]

The failure of welfare payments to reach the population they were supposed to serve meant that for 25 years after ADC existed, it was unable to accomplish its main goal for most poor families, black or white. Poor people across the country continued to need a place of emergency shelter for their children in the midst of family crisis. For white Americans, one of the places that could provide that help was the children's institution. Whether brought on by death, illness, abandonment of a spouse, or divorce,

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[189] Donald V. Wilson. *Public Social Services in Louisiana*. Louisiana Conference of Social Welfare, 1943. http://archive.org/details/publicsocialserv00dona.
[190] Edward R. Murrow, "Harvest of Shame" National Broadcasting Corporation.

families in crisis kept coming to children's institutions for help, and the Christian children's homes kept welcoming them in.

The Commitment to Family and Community Admissions

The National Benevolent Association was very much aware of the advent of ADC and Social Security, and within the Disciples of Christ there was active debate about whether federal government intervention in the field of social services would change the role of the church in ministering to the less fortunate. In denominational magazines and newsletters and in regional and national conferences, the church community argued for and against the social programs of the New Deal. On the one hand, the Depression had proven that the problem of poverty in times of financial crisis was far too big to be handled by charitable efforts alone. On the other hand, some argued that government should have withdrawn once the emergency had passed. Many did not think that government should be involved in ministering to the poor, sick, elderly and dependent in the long term. These activities were understood in part as essential tasks in the work of salvation. In the 1937 Christmas issue of the Christian Evangelist, the Disciples of Christ denomination magazine, J. Eric Carlson, the General Secretary of the National Benevolent Association, expressed the consensus that the church had reached in terms of understanding its own work. He clearly accepts that changes in services are an appropriate response to government programs, but rejects the idea that government can replace church work.

> Many of the rapidly developing trends in child and old age care may be traced to the entrance of the long arm of the government into the field. All socially minded church agencies welcome government work that is fundamentally sound and constructive, and cooperate with it. Yet it is felt with justification that the government program for child and old-age care will not alone solve the entire problem of dependency of these groups.

State aid to children and old people in their own homes may tend to change the methods in our institutional work, but will in no way lessen the responsibility of the church. Church "homes" are grounded in Christian faith. Their purpose transcends the purpose of public aid.[191]

And what was the purpose of Christian homes if not only to minister to the body? It was also to minister to children's souls: to share with them the transformative power of Christ's love – something desperately needed in cases where children felt abandoned or let down by the people who were supposed to love them unconditionally, their own biological relations. The idea of "Four-fold Development," set out the work of the children's home in this way:

1)   Treat each child as an individual with personal need, surround each with love and security.
2)   Care for his/her physical needs, including how to eat, exercise and develop a healthy body.
3)   Provide opportunity for the development of each child's talents.
4)   Help each child develop an everyday consciousness of God and Jesus Christ as Savior, friend and companion.[192]

This is a model that takes in physical, mental and spiritual development. Without God's love, the Disciples argued, the development of each child is incomplete. Reconciling this idea of the goals of a children's institution with the increasingly secular and scientific views of social work (particularly national social work advocates) could be difficult. The National Benevolent Association was open to the idea of hiring professional social workers, but did not see them as necessary to their work during this period. So although the NBA homes were never considered progressive, it's in part because they weren't -- but

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[191] Carlson, Eric J. "Plain Facts in Christian Benevolence." *The Christian Evangelist*, December 16, 1937. Cleveland Christian Home Private Collection. 1583.
[192] Introduction to the St. Louis Christian Home, pamphlet. Disciples of Christ Historical Society Collection.

not necessarily because of limited funding or access to talent (especially in Cleveland and St. Louis there was ready access to trained social workers), but because they were pursuing *different goal*s. Unlike the best-funded orphanages, such as Cleveland's Beech Brook and Bellefaire, leaders of NBA institutions did not seek national reputations for being on the cutting edge of the field.

In the most basic sense, the Christian Homes labored quietly doing the daily work of evangelism with children, to demonstrate what they understood to be God's love through the actions of providing safe, nurturing space and joyful celebrations, with the hope that those children would come to believe that God loves them too.

Surveyors from the CWLA evaluating the work of the Disciples' Children's Homes and other Protestant children's institutions in the period between 1930 and 1960 argued that, in general, smaller institutions like the Christian Homes were resistant to accepting social work standards and social workers on their staffs. CWLA analysts' explanations for this resistance include hidebound traditionalism, struggles over organizational control (especially between untrained versus professional staff), and ignorance of social work methods and practices. What they failed to take into account, was the possibility that these organizations may have been resistant to social work because they were pursuing a different philosophy of care – a thoughtful, planned approach to addressing the welfare of dependent children – which rejected two of the underlying tenets of social work: secularism and social hygiene.

The DOC institutions developed a *parallel model* for child welfare services based on the tenets of the social gospel movement that was somewhat in opposition to the philosophy of social work. Their institutions were not stuck in a rut between 1910 and

1960, or ignoring everything going on in the outside world, or resisting interference from social workers because it was expensive or new-fangled. The Disciples struggled to reconcile the approach of social science with their religious commitments, something which was also the case for many Catholic institutions.[193] It was not until the 1960s, when increasing government funding for the expansion of social services overwhelmed other sources of revenue for individual organizations, that the Disciples' children's homes came to accept social work standards as a step necessary in order to keep the doors open (and to keep fulfilling their ministry to children).

In Cleveland, St. Louis, and Denver, and across the country, the best-funded and most progressive orphanages began to integrate social workers and therapeutic practices into their programming beginning in the 1940s or early 1950s. Most other agencies, however, limited trained social workers to reviewing admissions requests, or employed no social workers at all. At the Christian Homes, church women on Admissions Committees continued to review applications, which largely consisted of statements from family members and letters of reference from ministers or other authorities attesting to the moral fitness of the parent/s asking for help. These committees took their responsibilities seriously, and followed up with the pastors who had written letters of support as well as other individuals who might have a sense of a given family's circumstances

Colorado Christian Home provides an example of this tension between doing things as they had always done them, and responding to modern trends in social work and

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[193] Brown, Dorothy M., and Elizabeth McKeown. *The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997, 103-104.

social service regulation. Regulatory changes at the state level in 1947 required the Home to work with a licensed child placement agency for finding foster and adoptive homes for children. Members of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees subsequently learned that the decision to discontinue using the Colorado Children's Aid Society as a placement agency would necessitate that "the Home be certified as a placement agency before we can accept any more children. It will therefore be necessary that we designate one of our employees as a case worker or employ some one on the outside to do this work so that we may qualify under the State Board of Standards of Child Care."[194] The committee's initial response to this change, which was to designate an existing employee to do the work, is consistent with the idea that casework could be learned on the job, and that experience working with children and families was more important than expertise gained through education in social work. The Home did comply with the state regulation, but the regulation itself did not require that the person placing children in homes have a background in social work. The Colorado Christian Home would not hire its first licensed social worker until 1966.

One of the ways that the Christian Homes retained their religious mission and financial independence was by continuing to accept referrals from their communities. In fact, the majority of residents for the Christian Homes came from referrals from their own family, friends, and church communities. Until the 1960s, admissions were governed by committees of interested volunteers at the three homes under study. Mostly populated by interested church women, and occasionally guided by a social work professional, these

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[194] "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Colorado Christian Home," April 10, 1947. 39 D: I 2. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

committees read each letter from destitute mothers and fathers, desperate aunts, and aging

grandmothers, and each testimonial from pastors in the region vouching for the character

of the parent, the tragedy of the situation, or the lack of acceptable alternatives for the

child or children.

A bulletin in the Rocky Mountain Christian from September 1959 explains,

"Children are recommended basically by ministers, relatives or children who have been

in the Home, social welfare agencies and judges of the court … It is further understood

that if the parent is financially able to adequately care for the child, it is not eligible for

entrance into the Home."[195] Even in 1969, the Child Welfare League of America noted

that most of the children at the St. Louis Christian Home had been "referred by a parent

or relative" and that "there was a marked absence of referrals or admissions from public

agencies, such as child welfare departments, juvenile courts, as well as from other

voluntary social agencies."[196]

The case study of "Bobby" from 1959 provides an example. Bobby showed up on

the doorstep of the Cleveland Christian Home with his mother, younger brother, and his

infant sister when he was eight years old. His mother had a letter of recommendation

from a Lutheran minister in the small town of Wabash, Indiana, who had been referred to

the Cleveland Christian Home through a couple who served as foster parents for

Cleveland Christian Home and were members of Wabash Christian Church. The minister

wrote that the father had abandoned the family and the woman had no means to support

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[195] Information About Colorado Christian Home, Rocky Mountain Christian, September 1959. Article.
Disciples of Christ Historical Society, National Benevolent Association Papers, 39/A.52.

