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Rory Cochran

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The Child Development Act of 1971: The Closest America Has Ever Gotten to Universal

Child Care

Rory M. Cochran

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

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May 2022

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedication to my parents, Michael and Pam who constantly supported me throughout my 7 years of college. I also want to thank my cat, Pussy “PG” Galore, for fighting through the storm of FIP.

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## **Abstract**

The significance of this thesis is on how a bill, the Child Development Act (CDA), and other complementary policies created a phenomenon of biracial and bigendered cooperation among socioeconomic boundaries to push for a reprioritization of children's rights in the welfare system of the United States. Although the CDA never passed the White House desk its influence was significant on how national social activism influenced the interpretation of universal child care. The thesis sheds a light on the influence of women in politics, welfare, civil rights, Chicano, and children rights and their cooperation and appeasement in pushing for a national policy. It stresses the importance of the fragile ad hoc coalition and the decisions made by these women leaders. It gives more context to the work of Shirley Chisholm, Bella Abzug, Marian W. Edelman, Dr. Cecilia Suárez, and more who have been neglected in the current scholarship. The shared goal by these leaders and organizations was the bills lost impact on the American welfare system, one that most historians overlooked due to the Nixon veto. My thesis contends that their argument is essential to understanding how women fought for social and political activism at the national level. Lastly, it assesses the influence of the New Right in generating a permanent opposition to universal child care and mothers' full participation in the economy.

## Introduction

Our children and our families are in deep trouble. A society that neglects its childrens and fears its youth cannot care about its future. Surely this is the way to national disaster. Our society has the capacity to care and the resources to act. *Act we must.*

— Preamble of the White House Children's Conference on Children and Youth

In December of 1970, the White House Children's Committee held its decennial conference on Children and Youth in the nation's capital. Hundreds of public leaders from across the country spoke on behalf of their constituents for the advocacy of an improved status of children and family in modern society. By the end of the conference the leaders had created a rational list of the needs of all children, one that addressed poverty, inadequate education, malnutrition, undiagnosed physical and mental disabilities, racism and immigration, teen pregnancies, and the spike in crime among youth. At the top of their list stood the need for a “comprehensive child care program” that served all facets of a child's needs and prepares them equally to those in all socioeconomic demographics.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, the Senate's Committee on Labor and Public Welfare created a new subcommittee on Children and Youth in hope of meeting the demands shared at the White House Conference, especially child care. Senator Walter Mondale a Democrat from Minnesota would head the new subcommittee and begin a

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<sup>1</sup> Although the conference was held in December of 1970, the Conference was called the 1969 Conference due to when Nixon authorized the conference but postponed it until the following year. The written list of reforms proposed by White House Conference was published in the Subcommittee on Children and Youth. See Congress, Senate, Subcommittee on Children and Youth, *White House Conference on Children-Child Development Recommendations: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Children and Youth*, 92nd Cong., 1st sess. (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Off.), April 26, 1971, 9-11.

campaign of public hearings and conferences with the intention of building public support for a universal child care bill.

The Child Development Act (CDA) was a bicameral policy that authorized the construction of thousands of child care programs culminating after a few years to provide universal child care services with a range of costs depending on the household yearly income, essentially ensuring to all Americans that child care was a guaranteed right provided by the federal government.<sup>2</sup> Much like the Community Action Programs authorized under Sargent Shriver of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the CDA promised community control to build comprehensive child care services, medical and nutritional services, family education, and legal compensation.<sup>3</sup> Initially supported by both liberals and conservatives in the House of Representatives and the Senate, the subcommittees worked closely with a nationwide coalition of women, welfare, educators, civil rights leaders, and more to construct the largest federal coalition for child care. Under the guidance of the ad hoc coalition and subcommittees, the CDA passed with a majority throughout Congress.<sup>4</sup> Once passed in Congress, certain Administrative

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<sup>2</sup> Most important to the final writing of the CDA was the sliding scale of costs with the poorest families given ultimately free child care services on the scale. Kimberly Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care," *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 220.