[196] *Child Welfare League of America Report of Survey of St. Louis Christian Home*. St. Louis, Missouri,
March 1969. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 39 D: I 59.

her children, all of whom appeared "emaciated" when they arrived. Notes from Bobby's case state that the children looked like "picked chickens," with their bones visible, skin sagging, and with a "bluish color." Cleveland Christian Home accepted the children for placement, and a member of the Admissions Committee followed up with the referring minister to confirm the woman's story and the account in his letter.[197]

In the St. Louis Christian Home Annual Report of 1956, the responsibilities of the Admissions Committee were listed as including: reviewing all applications for admission, for adoption, and for discharge, and presenting recommendations to the Executive Committee and the Board. The Admissions Committee was also charged with collecting all related paperwork, including medical histories of children and the complete family histories for each applicant. They also oversaw placement of the children into other homes, whether that was a return to their parent/s or transfer to foster family, an adoptive family, or to another institution. And all legal documents pertaining to each child's case were also their responsibility.[198] These duties were shared by all Admissions Committees in the Christian Homes.[199] Some sense of the time these volunteers dedicated to their work can be gleaned from the report of the St. Louis Admissions Committee in October of that same year, which showed "66 outside visits made, 56 office interviews, 1093 telephone calls, and 784 letters written in the past six months with 86 children in the Home at the present time."

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[197] "Conference of Ed Moseley with Dave Thompson at Cleveland Christian Home of September 14, 1965" Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN, Record Number 39 D.IV.118.

[198] Annual Report of the St. Louis Christian Home, 1956. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN. National Benevolent Association Papers, 39D I. 64, p. 7.

[199] Board meeting minutes and annual reports from the St. Louis, Denver and Cleveland Christian Homes are all full of reports of the Admissions Committee women from the early 20th century until the 1960s, when the Child Welfare League recommended turning over all intake and discharge responsibilities to trained social workers.

In January 1948, Mrs. D. L. Cross, Superintendent of the Colorado Christian Home, reported that out of 99 applications in the previous six months, only 21 children could be admitted.[200] She expressed concern that the Home was outgrowing its facilities, and noted that "there are some most urgent calls for our admitting girls from our churches – 1 from Wyoming, 1 from Kansas, since early summer, a Denver court case, also church, and 2 recent applications from Winfield, Kansas."[201] In an accompanying report of the Chairman of the Admissions Committee for the Colorado Christian Home, Mrs. Josephine C. Svenson, wrote about the families and children they had most recently accepted.

> The Pinson children are from a broken home. The father, a war veteran, is in the hospital not expected to live. The mother has been living with her mother under most pitiful conditions. There was no vacancy for the youngest child but the two boys were accepted, and as soon as a place was available, the youngest child was also taken into the Home, which was about a month later.

> Mrs. Earhart has asked for the placement of her four children, but we were unable to accommodate her 13 year old boy, but accepted the other three. This case was brought to our attention by Dr. David Bayliss. The Father had been drinking and had deserted the family. The mother took the children to the home of her mother and step-father, the aged father suffered a stroke and the noise of four boys in the house was more than he could stand in such crowded conditions. The mother works in a creamery, for a very small wage, but is keeping the home neat and clean, and seemed very deserving of help…

> One of our ministers from Wyoming has a little girl in his church that he feels should be accepted immediately. What can we do for more room right away? We can think of no solution and every week seems to bring more application for girls. The words "no room" bring sadness today as well as two thousand years ago. Isn't it tragic this answer must apply to little children.

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[200] Semi-Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Colorado Christian Home, January, 1948. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN, National Benevolent Association Papers, 39D.III 47.
[201] Ibid., p 1.

The Admissions Committees conducted inquiries with the families, checked their references, and verified their financial straits. They met for hours long sessions at least once a month, and more often in times of crisis. An application from an especially large family, or children in need of immediate care could justify an emergency meeting. And the available spaces were never enough to meet the true need.

The connection between the individuals who served on the Admissions Committee and the children living in the Homes was often strong. These adults took an active interest in the well-being of the children they felt responsible for bringing to the Homes, an interest that could last far longer than their term on the Committee itself. The women who served on the Admissions committees often continued to follow the progress of the children they admitted, visiting them, following their school achievements, and keeping in touch even after they were reunited with family.[202] An example comes from the Annual Report of the St. Louis Christian Home in 1945: "Henry, Donald, and Richard graduated from grammar school. Their friend, Robert Roehr, asked his mother to provide the class pins for them. The boys chose the less expensive ones and wore them very proudly. Bob graduated from high school in Ponca City and went into Service. Betty sent an invitation to her graduation from high school at Ogden, Utah. Jewel will graduate during summer school in Tulsa, and Inez graduates this summer from Beaumont High." The affectionate relationships between the Homes and the children could be mutual and long lasting.

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[202] See Board notes from St.Louis 1958 and Denve

A feature length article on the Cleveland Christian Home in the Ladies' Home Journal from 1950, reports on the "higher education fund" that Ma Thorpe, the matron of the Home, set up for children who want to go to college or professional school. First endowed by redeeming Octagon Soap coupons, it continued through the redemption of sales tax receipts at three cents apiece. "Churches, fraternal organizations, and individuals all over the state send these tiny contributions to the Home, and out of them Mrs. Thorpe got $4,696.92 last year. She is now sending one boy through Ohio State, a girl to Baldwin-Wallace … and two other girls to nursing school out of her tax-stamp fund."[203] The same story detailed how forty-two of the Home's former residents went into military service during World War II. "In one case, she received the War Department's telegram informing her a boy who had spent fifteen of his nineteen years with her had been killed in the South Pacific fighting. Another soldier sent her the Purple Heart medal he had won – "You're the only family I have, Mom," he wrote." [204] Yet another young man came back to the Home after his discharge from the Navy since he didn't know where else to go. He was allowed to stay and worked to provide maintenance for the buildings and grounds until he was able to find a regular job. The ongoing commitment of the Christian Homes to serving dependent children, their parents, and constituent churches, helped to support demand for their services through the 1960s.

Uneven Development of Foster Care

Progressive reformers and social work professionals promoted foster care as the best option for children needing out-of-home placement as early as 1910. The

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[203] Butterfield, Roger. "Life in an Orphan Home." *Ladies Home Journal*, December 1950, 152.
[204] Ibid.

development of foster care networks, however, took decades. Different funding

structures, licensing requirements, religious restrictions and a scarcity of interested

families limited the number of placements home finding agencies could make. In areas

where there was already a strong institutional presence, courts were likely to refer

children to organizations with which they were already familiar, creating a longstanding

bias toward institutional care.[205] It was 1950 before children in foster family care

exceeded those in institutional care on a national level, but in many states and counties,

institutional care remained the dominant method of providing out-of-home care for

dependent and neglected children.

      States and counties were initially reluctant to pay foster care families, and when

they did provide funds, the payments covered at best only a fraction of what supporting

children actually cost. Agencies often had a mix of foster families – boarding homes, free

homes, and wage homes. In boarding homes, families were paid a set rate per month of

care. Caring for children with more intense needs for parental supervision and support

such as infants, children with physical disabilities, developmental delays, chronically

illness or emotional and behavioral problems would often merit a higher rate of

support.[206] Free homes were homes which housed children who could not live with their

parents but had come to the attention of an agency for services. Often, free homes were

extended relatives of a given child or children. Wage homes or work homes were used

primarily for teens and were a kind of updated indenture arrangement in which a family

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[205] Broten, Alton M. "Use Made of State Funds for the Foster Care of Children by the Downstate Counties of Illinois." *Social Service Review* 25, no. 3 (September 1951), 337.

[206] "Child Welfare League of America Board Rates Paid in 1941," 1941. Child Welfare League of America Collection, Series 4.7. Social Welfare History Archive.

would provide room and board, and a young person would work in exchange. In wage homes the agency would pay a small subsidy to the youth for his or her work.[207]

The CWLA survey of the St. Louis Board of Guardians in 1935 noted that boarding families received $15 per month per child, and it was widely acknowledged to be insufficient to the supporting the needs of a child in the city.[208] In addition, almost half of the children in foster family care with the agency were being housed with five to eighteen other children. It would be difficult to argue that children were getting the individual attention they might need or even the level of supervision they might receive in an institutional setting with additional staff.[209] In 1941, CWLA collected data from 115 agencies across the United States on their levels of board payments for foster families. Only seven of the respondents were public agencies, the rest were private. Rates ranged from a low of $9 per month in a rural mid-Atlantic state, to a high of $26 in another mid-Atlantic state. More than half of the agencies payed families between $15-$21.67 per month, the equivalent of approximately $244- $353 in 2016 dollars, or between $8.13-11.76 per day.[210] Fourteen years later, the same complaint about board payments was made by the author of a book on child placement in foster care: "I believe that doubling the allowances to foster families would still make the payment they receive inadequate."[211]

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[207] Lewis, Foster Family Care, 33.

[208] CWLA Report to the Board of Children's Guardians, St. Louis 1935. Child Welfare League of America Collection, Series 4.7. Social Welfare History Archive.

[209] Ibid.

[210] Values calculated using www.MeasuringWorth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php using the Purchasing Power Calculator.

[211] Charnley, Jean. "Casework with Foster Families." In *The Art of Child Placement*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1955, 147.

The insufficiency of board payments to foster families most likely exacerbated the difficulties in recruiting and licensing appropriate foster families. In a review of the New York State foster care system, the author noted loopholes in licensing requirements for boarding homes, the use of lax standards in recruiting foster parents, but identified the most "major problem of all, namely, a serious and chronic shortage of six types of foster-homes throughout the entire state: for upstate Catholic children of all ages, for infants and young children, for children with behavior personality problems, for adolescents, for children with special physical and mental problems, and for children requiring temporary care."[212] One might wonder for which kinds of children foster families were readily available. A review of the use of state funds supporting foster care placements in Illinois in 1950 wrote about many of the same issues, and found that foster families were often unlicensed, agency supervision of children once they were placed in care was difficult to determine, and the lack of a centralized administration for foster care placements meant that children's records were often lost in the bureaucratic maze of individual county courts.[213]

The purposes for foster family care included the short-term protection of the child from a home life that was corrupting or dangerous, the provision of stable family life until a parent could be reunited with his/her child or an adoptive placement was found, or long-term foster family care in cases when adoption was not appropriate (children in their teens, for example.)[214] As the challenges of providing foster family care became

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[212] Chilman, C. William. "New York State Reviews Its Foster-Care System." *Social Service Review* 22, no. 2 (1948): 180–93.
[213] Broten, Alton M. "Use Made of State Funds for the Foster Care of Children by the Downstate Counties of Illinois." *Social Service Review* 25, no. 3 (September 1951): 332–44.
[214] Lewis, "Foster Family Care," 36.

apparent, it also became clear that there were some categories of children for whom

foster family care was not necessarily a good fit, and for whom institutional care might be

preferable. For children with severe emotional and behavioral problems, for children who

viewed foster parents as threatening to their relationship to their biological parent/s, for

adolescents who needed a balance of structure and independence, institutional care might

be preferable.[215] Adolescents in particular tended to have more trouble in family homes

than in institutional settings.[216] Although child welfare reformers since the turn of the

twentieth century had been advocating the closure of institutions and the expansion of

foster care, by mid-century, child welfare agencies and frontline social workers were well

aware of its shortcomings given the systems within which they worked. "Bitter

experience with the results of the inappropriate placement of children in foster-family

care, coupled with great improvement in institutional care, finally made apparent the need

for a variety of facilities if children were to be served well."[217]

Conclusion

The period between 1935 and 1960 was one of growth for the Christian Homes.

The inconsistent funding and administration of Aid to Dependent Children on the state

level left millions of poor families without safety nets in times of crisis. As a result, the

children's homes remained needed community partners for individuals, their constituent

churches, and for local governments requiring placement for children whom strained

foster care networks could not accommodate. The CWLA's view of a continuum of care

for children who could not live in their own homes, however, limited the role of

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[215] Charnley, *The Art of Child Placement*, 78.
[216] Charnley, *The Art of Child Placement*, 80.
[217] Lewis, "Foster Family Care," 34.

institutional care to therapeutic residential treatment for children who could not function

in a foster family setting. That vision, along with the expansion of federal funding to

welfare and foster care, and the passage of the Civil Rights Act, would transform the

Christian Homes and the field of child welfare in the 1960s.

Chapter 4

Federal Legislation and Local Action: How AFDC, the Civil Rights Act,

and the Child Welfare League helped transform the Christian Children's Homes

In the decade between 1960 and 1970, all three of the Christian children's homes in this study were transformed. Each one of the homes invited the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) to come in and survey their institutions, assessing everything from the organizational bylaws to the adequacy of the physical plant, staffing levels and compensation, and most importantly, the educational, emotional and social programs for the children in their care. They were not alone. Children's institutions across the country were examining their continued role in providing child welfare services in what had become a rapidly changing social and political environment.

In 1962, as part of the newly declared War on Poverty, Congress expanded the definition of child welfare services and accompanying federal funding in Title IV of the Social Security Act. One of the changes was to rename Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) as a reflection of the government's new emphasis on supporting the well-being of families, not only their children.[218] The passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1965 required that government programs receiving financial assistance from the federal government serve all American citizens, regardless of race.[219] Additional amendments to Title IV of the Social Security Act, passed in 1967, further expanded funding to support states as they attempted to reach every family eligible for income support.[220] These efforts paid off in the immediate growth of the number of families benefiting from AFDC, but also caused increased scrutiny of the

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[218] Ellen J. Perkins. "AFDC in Review 1936-1962." In *Children and Youth in America*, 3:547–51. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.

[219] Civil Rights Act of 1964, 88-352 § VI (1964).

[220] "Social Security Amendments of 1967." In *Children and Youth in America*, 3:563–64. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.

program and its recipients as state expenditures on welfare programs grew. Another influence on the field of child welfare came from the research of Dr. C. Henry Kempe, who documented the problem of physical abuse of children. With the publication of an article that showed how x-rays could be used to document injuries that indicated abuse in the American Medical Association Journal in 1962, the public outcry overwhelmingly supported new strategies for prevention and treatment of child abuse.[221]

In the midst of changing federal legislation, increasing state regulation, and new information about the problem of child abuse, the Christian Homes were seeking ways to remain relevant and responsive to the needs of children. In service to that mission, they were willing to experiment with new sources of funding and new mixes of programs and services. With the guidance of the CWLA, the Christian Children's Homes began to reorient their services from residential care for children from within their religious community, to providing services based in their local community with a residential component.

A Changing Environment: AFDC

The 1960s marked a significant period of change for the United States in its policies toward minorities and the poor. A great deal of scholarly energy has been focused on determining the origins and the impetus for Civil Rights legislation and the War on Poverty, and how they transformed America's understanding of what it meant to be treated as a full citizen with equal access to government protections and services. In the context of hotly contested debates about Civil Rights, the arguments were not only centered on the right to exercise one's democratic freedoms by voting, and on the rights of citizens to expect equal protections under the law, but also on the responsibility of the federal government to ensure that social services like Medicaid,

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[221] C. Henry Kempe, FN Silverman, BF Steele,W Droegemueller, and HK Silver. "The Battered-Child Syndrome." *JAMA* 181, no. 1 (July 7, 1962): 17–24.

Medicare and AFDC were provided equally to all citizens, a goal that was accomplished in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

James Patterson, Michael Katz, Linda Gordon, Gary Lowe and Nelson Reid, Alice O'Connor, Mimi Abramovitz, Bruce Jansson, Theda Skocpol, and other historians and social scientists have documented the unequal and unfair distribution of income supports for women raising their children alone.[222] Initially in the mother's pension programs, which were enacted by states in the nineteen-teens and twenties, and later in the implementation of Aid to Dependent Children, which was enacted as part of Social Security legislation of the New Deal in 1935, the eligibility standards for accessing benefits excluded far more women and children than they included. Stipulations regarding the marital status of the recipients, moral judgments on the fitness of women to raise their own children, and unwritten policies of denying certain ethnic and racial minorities access to benefits limited the penetration of anti-poverty programs to a fraction of the actual population in need. For years after 1935, attempts by states to subvert the Social Security provisions of the federal government went unchallenged.

Decades of the federal government failing to sanction individual states for these practices had the effect of encouraging state governments to experiment with new ways of avoiding their financial responsibility to provide welfare payments. In 1960, Louisiana dropped more than

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[222] Patterson, James T., and James T. Patterson. *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000; Katz, Michael B. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse : a Social History of Welfare in America*. New York: BasicBooks, 1996; Katz, Michael B. *The Undeserving Poor : from the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1990; Gordon, Linda. *Pitied but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890-1935*. New York: Free Press, 1994; Gordon, Linda. *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence: Boston, 1880-1960*. New York: Viking, 1988; *The Professionalization of Poverty: Social Work and the Poor in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1999; O'Connor, Alice. *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-century U.S. History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001; Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present*. Boston: South End Press, 1996; Jansson, Bruce S. *The Reluctant Welfare State: a History of American Social Welfare Policies*. Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth, 1988; Skocpol, Theda. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992. Mink, Gwendolyn. *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.

23,000 children from its ADC rolls after enacting new eligibility criteria known as a "suitable home" test. Some variation of this test was already part of the regulations in twenty-four other states that pertained to the administration of ADC benefits, all of which dealt with immoral or undesirable conduct of the parent or guardian.[223] In most cases, if a home was not deemed suitable, the state would then be responsible for providing additional social services to address the family's troubles, or for removing the child from a dangerous or corrupting environment.[224] In seven of the states, however, while benefits could be cut off from a family because of such a designation, there was no alternative plan for providing care for children. For states that were already reluctant to distribute ADC, these tests provided a convenient tool to save money in the state budget by manipulating the number of children on the welfare rolls.

Louisiana's version of the suitable home provision was so egregious, however, that it called attention to the entire class of these regulations. The state's statute stipulated that all aid to a family could be discontinued if a parent was living with someone out of wedlock, that aid to legitimate children could be stopped if their mother became pregnant outside of marriage or an illegitimate child was born while benefits were being received, and that no aid should be provided for any child if he or she had two older illegitimate siblings. Under the last provision, even if a child having two illegitimate siblings was <u>not</u> living with the parent, he or she was ineligible for state benefits. While appearing to be evenhanded in its demand for high moral standards, the rule was applied overwhelmingly to black families. "The enactment of these provisions reduced the number of qualifying children in Louisiana by almost one-third of the previous total; of those disqualified, nearly all were non-white."[225] Put in place during the same period in which the city of New Orleans had been court-ordered to integrate the school system, civil rights activists,

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[223] "'Suitable Home' Tests under Social Security: A Functional Approach to Equal Protection." *The Yale Law Journal* 70, no. 7 (1961): 1192–1204.
[224] Ibid., 1193
[225] Ibid., 1194

politicians and social welfare organizations protested what they viewed as part of a pattern of the state's resistance to racial integration and to the equal treatment of its black citizens.[226]

Public outcry resulted in a federal investigation. In a hearing held in November of 1960, the Child Welfare League of America filed an amicus brief arguing that any "suitable home" requirement was a violation of the Social Security Act, which stated intent was to "furnish financial assistance, as far as practicable … to needy dependent children."[227] In response to the hearings, Arthur Flemming, President Eisenhower's Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, issued a statement which came to be known as the "Flemming Rule." In it, he acknowledged that states had broad latitude to decide how to administer their programs, but that aid was not intended to be used for punitive purposes.