<sup>3</sup> Community Action Programs (CAP) were programs created at the local level by community leaders but funded by federal grants. CAPs were part of the larger policies passed to support Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. The War on Poverty was a federal intervention in the poorest communities and cities of America in order to uplift them from poverty and create politically active citizens. Unlike Roosevelt's New Deal policies, the War on Poverty did not create national federal labor and poverty programs but rather one federal department with federal grants designated specifically for community scale CAPs to use however they see fit. Programs such Head Start, Volunteer to Service America, and Jobs Corps are all federal programs created during the War on Poverty. See Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian, *The War on Poverty: a New Grassroots History, 1964-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Prime sponsors are the population and geographical districting of child care centers and federal funding. Similar to a school district, but under the CDA prime sponsors can be made by non-government entities. Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 58.



advisors, and advocates of the CDA were confident in the groundbreaking policy and hopeful of its future however, it would take months before the executive branch offered any reassurance of it being enacted. Finally, by October members of the Nixon administration seemed confident that President Richard Nixon would approve the bill. The final decision was unbeknownst to Congress, and even sponsors of the bill within Nixon's administration.

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1971, Nixon vetoed the Economic Opportunity Amendments with the CDA attached. Following the veto, Nixon delivered a harsh address to the nation in which he made direct attacks on the CDA and universal child care as an intrusive policy on American family values that “would commit the vast moral authority of the National Government to the side of communal approaches to child-rearing over the family centered approach.”<sup>5</sup> In just one sentence Nixon disassembled the policy to be nothing more than an intrusion of the nuclear family. He had defeated universal child care and soon after the Democratic Party made its final retreat from the majority control.<sup>6</sup> To commemorate his victory, Nixon signed the Tax Revenue act the day after the veto on December 11<sup>th</sup> granting mothers on welfare tax subsidies for private child care and later reauthorized the Head Start program for another term. The veto of the CDA but expansion of welfare benefits for working mothers set a precedent for future politicians

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Nixon, “Veto of the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971,” in *Public Papers of the President of the United States: Richard Nixon, 1971*, 1176, 1178. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972).

Nixon was very critical of the OEO expansion and most of his veto statement was directed towards sections regarding the OEO, however these were largely budget issues on the reassessment of programs that were asking for almost triple the increase in allocated funds. For more detail to Nixon's reasoning of veto see Kimberly Morgan, “A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care,” *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 220.

<sup>6</sup> Steven M. Gillon, *Separate and Unequal: The Kerner Commission and the Unraveling of American Liberalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2018).

that federal child care should only be provided to mothers who must work, killing any chance of child care leaving the works of federal public assistance.<sup>7</sup>

Nixon's victory over the "Sovietization" of America's daycares has remained the running narrative of the CDA for almost three decades.<sup>8</sup> Historians of child care who have dedicated their research of the CDA around Richard Nixon's veto have come to a moderate consensus that the CDA was vetoed due to interior pressure from New Right politicians and elites, the close attachment of the bill to Second Wave Feminism, and the Nixon administration's goal to cut back on the War on Poverty.<sup>9</sup> Although these theories are credible, they do not portray the full story of the CDA and its significance to the historiography of the American welfare state, as historians have only interpreted the bill as a climatic failure of American child care.<sup>10</sup>

To move past the bleak narrative of Nixon's veto, the CDA has substantial significance as being the closest attempt to creating a universal social program guaranteed to all American families no matter their socioeconomic standing. The CDA

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<sup>7</sup> Kimberly Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care," *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 220.

<sup>8</sup> Although the term "Sovietization" is used here for dramatic effect it is a term used by grassroots opposition groups of the CDA following the bill's passage in Congress. James J. Kilpatrick, "Child Development Act is a Monstrosity," *Human Events*, Oct 30, 1971, 11. For more context on the opposition see Kimberly Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care."

<sup>9</sup> Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 251-67.; Kimberly Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care," *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 220; Deborah Dinner, "The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966-1974," *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010): 597-602. Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 8-14.

<sup>10</sup> Most famously to this scholarship would be the personal writing of Edward Zigler who himself was an advocate of the CDA while chairing Head Start. Zinn himself called the policy a failure for its veto and for the ultimate erosion of the Democratic Party. In modern interpretations this failure is not the fault of the CDA but rather of the Democratic Party. See Edward Zigler, Katherine W. Marsland, and Heather Lord. *The Tragedy of Child Care in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

was not a policy that fits into the normative American two-tier social welfare state where issues of disability, poverty, and child care have been castigated to the monetary system of “contributor and receiver.”<sup>11</sup> The legislation was groundbreaking in offering comprehensive services to all Americans regardless of socioeconomic status. The CDA ensured federal employment, federally training and education, protected socioeconomic and geographic mobility, integration and anti-discrimination of civic engagement, and assessed and administered services at all levels of government.<sup>12</sup> If the CDA had not been vetoed it could have stood as the catalyst that propelled the rhetoric of the Civil Rights “dual agenda,” second wave feminists liberation in labor and society, and above all threatened how the American government provided public assistance in healthcare, employment, housing, and many more to be universal guarantees.<sup>13</sup> Nixon’s victory over the CDA did not just defeat future possibilities of universal child care, it also represented one of the last attempts by New Deal liberals to pass universal public assistance.

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<sup>11</sup> To have an economic guaranteed right is to be classified under tier 1 of the American welfare state. Under the 1935 Social Security Act which created the two-tiered system, Tier 1 was guaranteed rights to financial compensation derived from your civic services of employment and taxation from it. Tier 1 is a guaranteed right to social insurance, covering issues such as retirement and unemployment insurance, better known as “Social Security.” All those who worked and paid taxes at any point in their life are entitled to compensation under tier 1. Tier 2 is what is known commonly as “welfare” and is in line with public assistance programs targeted at certain demographics and is not considered a guaranteed right by the public. *The Dual Agenda*, pg. 4-5.

<sup>12</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views*, (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971).

<sup>13</sup> The terminology of the American Welfare state is political and societal. Using societal definitions, tier 1 is interchangeable with guaranteed rights and “social security”. Tier 2 is more complicated in its terminology. The term “welfare” for tier 2 comes from the repetitive stigma of “welfare queens,” however defined politically it is seen as “public assistance.” All these terms are interchangeable but must be placed in their appropriate context. Dona C. and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda: Race and Social Welfare Policies of Civil Rights Organizations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 1-9.

This bill has yet to be interpreted as one of the potential shifts in American welfare policies— like the plethora of bills before that had failed to pass, historians have struggled to place the CDA in its proper context of significance.<sup>14</sup> The current historiography of American child care focuses on the federal recognition and inclusion of poor and poor-working women into welfare. Specifically, the rights of mothers to receive public assistance, either through required labor programs or opt-in monetary compensation following the Social Security Act of 1935. Historians have given great detail about the Lanham Act of the World War II homefront, the Social Security Act of 1954, which expanded benefits of tier 2 assistance as an incentive for impoverished mothers to work, and Head Start which targeted families in the poorest geographic regions of America.<sup>15</sup> What unites all of these histories is that they feed into the larger narrative that child care in American politics has only been viewed as a private privilege for those who can afford it, or a necessity of welfare for the families that cannot. The CDA does not fit into this narrative as it would have offered comprehensive services to all American families universally. A sore thumb to the current narrative as it was not a simplified expansion of the New Deal social welfare state but instead a revision of the

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<sup>14</sup> Many of the influential policies that had been vetoed or had died in Congress were similarly constructed to uplift areas under critical conditions, whether it be based on poverty, race, gender, or labor, healthcare. These bills were killed because they inherently threatened the system. *The Dual Agenda*, 1-9.

<sup>15</sup> For specific works on these monumental shifts in federal child care policy see; Natalie M. Fousekis, *Demanding Child Care: Women's Activism and the Politics of Welfare, 1940-71*, (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011); Maris Vinovskis, *The Birth of Head Start: Preschool Education Policies in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Edward Zigler, Katherine W. Marsland, and Heather Lord, *The Tragedy of Child Care in America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).

civil rights of children.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the CDA has been subjugated to a complimentary role in the larger narrative of child care.