> "I have concluded that when a needy child who otherwise fits within the aid to dependent children program of the state is denied the funds that are admittedly needed to provide the basic essentials of life itself, because of the behavior of his parent or other relative, the state plan imposes a condition of eligibility that bears no just relationship to the aid to dependent children program."

He went on to argue that withholding aid "to make the conduct of the mother … more acceptable is no more supportable than the exclusion of benefits to children because their parents have not conformed to other public policies of the state."

Flemming further stipulated that a state could not deny children benefits because they were living in an unsuitable home without in some way addressing the unsuitability of that home by giving supportive services or removing the child. If a state did cut children off without support because of such a rule, the federal government would withhold appropriations for the entire state program.[228] In response to the Fleming Rule, Congress amended Title IV of the Social Security

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[226] Kathryn D. Goodwin. "Letter to State Agencies Administering Approved Public Assistance Plans." In *Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*, edited by Gwendolyn Mink and Rickie Solinger, 204–5. New York: New York University Press, 2003.

[227] Social Security Act of 1935, Title IV - Grants to States for Aid to Dependent Children, § 401-406 (1935). https://www.ssa.gov/history/35activ.html.

[228] Kathryn Goodwyn, "Letter to State Agencies Administering Approved Public Assistance Plans."

Act in 1962 to include the provision that children receiving AFDC would continue to receive support even if they were placed in foster homes or children's institutions. These funds would become incredibly important to the provision of child welfare as the decade progressed.

Flemming had made a strong statement against using "suitable home" tests as a condition of receiving aid, but in practice, morality based eligibility tests remained part of state welfare regulations through the 1960s. As long as access to aid was based on case workers' judgement of parental morality, states had an effective tool for keeping welfare rolls artificially low through unwritten policies of racial discrimination.[229] Compliance among largely rural and racially segregated southern states was particularly execrable. Poor white women and children in poverty were never treated well, but African American women and children were likely to be excluded from AFDC altogether. Although the Civil Rights movement is most widely associated with the struggle to gain voting rights in the South, for black families living in poverty in Northern, Midwestern, and Western urban areas, many of their most pressing issues were economic. Access to employment, education and opportunity drove their participation in the Civil Rights movement, and out of their frustration arose the welfare rights movement.[230]

Welfare Rights advocates were activists from the African American community – largely women – who sought to address hurdles to eligibility and inadequate benefits in order to guarantee fair, equitable, and dignified treatment for them and their children.[231] Through community organization, protest, and legal challenges, the Welfare Rights movement empowered

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[229] It wasn't until 1968, for example, with the Supreme Court ruling in King v. Smith, that 'substitute father' regulations were declared outside the scope of the Social Security Act. These state provisions would cut off benefits to children if their mother was thought by a welfare case worker to be having a relationship with a man who could take financial responsibility for her children. Any evidence of a man living with a family receiving AFDC benefits – reports from neighbors, a pair of men's shoes by the door – could be the basis for benefits termination.

[230] Guida West. *The National Welfare Rights Movement: The Social Protest of Poor Women*. New York, N.Y: Praeger, 1981, 20.

[231] Premilla Nadasen. *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States*. New York: Routledge, 2005, 3.

minority communities in public housing projects and other concentrated areas of poverty to access the support that had been denied to them for more than 30 years after the passage of the original Social Security Act. The National Welfare Rights Organization, active from 1966-1975, sought to reform punitive and exclusionary state regulations, and to reform welfare legislation and implementation to include the voices of welfare recipients and their concerns.[232]

Between 1962, with the passage of amendments to the Social Security Act expanding federal funding for child welfare programs (also known as Title IV legislation), 1965 and the passage of the Civil Rights Act, and 1975, the number of families enrolled in income support programs like Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Food Stamps more than doubled.[233] The political rhetoric around families receiving AFDC was often negative. Poor black mothers were portrayed as lazy, immoral, and likely to have more children in order to gain access to more benefits.[234] The disproportionate numbers of black families living in poverty also translated into a larger share of the black population being eligible to receive benefits. Unfortunately, many state politicians in the midst of resisting federal civil rights legislation argued wrongly that AFDC was supporting a permanent black underclass, rather than identifying the longstanding economic, political, and social structures that had perpetuated high rates of poverty in the African American community.[235]

The major drivers of the expansion of the welfare rolls were not the laziness or moral turpitude of the population. Instead, the expansion of AFDC was the result of more states participating in the federally funded program (Nevada was the last to join in 1955), federal amendments that expanded eligibility requirements to include more families (including those in foster care or children's institutions), and the growth of the population of children in the baby

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[232] Nadasen, *Welfare Warriors*, 3.
[233] See SSA Bulletin for appropriate figures.
[234] Nadasen, Welfare Warriors, 7, 12.
[235] Nadasen, *Welfare Warriors*, 11-12. Schram, Sanford, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording, eds. *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003, 196.

boom period.[236] The expansion of AFDC not only meant more families with income support, it also translated into more social workers going into more homes to review eligibility criteria. In the mid-1960s, their responsibilities also expanded as state after state passed mandatory reporting rules requiring social workers and other professional people to report suspected incidences of child abuse.

A Changing Environment: The Rediscovery of Child Abuse

The first published account of how to find evidence of child abuse using x-ray technology was by John Caffey in 1946, and it was entitled "Multiple Fractures in the Long Bones of Infants Suffering from Chronic Subdural Hematoma."[237] The article detailed the distinctive pattern of multiple broken bones in the arms or legs (or evidence of broken bones in various stages of healing) that often accompanied very young children who were admitted to the hospital with bleeding underneath the skull. Without openly stating that parents or caretakers had directly caused these injuries, Caffey postulated that the difference between the account of how the injury occurred (or the complete denial that there had been an injury) as provided by parents, and the scope and severity of the injuries as documented by x-ray pictures was a clear indicator that something was amiss. His early work helped to focus the attention of some physicians on the distinctive patterns of injury that often indicated child maltreatment rather than normally occurring childhood accidents.

Dr. C. Henry Kempe, and his colleagues published "The Battered Child Syndrome" in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 1962. Together with its follow up book "The Battered Child" in 1968, these publications brought new techniques in radiology to the fore in identifying children who had been physically abused by their parents, and who were in imminent danger of future harm. This new, evidence based standard, in which x-rays were used to diagnose

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[236] Perkins, "AFDC in Review 1936-1962," 548-49.
[237]John Caffey. "Multiple Fractures in the Long Bones of Infants Suffering from Chronic Subdural Hematoma." American Journal of Roentgenology, 56 (August 1946).

both recent and healing fractures typical of abuse rather than common childhood injury, created

proof that could be used in a courtroom to controvert caregivers' stories of how an injury

occurred. Along with the article's publication, Dr. Kempe also issued a press release to the

general media which brought the abuse of children by their parents or other trusted adults to the

forefront of the cultural conversation. Within the next two years, Time, Life, Newsweek and

Good Housekeeping magazines, among others, published feature stories on child abuse that

resulted in a new awareness of the problem and helped to propel new legislation that created

classes of people who were mandated by law to report suspicions of child abuse to the

authorities.[238]

The first of these mandatory reporting laws were passed in 1963 by ten states using the

recommendations of a number of nonprofit groups, including the Children's Bureau, the

American Medical Association, the American Humane Society, and the Council of State

Governments. By 1967 – in just 4 years – all fifty states had some version of mandatory reporting

laws in place.[239] The classes of individuals who were required to report suspected abuse included

school teachers, nurses, doctors, social workers (including AFDC workers), and coaches.[240] Prior

to the 1960s, there had been no way to measure the scope of the problem of child physical abuse

and neglect. The new mandatory reporting laws changed that. Through the creation of child abuse

hotlines, which provided concerned citizens a number to call with abuse allegations, and

accompanying national and statewide public relations campaigns detailing signs of abuse and

neglect, the number of allegations exploded. In 1965, a Children's Bureau study estimated that

there were probably a total of 6,000 to 7,000 cases of serious child abuse nationally each year.

But by 1974, reports totaled ten times that number.[241]

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[238] John E. B. Myers, *Child Protection in America: Past, Present, and Future*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, 87-89. Ashby, *Endangered Children*, 134-135.
[239] Ashby, *Endangered Children*, 134.
[240] Myers, *Child Protection in America*, 89-90.
[241] Ibid. 90; Gil, David G. *Violence Against Children; Physical Child Abuse in the United States*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970.