The complimentary role of the CDA has stripped humanity from its story and has hindered how we should view a policy that was created to uplift the average American family.<sup>17</sup> The CDA was not written behind closed doors and shaped to fit the political ideologies of white male politicians rather it was debated in public forums and written by mothers. As stated by House Representative of New York Bella S. Abzug, “this bill, however, is also a women’s bill, and that is something no one seems to want to mention. Indeed, I find it highly ironic that a bill which talks so much of the potential of growing children fails to mention the underdeveloped potential of over half our adult population.”<sup>18</sup> Women made up most of each organization and spoke on behalf of the CDA as both constituents and women. No matter their stake in universal child care the leaders of welfare, civil, and child rights organizations all identified as American women first. The leadership of women such as Marian W. Edelman founder of the Washington Research Project (now the Child Defense Fund), House Representatives Shirley Chisholm and Abzug, Jane G. Lewis program coordinator for the National Council of Negro Women, and Dr. Cecilia Suárez of UCLA and activist in the Chicano Movement were the true policymakers of the CDA. Their voices did not just represent the female perspective of civil, education, labor, and children rights, it most importantly symbolized women

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<sup>16</sup> Dona C. and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda: Race and Social Welfare Policies of Civil Rights Organizations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Jacqueline Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005): 1233–1263.

<sup>17</sup> See Shirley Chisholm hearing in *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-Second Congress, First Session on H.R. 6748 and Related Bills*, 1971. 71-3.

<sup>18</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-Second Congress, First Session on H.R. 6748 and Related Bills*, 1971

defining their rights as mothers, people of color, workers, and citizens of America. The history of the CDA is how these women and many more moved beyond the barriers of welfare and who, above all, viewed equality to all Americans as a right guaranteed at birth.

Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to explore the legislation of the Child Development Act and its life in Congress by examining the tactics and ideologies of participating figures of the ad hoc coalition and subcommittees. The full story of the CDA incorporates a much denser understanding of maternal and feminine ideologies about universal and comprehensive child care. Most of these women saw these ideologies through various lenses of color and identity as most of the ad hoc coalition were women activists in the fight civil, and welfare justice. These women's work at the local level is evidence to how it constructed the national narrative and supports the concept that it was their efforts that would ultimately define the future of the American social welfare state for families and "universal child care."

The lack of analysis on the CDA has allowed historians to rely on policies that constructed the welfare-based programs and created a scholarship that justified Nixon's defiance to the grassroots demand for a "new deal" in federal responsibility to child care in America without much pushback. Two of the most evocative monographs on twentieth century child care in America by Elizabeth Rose and Sonya Michel discuss how the history of the CDA fits into the larger narrative of mid-century politics clash between American traditional values and second wave feminism. While this remains true, the ad hoc coalition of the CDA was led by welfare and civil rights leader and both of these

histories lack a complete incorporation these “radicals” of feminism.<sup>19</sup> Instead, Rose and Michel contribute to the traditional feminists narrative, the CDA relationship to Head Start, and the rise of government supported preschool efforts to define the role of mothers to child care and state governments to early education, drawing a clear line between the two terms, separated by the age and socioeconomics of the child.<sup>20</sup>

Scholarly articles that directly address the CDA and the “radicals” of the history such as Deborah Dinner and Kimberly Morgan offer nuances to the general narrative laid out by Rose and Michel.<sup>21</sup> Dinner expands on Michel’s study of radical women’s role in federal child care by analyzing the publications of various women’s rights organizations that shaped the national agenda of equal citizenship through governmental child care services.<sup>22</sup> Dinner’s work with Marxist, welfare, and Black feminists literature for child care challenged the traditional narrative of the CDA to be included in the history of “radical” feminists argument that universal child care was necessary solution for liberation of all race and socioeconomic status. While vital to understanding the complexity of second wave feminism and its relationship to child care, Dinner does not