In Florida, for example, there were sixteen reported cases of child abuse in 1965. After

passage of mandatory reporting laws, a publicity campaign, and finally the creation of a state-

wide anonymous child abuse hotline, 28,000 calls were received alleging incidents of abuse or

neglect in 1972.[242] The result of the upsurge in reporting was not accompanied by a

corresponding expansion of child welfare case workers. Instead, existing workers were buried

under increasing caseloads, and fearing litigation if a child was maltreated once a case had been

opened, allegations triggered a massive increase in removals of children into foster care in the late

1960s that continued to rise until 1976.[243] Leroy Pelton argues that expanded funding for child

welfare services and foster care in Title IV of the Social Security Act provided financial supports

for public child welfare agencies to continue removing children from their families and placing

them in foster care. He also makes the case that in their eagerness to protect children from

physical abuse, case workers began to treat neglect as being equally damaging. Severe neglect,

which can result in malnutrition or other long-term injury to a child is often linked with parental

mental illness or substance abuse, but the inability to provide appropriate clothing, shelter or food

for a child, is often linked directly to poverty.[244]

The expansion of AFDC in 1962 and 1967 and the subsequent welfare rights movement

created a new army of social workers with the authority to go into poor people's homes to make

judgments about their qualifications for government support. After the advent of mandatory

reporting laws, they were also required to report any instances of child abuse or neglect that they

thought they saw. By placing neglect stemming from poverty on the same continuum with severe

physical child abuse, case workers defaulted to basic child protection – removing children from

their homes in order to save them from potential harm. Research had already demonstrated,

however, that removing children had its own set of negative consequences for children due to the

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[242] Sealander. *The Failed Century of the Child*, 66.
[243] Leroy H. Pelton, "Not for Poverty Alone: Foster Care Population Trends in the Twentieth Century." *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 14, no. 2 (May 1987): 37–62.
[244] Pelton, "Not for Poverty Alone," 51.

psychological trauma of being taken away from family members and the subsequent instability of long term foster care.[245] Many of the children who were taken into foster care during this period were in regions with a shortage of foster families or were unable to manage the transition from their own homes to foster homes. In both cases, residential care in an institutional setting was considered appropriate, either to provide emergency placements for children, or to provide longer term therapeutic intervention for children with emotional and behavioral problems. The Christian Children's Homes were invested in continuing to be able to serve children in need, even if the children needing those services were different than those they had served before.

New Directions

The Christian Children's Homes served multi-state regions of Disciples congregations, as well as accepting children from local juvenile and family courts. As a result, the Homes did not see the precipitous drop in admissions that some other institutions faced in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The decrease in admissions did however become obvious over time, and it was clear that operating the Homes with reduced occupancy was unsustainable.[246] At the same time, state regulators were also pressuring the Homes to update their programs and standards, especially regarding the employment of trained social work staff and the closure of the babies' wards.[247] It was in this climate that the NBA administration encouraged new criteria for leadership that included the adoption of training in social work and the ability to explore additional sources of referrals and revenues from government sources.

Between 1962 and 1965, the longstanding leaders of the homes in Cleveland, Denver, and St. Louis all retired or moved on to new projects, and modern social work practices and standards came to the Homes almost overnight. In 1962, Anna Garver "Mom" Thorpe, retired

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[245] Pelton, "Not for Poverty Alone," 52.
[246] Brewer, "A Century of Caring", 141.
[247] The surveys of the Homes in St. Louis and Cleveland indicate that the Homes were functioning under provisional licenses while issues with social work staff and the continuing institutional care of young children were addressed.

from the Cleveland Christian Home after thirty-seven years of service.[248] Her qualifications were her childhood growing up in a state orphan home, a college education, a knack for fundraising, and decades of experience working with children and families. After she had announced her plans to retire, the Board of Trustees of the Home turned to the CWLA "in a spirit of self-evaluation" and to suggest "future direction for the Home's services to children."[249] Among the surveyor's many recommendations to the board was the following: "There is an urgent need to make every possible attempt to find a person with demonstrated administrative ability who is experienced in child welfare and is a graduate of an accredited school of social work." (emphasis in the original).[250] The trustees listened. "Mom" Thorpe was followed by the appointment of John Petten, the first trained social worker to be a Christian Home administrator. Petten earned his master's degree in social work from Ohio State University and had experience as a probation officer and a social worker with children before coming to the Home.[251]

In 1964, Rev. James Tilsey of the Colorado Christian Home stepped down as Administrator after sixteen years. A pastor in Disciples of Christ Churches in Nebraska, Indiana, Kansas and Missouri, Tilsey had "a well-honed understanding of the whole church and an extensive network of church leaders and individuals."[252] He was succeeded by Harry Spear. Also a pastor, Spear was aware of the changing field of child welfare and the ways in which the Home in Denver needed to adapt. In response to changing state regulation, he hired the Colorado Christian Home's first social worker in 1966, and brought in the CWLA to conduct a survey of the Home in 1967.[253]

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[248] Wadovick, J. A. "Mom Thorpe Is Saying Goodbye." *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. March 12, 1962.
[249] Donald M. DeMuth. "Report of a Survey of The Cleveland Christian Home for Children Cleveland, Ohio." Child Welfare League of America, June 1962. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 39 D: IV.
[250] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 9.
[251] Brewer, *A Century of Caring*, 144.
[252] Brewer, Don D. *A Century of Caring: A Pictorial History of Colorado Christian Home, 1904-2004*. Denver, Colorado: Friends of Children, 2004, 76.
[253] Brewer, A Century of Caring, 141.

In St. Louis, Charles Palmer stepped down as Administrator of the St. Louis Christian Home in 1961 after seven years.[254] He was replaced by J. Frank Crow, a pastor with a background in sociology, who initiated a relationship with the school of social work at the Washington University in St. Louis, brought on a psychiatric social worker to facilitate group work with the children, set up a Research and Planning committee for the purpose of evaluating the current program and advancing work at the home, and immediately appealed to the Board of Trustees for a larger budget to hire additional social workers.[255]

The leadership of the NBA was aware that social, cultural and political trends had changed the kind of children and families they were serving. More of the children the Children's Homes cared for were from families undergoing divorce, struggling with problems of addiction, mental illness, or from situations of severe abuse and neglect. The children coming from these families were often in need of more significant social services, school tutoring, and staff attention than children who fit the earlier profile of growing up in a loving, if somewhat unstable environment that was broken by poverty. A meeting of NBA institutional leaders in Cleveland during 1961, for example, emphasized the need to provide the appropriate social work interventions to each child in their care. The meeting of the St. Louis Children's Home Board of Trustees reviewed what had been discussed at the gathering in Cleveland, and those present agreed that "there is a need to keep a home board abreast of the times in social work procedures. Every child in the homes is a disturbed child and has need of trained workers in the field of social welfare."[256] This is a significant change in the language of Homes, which had previously emphasized the healing power of love in overcoming the emotional and behavioral problems of children.

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[254] St. Louis Christian Home Board Meeting Minutes, April 4, 1961. Disciples of Christ Historical Society. 39: D I 3.
[255] St. Louis Christian Home Board Meeting Minutes, May 6, 1961. Disciples of Christ Historical Society 39: D I 3.
[256] "Board Meeting Minutes, St. Louis Christian Home," October 30, 1961. 39 D: I 3. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

The knowledge that the homes would need to change their programs to meet the more severe needs of children in the 1960s was not revolutionary, but radically changing the programs and functions and day to day routines of the homes required a major disruption. Institutional inertia is a strong force, and it took the appointment of new chief administrators and subsequent periods of institutional self-examination to overcome it. The survey process and final reports issued by the CWLA were intense for the volunteer board members and administrative staff of the homes, in part because the CWLA was blunt in its criticisms of practices and programs it felt were outdated. The surveyors were not interested in sparing the feelings of administrators, volunteers or staff, although the reports always included generous appreciation of their cooperation. The purpose of the surveys was to evaluate existing programs and recommend actions "consistent with modern child welfare practices."[257] Inevitably they included some hard truths.

In an effort to prepare the readers of the CWLA reports, most often the trustees of the institution being reviewed, surveyors tried to frame their work carefully. Reports were neither histories, nor promotional materials, and they were intended for a private audience – those in a position to make changes. The Report to the St. Louis Christian Home included this statement: "There may appear to be a tendency … to focus on negative factors rather than to elaborate extensively on the many positive aspects of the program. This report will concern itself with future orientation of the agency with the expectation that such a focus will produce an even more meaningful community service."[258] In the report to Cleveland Christian Home, the surveyor put a more positive spin on things, writing "it is obvious that no survey is complete in and of itself. It is merely the beginning of a process … in which those charged with the responsibility of carrying

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[257] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," Cover Letter.
[258] Maurice Caldwell and Marguerite T. Ronan. "Report of Survey of St. Louis Christian Home, St. Louis, Missouri." Child Welfare League of America, March 1969. 39 D: I 59. Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 4.

on the work of the Home must play a major role."[259] In surveys of other child care institutions, the language was very similar. The surveyor of the Jones Home, another protestant children's institution in Cleveland, shared this caveat:

> A survey, by its very nature, is requested and undertaken to evaluate the past and present functioning of an agency and to find better ways of accomplishing goals in the future. It, therefore, tends to focus on shortcomings and weaknesses in the program rather than upon strengths and assets. It may be taken for granted that this study will, therefore, seem to over-emphasize the negative. Time and space will not permit a description of the positive accomplishments of the past.[260]

The surveyors were true to their words. In well-researched and straightforward prose, they went on to list the shortcomings of the Homes in great detail.

The most urgent recommendation of the surveyors in the Cleveland, St. Louis, and Denver Homes was the immediate closure of their babies' departments. In 1962, the Cleveland Home was caring for twenty-five children under the age of six in their Babies' Department. After observing the children and staff interact for a day, the surveyor noted that the department was understaffed, and the children weren't able to get the individual emotional attention that they deserved in the rush to make sure that all of their physical needs were attended to. A member of the staff who had been there for a long time "commented to the surveyor with real feeling that the staff … have never been encouraged to love the children, because this was too upsetting to the schedule." In addition to citing research demonstrating the importance of foster family care for infants and young children, he concluded his remarks thusly.

> "The surveyor attempted in an honest way to assess impartially the quality of care given in the baby department. He has been forced to conclude, in view of the emotionally-hungry reaching-out quality of these little children, that the Home should plan immediately toward a gradual elimination of the baby and preschool department, by stopping the admission of any new children and planning the removal of those now under care."[261]

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[259] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 1.
[260] Donald D. Dowling. "Report of Survey of Jones Home for Children." Cleveland, OH: Child Welfare League of America, September 1964. Child Welfare League of America Collection 4.7 Box 129 Folder 7. Social Welfare History Archive, 3.
[261] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 18-19.

Five years later at the time of the Colorado Christian Home CWLA survey, they were also caring

for infants and young children, and seven years later in 1969, the

St. Louis Home was still providing care for thirty-three children under the age of six, nineteen of

whom were less than a year old.[262] The surveyors reproduced a significant section of the Child

Welfare League of America Standards for Services of Child Welfare Institutions, including that:

> No infant or child under six, should be placed in residential group care, because developmentally, children under six are not ready to profit by group living. The need of the infant for close, warm, and continuous physical care and emotional contact with the same caring person, cannot be met as well in a group as in a family, regardless of the quality of the care given.[263]

Although it may seem shocking that organizations were providing institutional care for young

children as late as the 1960s, the Christian Homes were not alone.

In 1960-61, the CWLA corresponded with a group of ten agencies that had recently

closed their babies' departments and began recruiting foster families to care for the children. The

correspondence was in part to convince the director of an agency that wanted to become

accredited, that foster family care could provide the same, if not better, quality of care for

newborns as his nursery staff did. The responses were resoundingly positive. "We have never

considered reestablishing the nursery, although in a 12 month period we moved 160 infants from

hospitals and maternity homes to Foster Homes. This moving is done by volunteers ... A few of

the women are board members and others are members of church organizations. They report that

there is no volunteer activity which gives them such complete satisfaction" wrote the

administrator of the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A staff member of

Louise Wise Services in New York City responded:

> We have never found that nursery care had any advantages over (the institutional) system, either medically or otherwise. …it would seem to us that having the baby in a natural family environment affords much more opportunity to see him as he might really

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[262] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 16-18.
[263] Caldwell and Ronan. "Survey of St. Louis Christian Home," 13.

begin to be, to offer him more stimulation and challenge to respond to people, both adults and other children, and to utilize the very valuable experience of the boarding parents in judging his development and readiness for adoption… We have never considered reestablishing the nursery; there has never been any reason for the thought ever to have arisen.[264]

All three surveys recommended that the Christian Homes repurpose their nurseries to provide day care services to their immediate communities, noting in some instances the increased demand for such services, or encouraging the Home to collaborate with a local agency that might pay to rent the space.

Other recommendations consistent throughout the surveys included the expansion of the social work departments, and the addition of psychologists or psychiatrists to provide services to the most disturbed children, the cessation of the admissions committee activities in favor of a trained case worker managing intake, and the recommendation that the Homes refocus their energies on serving the needs of their immediate geographic communities rather than the multi-state regions of the Disciples of Christ. Becoming a participating member of the local child welfare community, made up of welfare federations, public child welfare agencies, child guidance clinics, universities, and courts put the Homes in a better position to market their services to meet local needs. That could also include contracting with the public child welfare agency and court systems to offer care to local children. One surveyor wrote that "it is crucial if the Home is to move ahead and realize its full potential, that its efforts become an integrated part of the whole of Cleveland's gamut of services to children." [265]

By restricting intake to agency or court referrals, the CWLA was both advocating for modern social service practices, which would avoid unnecessary institutional placements, and creating community based sources of revenue for the Homes. At the same time, the

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[264] "Correspondence Regarding Institutional Nursery Care for Infants and Young Children,"1960. Child Welfare League of America Collection 4. Box 13. Social Welfare History Archive.
[265] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 4-5.

implementation of that policy would close down intake based on referrals from pastors and parents, putting up a barrier between the churches and their Homes. The St. Louis survey made it clear "there is no longer any need for the Admissions Committee to function as an Intake Committee. The Committee should instead establish the policies under which the personnel of the Agency should function. All referrals should be directed to the Agency's Social Service Department."[266] These actions fundamentally changed the ways in which volunteer leadership could participate in the work of the Homes.

The completion of the surveys of the CWLA and their recommendations to significantly alter the programs, services, and staff, were often accompanied by changes in the individuals composing the boards of trustees of each institution. Women and men from the Disciples community who had committed decades to the support and maintenance of the Christian homes and developed relationships with the children living there stepped down as they felt their experience was no longer needed. More of the decision-making responsibilities about admissions, budget, facilities, and programs came to be dictated by the accreditation standards of the CWLA, new state requirements, and professional staff.[267] Younger, more progressive board members took their place who had a more detached interest in the institution and a willingness to defer to the recommendations of the experts.[268]

These personnel changes reflected changes in the identity and self-perception of the board and staff. From their founding, the mission of the Children's Homes was first and foremost to serve the regional congregations of the Disciples of Christ with a safe space to care for children whose families were in crisis while preserving and promoting their religious values. Sharing the transformative power of God's love with these children was an integral part of their responsibility to develop the whole child – physically, emotionally, educationally and spiritually. With the new

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[266] Caldwell and Ronan. "Survey of St. Louis Christian Home," 19.
[267] "St. Louis Christian Home Reports and Board Minutes, 1960-1973," 39 D: I 3-13. Disciples of Christ Historical Society.
[268] Brewer, "A Century of Caring", 144.

leadership in the 1960s, the mission of the Children's Homes began to be reimagined to meet the needs of children and families that may not be a part of the Disciples community, but that still needed their help.

With admissions decreasing and financial pressures mounting, the Homes came to the conclusion, with the help of the CWLA survey reports, that far from avoiding the admission of children with serious behavioral and emotional needs, they should seek them out. The CWLA surveys all noted that demand for spaces for children who were difficult to place in foster care was increasing, particularly for those children with the greatest difficulties functioning in family foster care. This reorientation made sense in light of the expanding number of children coming in to the foster care system. The Homes also explored opening smaller group homes for teens in foster care, where the children could live in a more home-like setting while taking more responsibility for household duties and learning how to be more independent before they set out on their own as adults. The speed with which the Homes responded to the survey process is remarkable. Within six months of their survey report, the Denver Christian Home had closed its Babies Department and opened a new day care center. Within a year, they had completed 80% of the recommendations of the CWLA, and were already in negotiations to open a group home in Kansas. [269] The St. Louis and Cleveland Homes also opened day care facilities, and expanded their foster care and adoption placement programs.

Conclusion

The 1960s was a decade of rapid change for the Christian Children's Homes. Federal policies dealing with the administration of AFDC and increasing funding for child welfare programs through the Social Security Act intersected with the Welfare Rights Movement and the rediscovery of child abuse, driving a significant increase in the number of children being placed in foster care, whether in a family or in an institution. State regulations pushed children's

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[269] Brewer, "A Century of Caring", 145.

institutions to update their programs and services, and the Child Welfare League of America worked directly with the Homes to evaluate their work and implement modern social work standards. In the process, the leadership of the Homes shifted from being primarily rooted in the churches of the Disciples of Christ to becoming part of local networks of professional social welfare agencies. At the same time, the Homes shifted from providing only sectarian institutional care to providing community based services including day care, foster care placement, and therapeutic residential treatment, opening their doors to the community, and becoming modern multipurpose child welfare agencies.

<center>**Conclusion**</center>

The passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 1974 truly

marked a turning point in the use of residential children's institutions in America. While scholars

have tended to focus on the passage of Aid to Dependent Children in 1935 as the beginning of the

end for children's homes, this study has demonstrated that a significant number of children's

institutions continued to provide care as they always had through the 1950s, and only a minority

adopted therapeutic programs with social workers on staff.[270] It was the confluence of events in

the 1960s – the expansion of AFDC to all eligible citizens due to the passage of the Civil Rights

Act, and the provision of funding for children in foster or institutional care, the increasing

regulatory action of individual states requiring higher institutional standards, new laws that

mandated child abuse reporting and increased the number of children being taken into foster care,

and the influence of the Child Welfare League of America through its accreditation process – that

forced sectarian children's institutions to meet current standards of child welfare practice and

open their doors to a broader community than just their co-religionists.