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<sup>19</sup> It is important to separate the two histories presented under the context of their individual theses. Michel focused heavily on the women’s perspective focusing on the role of mothers and women’s rights activists to define their rights in the public sphere as both workers and mothers. Rose concentrated more on the role of government in “early education” preschool based on age range, dictated by the state. Rose argues that Head Start generated massive societal shifts on child development expanding the middle class to demand early education. Although the final histories of the monographs lead both historians to different interpretations the analysis of the CDA remains similar due to their shared use of government records and public sources. Sonya Michel, *Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights: The Shaping of America’s Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999); Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 58.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the concept of recategorizing both the racial and traditional aspects of second wave feminism. See Becky Thompson, “Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism,” *Feminist Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 337–60.

<sup>21</sup> Deborah Dinner, “The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966–1974,” *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010): 597–602.; Kimberly Morgan, “A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care,” *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 220.

<sup>22</sup> Dinner, “Universal Childcare Debate,” 597–602.

expand to be inclusive to other influential interpretations of women's rights made by civil, child, and labor leaders who did not identify as feminists, many of whom had essential roles in the CDA.

Influential to the history of American Republican motherhood and child care opposition, Morgan expands on Rose's argument that the CDA was doomed from the start for its communal approach to motherhood which conservatives argued was a direct attack on the familial values and acceptance of second wave feminism. Morgan works within the scholarship about the closure of New Deal Liberalism and attaches the CDA to the larger history of the end to the Great Society era. The article focuses on how politicians viewed the CDA in relation to the growing resistance at the local level by the Silent Majority. Morgan argues that the rise of CDA opposition was a top down resistance by the Nixon administration to manipulate conservative media to fuel the fire of anti-civil rights legislation at the grassroots. Morgan concludes that the success of the Nixon Administration media campaign created a permanence of conservative grassroots organizations in middle-class America focused around protecting conservative ideologies. Although Dinner and Morgan address the importance of the CDA their main theses remain detached from the actual history of the bill.<sup>23</sup> Currently the CDA remains a climatic failure in changing the American welfare state and New Deal Liberalism. Relying on successful federal policies and Nixon's veto only validates the narrative that

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<sup>23</sup> The elephant in this thesis is the discussion of communism, the USSR, socialism, and the Cold War. Unavoidable in the history of the CDA which created opposition groups against the soviet nightmare of universal public assistance, many leaders of the ad hoc coalition along with academics and democrats in favor of the bill spoke on the success of child care services in communists and socialist countries. This thesis will not detach itself from the relationship the CDA has with USSR and Cold War rhetoric. However, Rose, Michel, Dinner, Morgan and smaller histories on the CDA discuss this history in great detail. Communism has always been a part of historiography and has contributed to the CDA being a narrative centered around the Nixon administration.



child care policies have only supported tier 2 public assistance to the poor. This framework cuts out the voices of the ad hoc coalition of the CDA and their larger arguments of universal rights in the social welfare state.

## **Chapter Breakdown**

This thesis will be organized into four chapters with careful consideration to the present historiography of the CDA. Chapter one will reevaluate how the CDA came to be a practical solution to the growing child care crisis of the 1960s by narrating the intersection of cooperation between feminists' movements and child welfare movements to accept women wage-earners outside of welfare work requirement programs. This is first to detach the CDA from the simplified narrative of the bill being an extension of Head Start, one that misguides the work of feminists, civil rights, and welfare leaders to detach child care from welfare altogether. It important to understand the various justifications for each policy before drawing conclusions on their similarities. Head Start was poverty intervention while the CDA was protecting women's rights to work in a desperate lack of available services nationwide. Second, it expands on the conflicting nature of child care and welfare and how women contested this issue as a failure of the system to accept the societal shift in familial roles and labor. Focusing on the President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) and the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) as they fought at the federal level for maternal wage-earner acceptance was a matter of arguing for women's right of choice, not right of work. Lastly, the bill shows the first attempt for federal policy to remove child care from welfare with John Brademas "Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Act of 1969" or H.R. 13520.