Even among the forty-three children's homes supported by the Duke Endowment in

North and South Carolina, it was not until 1965 that twenty-five percent of those homes began to

provide foster care placement and in-home supervision of children at risk of being removed from

their families.[271] The rest continued to provide their traditional program of custodial care. By

1974, however, there are thirteen institutions providing foster care placement, five providing

supervision to children in their own homes, and the programs of the homes include "work with

emotionally disturbed children." The exponentially increasing costs of institutional care – "an

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[270] All six of the children's homes of the National Benevolent Association of the Disciples of Christ continued to provide primarily custodial care to children until the 1960s: The Cleveland Christian Home in Ohio, The Colorado Christian Home in Colorado, the St. Louis Christian Home in Missouri, the Southern Christian Home in Atlanta, the Child Saving Institute in Nebraska, and the Juliette Fowler Home in Texas.

[271] Duke Endowment, ed. *Annual Report of the Duke Endowment*. New York, 1965, 125. It is also worth noting that of those 43 homes in two states, almost half of them remained affiliated with a religious denomination.

increase of 227.9 percent in the last 10 years in the average cost per day in assisted institutions" –

are also indicative that these institutions are spending resources to employ more trained social

workers and other experts.[272]

CAPTA was the first federal legislation to directly support modern social work standards

in all fifty states by providing assistance to strengthen public child welfare agencies. The

provisions in CAPTA also support child abuse prevention and treatment by establishing the

National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect within the Department of Health, Education, and

Welfare, and creating the National Clearing House on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, with

the purpose of collecting state level data for research purposes.[273] An outgrowth of the work of

Dr. C. Henry Kempe on battered child syndrome, the law was intended to support states in

developing family based interventions that would provide case workers more tools for dealing

with children at risk of abuse or neglect than continuing visits by a social worker, or removal

from the home.[274] The natural laboratory for these kinds of interventions was on the local level in

partnership with the very organizations that had been founded as orphanages and had been taking

care of children for decades. Once again, the Christian Children's Homes and other children's

institutions were at the forefront of a movement to help protect children, but the methods for that

assistance had changed dramatically.

By 1974, the social safety net had been expanded to include Aid to Families with

Dependent Children, Food Stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, and public housing. Still inadequate for

many families, these programs at least made it possible for poor families to remain together. In

any case, the families who had turned to local children's institutions for assistance on their own

or through their pastors, no longer had the option of coming to the doorstep of an institution and

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[272] Duke Endowment, ed. *Annual Report of the Duke Endowment*. New York, 1974, 46-47.

[273] "The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act: 40 Years of Safeguarding America's Children."
Washington DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, 2014.

[274] De Francis, Vincent. "Child Protective Services." In *Children and Youth in America*, edited by Robert
H. Bremner, 880–85, 1974.

asking for help. The sweeping changes made in children's institutions had transformed these largely sectarian and volunteer driven organizations into modern child welfare agencies in which referrals came through public child welfare agencies and courts. Now each of the Christian Children's Homes ran a day care, offered foster care and adoption placement, and provided specialized therapeutic treatment for children who could not function in a normal family setting. The Homes remained independent nonprofit organizations, but they were now directly connected to the policy decisions and funding streams of government at the county, state, and federal level. Far from their evangelical mission to save the world by saving its children, the surveyor of the Cleveland Christian Homes recommended that they remake themselves to "be in consonance" with the motto of the Child Welfare League of America: "To help children grow into citizens strong enough to love freedom and wise enough to use it."[275]

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[275] DeMuth, "Survey of the Cleveland Christian Home," 33.

Appendix 1
Largest Child Welfare Organizations, 2005[276]

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Child Welfare Agency	City	ST	Date Founded	Age in 2009	Revenue 2005	Assets 2005	Religious Affiliation
2	The Home for Little Wanderers	Boston	MA	1799	210	55,183,795	104,780,083	Protestant
3	Graham-Windham	New York	NY	1806	203	45,163,149	22,621,403	
4	Jewish Childcare Association of New York	New York	NY	1822	187	51,586,441	76,981,506	Jewish
5	Episcopal Social Services of New York, Inc	New York	NY	1831	178	26,215,822	12,790,549	Episcopalian
6	Applewood Centers Inc.	Cleveland	OH	1832	177	17,053,003	31,562,852	
7	Catholic Comprehensive Services for Children-Marygrove	St. Louis	MO	1849	160	7,756,814	5,605,108	Catholic
8	Children's Village, Inc.	Dobbs Ferry	NY	1851	158	40,447,591	34,783,138	
9	Beech Brook	Pepper Pike	OH	1852	157	20,817,410	40,061,953	
10	Children's Aid Society	New York	NY	1853	156	96,073,406	301,636,550	
11	Parmadale Village (a division of Catholic Charities Corp)	Cleveland	OH	1853	156	21,457,105	83,201,186	Catholic
12	Good Shepherd Services	New York	NY	1857	152	30,950,093	34,674,553	
13	Jewish Children's Bureau of Chicago	Chicago	IL	1859	150	21,131,818	21,465,538	Jewish
14	St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home	Washington	DC	1860	149	5,198,088	8,660,349	Catholic
15	Epworth Children and Family Services, Inc.	St. Louis	MO	1864	145	9,719,261	9,707,426	
16	Berea Children's Home	Berea	OH	1864	145	25,429,826	26,614,854	
17	Lawrence Hall Youth Services	Chicago	IL	1865	144	20,198,411	30,695,070	
18	Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota	St. Paul	MN	1865	144	75,423,046	44,661,852	Lutheran
19	Bellefaire Jewish Children's Bureau	Shaker Heights	OH	1868	141	27,879,520	34,940,951	Jewish
20	Uhlich Children's Home	Chicago	IL	1869	140	31,980,403	34,707,577	
21	New York Foundling Hospital	New York	NY	1869	140	69,279,924	29,615,159	
22	Lutheran Child and Family Services	River Forest	IL	1873	136	20,002,749	6,413,133	Lutheran
23	Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services	New York	NY	1874	135	130,763,238	189,598,312	Jewish
24	The Youth Campus	Park Ridge	IL	1877	132	10,316,099	6,483,472	non-sectarian
25	Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	Boston	MA	1878	131	36,027,068	43,970,150	Protestant
26	Family and Childrens Service	Minneapolis	MN	1878	131	5,872,314	7,318,330	
27	Children's Home + Aid	Chicago	IL	1883	126	37,014,056	18,064,366	Presbyterian
28	Ryther Child Center Inc	Seattle	WA	1883	126	8,063,197	9,632,133	
29	Missouri Baptist Children's Home	St. Louis	MO	1886	123	5,131,099	3,645,760	Baptist
30	Hillside Inc.	Atlanta	GA	1888	121	12,186,822	20,630,297	Protestant
31	Children's Home Society and Family Services	St. Paul	MN	1889	120	25,255,117	33,278,161	
32	Families First Inc	Atlanta	GA	1890	119	12,372,504	13,348,604	Protestant
33	DePelchin Children's Center	Houston	TX	1892	117	26,558,090	83,080,507	
34	MercyFirst	Syosset	NY	1894	115	47,242,227	23,599,612	Catholic
35	Children's Home Society of Washington	Seattle	WA	1896	113	15,696,384	15,622,276	
36	Allendale Association, Inc.	Lake Villa	Il	1897	112	27,106,054	20,784,352	non-sectarian
37	Catholic Gaurdian Society and Home Bureau	New York	NY	1899	110	39,734,497	9,806,317	Catholic
38	Cleveland Christian Home	Cleveland	OH	1900	109	9,953,725	10,629,847	
39	Children's Bureau of Southern California	Los Angeles	CA	1904	105	21,746,521	20,833,965	non-sectarian
40	Friends of Children (Colorado Christian Home)	Denver	CO	1904	105	11,686,010	4,227,921	Disciples of Christ
41	Children's Institute, Inc	Los Angeles	CA	1906	103	22,627,340	36,503,233	non-sectarian
42	Family Services, Inc.	Washington	DC	1908	101	9,981,540	6,938,236	non-sectarian
43	Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children	New York	NY	1908	101	6,711,909	31,981,351	
44	Hillsides	Pasadena	CA	1913	96	15,072,687	14,834,357	Episcopalian
45	Presbyterian Childrens Services Inc	St. Louis	MO	1914	95	6,109,334	12,429,414	Presbyterian
46	Heartshare Human Services	Brooklyn	NY	1914	95	63,817,381	30,485,806	
47	Italian Home for Children	Jamaica Plain	MA	1919	90	9,639,534	9,982,354	Catholic
48	Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families	New York	NY	1927	82	14,524,099	1,992,842	
49	Lutheran Community Services Northwest	Sea Tac	WA	1927	82	23,108,544	1,779,461	Lutheran
50	Little Flower Children and Family Services	Brooklyn	NY	1931	78	48,247,772	24,795,053	Catholic
51	Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston	Houston	TX	1943	66	14,844,509	15,979,450	
52	Boys Town of Missouri	St. Louis	MO	1949	60	19,613,660	26,094,278	
53	Ettie Lee Homes, Inc.	Baldwin Park	CA	1950	59	9,067,336	3,863,235	non-sectarian
54	Friends of Youth	Redmond	WA	1951	58	5,947,694	12,802,772	
55	Community Care Services, Inc	Taunton	MA	1952	57	19,071,497	9,324,843	
56	Puerto Rican Family Institute	New York	NY	1960	49	22,831,836	8,506,626	
57	Dare Family Services	Somerville	MA	1964	45	24,639,259	6,124,886	non-sectarian
58	Savio House	Denver	CO	1966	43	8,478,906	9,075,875	non-sectarian
59	Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps	Boston	MA	1969	40	18,740,647	6,216,656	non-sectarian
60	Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center	Chicago Heights	IL	1972	37	35,305,829	16,647,774	non-sectarian
61	Harbor Schools Inc	Newbury	MA	1972	37	11,227,723	5,605,384	Protestant
62	Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc.	Washington	DC	1974	35	8,032,909	8,567,476	non-sectarian
63	Youth in Need	St. Louis	MO	1974	35	13,435,226	3,598,603	
64	Creative Community Services	Atlanta	GA	1982	27	7,165,156	1,107,823	non-sectarian
65	Texas Center for Adolescent Rehabilitation and Education	Houston	TX	1982	27	2,720,969	485,000	Last info available from 2004 no online presence. Org no longer existant?
66	Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc	Altadena	CA	1986	23	13,505,901	6,387,454	NA
67	Westside Children's Center Inc	Culver City	CA	1987	22	5,399,757	7,122,516	non-sectarian
68	Children's Services of Roxbury	Roxbury	MA	1990	19	9,490,989	2,139,596	non-sectarian
69	Arrow Project	Houston	TX	1992	17	12,634,036	2,151,057	
70	The Mockingbird Society	Seattle	WA	2001	8	1,511,060	1,211,677	