These factors outside of Head Start pushed for the very concept of universal child care, and not what Edelman recounted as “broadening the base of its constituency.”

Chapter two focuses on the first influential revision of the CDA, the “Abzug/Chisholm Amendments.” These amendments made by politicians Abzug and Chisholm contributed to the largest revisions of the CDA, a larger budget, small prime sponsors, and poverty prioritization growing into universally available services and helped to shape future arguments of the CDA by the ad hoc coalition. The chapter focuses on the relationship of Abzug, Chisholm, and child care highlighting the early differences Black welfare leaders had with second wave feminism and how the two leaders cooperated to avoid repeating the failures of H.R. 13520. They represented the necessary sacrifices and demands of women of all facets to achieve this “new deal” of American child care, although ultimately their political behavior was not shared by all members of the ad hoc coalition.

The third chapter details the efforts of the ad hoc coalition and their influential role in shaping the CDA to be a bill for all Americans. Current history on the CDA take a narrow interpretation of the involvement of civilian organizations and selectively decide which of the organizations and leaders fits the thesis and neglectfully use other organizations as supplementary evidence. However, the history of the CDA is one constructed by all active leaders of communities and organizations who defined at the local, state, and national level what universal child care offered Americans. By analyzing the CDA beyond the repetitive rhetoric of Walter Mondale and John Brademas, the bill is a patchwork of dozens of successful campaigns throughout the country each serving a crucial purpose to its communities. This theory can best be explained when analyzing the

ten “essentials” of the ad hoc coalition purpose statement in which comprehensive child care as all members was “morally, nationally, politically, and practically necessary in modern society.”<sup>24</sup>

Whether speaking on behalf of welfare, child, or women and civil rights, each one of these organizations had a stake in the passage of the CDA and each “essential” was a broader interpretation of these organizations' fully functioning idea or service in the United States. From twenty-four hour day cares in the Northeast and in universities by feminists rights groups, bilingual and bicultural inclusive daycare centers in the South-West by Chicano leaders, or creating manpower and employment opportunities yearly in the South by welfare and civil rights leaders, each one of the essentials culminated from a number of organizations who saw their programs necessary at the local level and articulated them to fit all communities in the nation.<sup>25</sup> The inclusion of leaders in the ad hoc coalition to committee hearings was to expand on what is essential to child care by providing necessary evidence to what they defined as “comprehensive” and “universal” child care. Women who fought to achieve equality for their constituents all viewed child care as an invaluable step and cooperated with one another to achieve their interpretation.

Chapter 4 moves away from Richard Nixon's veto and focuses on the opposition of the policy in Congress and in the public sphere. Historian Kimberly Morgan extensively gave a history of how Nixon was able to veto the CDA without repercussion but stopped short of how Congress was able to oppose the veto of a Bill that in

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<sup>24</sup> Marian W. Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman before the Joint Hearings of the Senate Subcommittees on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, and on Children and Youth,” (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Office), May 1971.

<sup>25</sup> See Hearings held by Stephen Hess, *White House Conference on Children-Child Development Recommendations: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Children and Youth*, 92nd Cong. (1971); Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.

September passed with majority. Strom Thurmond was the first to move Senators away from the CDA and used the Emergency Committee on Children (ECC) media campaign to articulate the threat of communal care and cost it could pose on the future of America. An internal opposition group in Congress did much more upheaval than the conspiracy theories posted in the Sunday mail. The media campaign created a permanence to Republican Motherhood, a concept correlated to affluent suburban families who opposed most child care policies and viewed them as an attack on the nuclear family and federal attempts to achieve civil rights equity. The permanence of these grassroots organizations ensured that the CDA never passed through Congress again and that any child care policy that moves outside of welfare and tax breaks remain “toxic” to American values.