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[276] Data is from a survey of child welfare agencies with $5 million or more in revenues in 2005, in 13 of the largest Metropolitan-Statistical Areas, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Search was conducted in Guidestar, November 2009.

Appendix 2

Definitions of Common Child Welfare Programs Offered by Child Welfare Agencies

Residential Treatment – An institutional setting for children and youth with severe behavioral and emotional problems, where they receive specialized psychiatric and therapeutic care in addition to attending school and engaging in recreational activities on a single campus. Children usually stay in this type of setting for one year or less. The majority of children in this type of institution are in the foster care system, and can no longer function in a school or family setting. As of 2013, there were 55,916 children who had been in an institutional setting out of the 402,378 total children in foster care.[277] In 2015, the average length of stay in a residential facility or group home was eight months.[278]

Foster Care Placement and Training – Matching children in foster care with foster families, and the recruitment, training, and support of foster caregivers. Training requirements for foster caregivers vary widely depending upon state regulations and the level of care. For example, in Massachusetts and four other states, an 18-year-old is eligible to become a foster parent, while in Ohio and 34 other states, you must be 21 years old. Ohio requires 36 hours of training for basic licensure, and Minnesota requires 6 hours. Treatment Foster Care, a way to create a structured home environment for children with behavioral and mental health challenges, requires higher levels of initial and

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[277] "A National Look at the Use of Congregate Care in Child Welfare." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, May 13, 2015, p 2.
[278] Ibid., p 1.

ongoing training, and coordination with psychiatric, educational, and counseling services.[279]

Family Preservation Services – Outpatient casework and counseling services, often provided in the family home, that are designed to identify the needs of families with an open child welfare investigation. The goal of these services is to preserve the family unit by addressing problems before the situation worsens and children must be removed from the home. Family preservation workers visit regularly, speak with parents and children, and observe family dynamics. They may provide family therapy, refer parents to additional services like parenting classes, vocational training or addiction treatment services, or help meet basic needs by connecting families to public benefits.[280]

Outpatient Counseling – Therapy that takes place in an office setting and is conducted by a licensed social worker, counselor, or psychologist. The clientele for outpatient counseling in many of these agencies is made up of low income families on Medicaid and children in foster care. Demand for services and a shortage of mental health professionals working with children and youth can lead to long waiting periods.[281]

School-based Counseling – Access to mental health counseling supports classroom learning for children with behavioral and emotional difficulties. Districts with more than 40% of students from low income backgrounds qualify for federal funds under Title I of

[279] "Home Study Requirements for Prospective Foster Parents." Child Welfare Information Gateway. Washington, D.C.: United States Children's Bureau, March 2014.

[280] "Issue Brief: In-Home Services in Child Welfare." U.S. Children's Bureau Child Welfare Information Gateway, March 2014. https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/inhome_services.pdf.

[281] Burns, Barbara, Susan D. Phillips, H. Ryan Wagner, Richard P. Barth, David J. Kolko, Yvonne Campbell, and John Landsverk. "Mental Health Need and Access to Mental Health Services by Youths Involved With Child Welfare: A National Survey." *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 43, no. 8 (August 1, 2004): 960–70.

the Every Student Succeeds Act. Federal funds can be combined with state resources to

support school social workers and counselors in these districts. [282] Nonprofit child welfare

agencies compete to serve these schools, and nationally, over half of eligible schools

contract with independent organizations to provide these services.[283]

Parenting Classes – In cases of substantiated abuse or neglect where the Department of

Children and Family Service has identified gaps in parenting skills, parents may be

required to engage in parenting classes. These courses are meant to cover everything

from the normal developmental stages of children to age appropriate disciplinary

strategies and communication skills. Parenting classes have been shown to positively

effect parenting skills and may reduce subsequent incidences of reported abuse or

neglect. More research is needed to identify which course curricula are most effective.[284]

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[282] "Supporting School Reform by Leveraging Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program." U.S. Department of Education, September 2016. https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaswpguidance9192016.pdf.
[283] Kutash, Krista, Albert Duchnowski, and Nyncy Lynn. "Chapter 6: The Organization and Funding of School-Based Mental Health Services." In *School-Based Mental Health: An Empirical Guide for Decision-Makers*, 68–69. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, 2006.
[284]See Beaulieu, Amy. "Parent Education and Training Programs in a Child Welfare Population: A Review of the Evidence." University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service, 2010.

Appendix 3

An Overview of Disciples of Christ History and Theology

The Disciples' institutions had a distinct organizational culture based in large part on the translation of their theology into 1) institutional organization, 2) conduct of human relationships, and 3) a religious understanding of the mission of the children's homes, even as they expanded to take in children of many faiths and backgrounds.[285] The Disciples of Christ were born out of a radical democratic impulse to return Christianity to the people by restoring the "primitive" church, when all Christians were equal between each other and before God. A primitive church could bring together members of all denominations, producing Christian unity out of the competition and division of denominationalism. The founders of the early movement sought guidance for forms of worship and the role of the church in people's lives by emulating the actions of Christ and his followers in the New Testament. At the core of the movement are the rituals of weekly communion and adult baptism using full immersion, both of which are dependent on the acceptance of Jesus Christ, but not on belonging to a particular denomination. Disciples have been ecumenical since their beginning.[286]

In describing the early movement, David Harrell writes: "The key to their success was simple confidence in the literalistic restoration of New Testament Christianity. Their program of restoration was based on simple reforms: the abandonment of all names

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[285] For an analysis of the relationship between religious affiliation, institutional culture, and social service mission, see Steven Rathgeb Smith and Michael R. Sosin, "The Varieties of Faith-Related Agencies," *Public Administration Review*, 61 (2001): 652-670.

[286] For information about Disciples of Christ theology, please see: David Edwin Harrell, *A Social History of the Disciples of Christ, vols 1-2* (Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 2003); Louis Cochran, *Captives of the Word*, 1st ed., Religion in America series (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1969); Oliver Read Whitley, *Trumpet Call of Reformation* (St. Louis, Missouri: Bethany Press, 1959).

except such biblical terms as Christian and Disciple; regular participation in the Lord's supper every first day of the week; and the establishment of independent congregations with biblically authorized officials."[287] As each congregation in this model has great autonomy to determine its interpretation of Christ-like behavior, so each individual relies on his or her own interpretation of Scripture for moral guidance, often resulting in a wide range of beliefs within and between congregations. Eventually the diversity of belief caused fissures within the movement.

The central tensions were between the theologically conservative, who emphasized the return to the Primitive Church, for whom literal interpretation of the Scriptures was central; and the theologically liberal, who emphasized the unity of the church, for whom there was room for greater scriptural interpretation in more modern times. As a result, the Disciples movement of the Nineteenth century fractured twice in the twentieth century to create three separate denominations: The Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches), the Churches of Christ, which separated in 1906, and the Independent Christian Churches, which separated in 1927. In 1968, the General Assembly of the Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches) restructured their regional and national governance, a move which led remaining Independent Christian Churches to declare themselves no longer affiliated with the Disciples of Christ movement. Since 1989, the Disciples of Christ and the United Churches of Christ have had an ecumenical partnership that means each denomination recognizes the sacraments and ordained ministry of the other.

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[287] David Edwin Harrell, Jr. *Sources of Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1865-1900: A Social History of the Disciples of Christ, vol 2*. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003) 4.

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