Lastly, is the issue of how opposition leaders purposefully attached the CDA to the feminist’s rights movement to force politicians and supporters of to distance themselves from the policy and feminists’ contributors. The ad hoc coalition would crumble under the pressure of the opposition groups and divisions led to women organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) leaving the coalition to pursue other avenues of achieving their interpretation of universal child care. Leader of the coalition, Edelman, was determined to pass the bill and accepted conservative changes to the policy that removed most NOW goals from the CDA to ensure its passage through Congress. The decisions by the coalition in the final months of the CDA were ultimately the largest hit taken by supporters of federal child care as rest of the decade no other bill had enough momentum and large enough support to overcome the grassroots opposition.

Finally, the matter of availability and access to sources was limited greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic and created a top-down history with influences spanning at the local level. While the initial thesis was centered on the analysis of the ad hoc coalition and the members who comprised it, the limitation in sources forced me to take on a new perspective of the CDA. Sources in small and regional archives were not accessible for most of the writing process and other archives were too distant to afford the travel. The only consistent source bank available were the digitized sources by the Library of Congress and through James Madison University interlibrary loans and databases. While this limited my effort to tap into the history at the local level and organizations influence to the federal level, my lack of source banks gave an inspiring opposite affect. Although limited, this tells a powerful story or game of telephone inside the Congressional records used. Leaders, with privilege of some nature, defined their stake in child care through their constituents' experiences, struggle, and successes. The women written in this thesis come from a place of status, but their testimonies shed lights to the tens of thousands in America who were not as lucky. The efforts of the bottom did not go unnoticed and became a powerful tool of rhetoric to prove the failure of child welfare and the strength in the communal approach of child rearing. Countless brochures of centers, reports of effective services, and personal letters of recommendations by women are deeply rooted in the Congressional records giving a sense of powerful humanity that one's voice will be heard.

## 1: American Women and the Push for Federal Child Care

The women's place-in-the-home shibboleth is a thing of the past if it ever was a legitimate concept. Nine out of 10 females will work sometime during their lives. Women do and will continue to undertake employment for many reasons. Many are heads of families, others supplement family income, improve opportunities for other family members, and still others work to realize personal and career objectives... However, whether the mother works because of extreme economic need or for other reasons, this Nation needs her abilities and skills. We know we are losing contributions of many women because of obstacles related to child care.<sup>26</sup>

### **American Women: Signs of Universal Care Before 1969**

In 1963, the President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) published its final report titled *American Women*. Founded under John F. Kennedy in 1961, the PCSW was a bicameral, racial, and gendered mixed committee that provided the executive branch analysis on a variety of gender issues. *American Women* was a standalone report by the PCSW that centered around the political and economic engagement of women in America. Sections of the report were widely reprinted in journals and magazines related to child care, education, home life, and women's lifestyle. The report covered a large scope of issues on gender inequality and challenged that the societal role of domesticity remained unchallenged as more women left their homes to find work, creating tensions in cultural expectations. Many of the women who worked in the PCSW found jobs in fields closely related to women's rights after their

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<sup>26</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, pg. 107.

disestablishment, offering context to the scope of diverse perspectives that internally divided the PCSW and *American Women*.<sup>27</sup>

At age 51, activists Elinor Guggenheimer was appointed by John F. Kennedy the first chair of the Home and Community Committee under the PCSW. By 1963 Guggenheimer was a household name in the field of child care. She earned grassroots popularity shortly after World War II for her leadership role in protecting child care centers in New York City from shutting down after the withdrawal of Lanham Act funds.<sup>28</sup> After saving more than ninety centers, she founded the Day Care Council of New York in 1948 and was appointed executive director. Guggenheimer was a strong advocate of women's political engagement, sponsoring dozens of women for city council and local office positions throughout the city. She believed firmly that it was women's right and responsibility to dictate and control the future of women, specifically child care. Once she entered the national political realm in the 1960s, Guggenheimer believed that only women working directly in politics could achieve social change. Her work in the PCSW was only the start of her efforts as she helped to create the first Women's Political Caucus in 1971.<sup>29</sup>

Guggenheimer contribution to *American Women* addressed the current state of child care as being the largest impediment of women's equality and addressed necessary

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<sup>27</sup> Consensus on all divisions of the committee was hard to salvage and many of its members would contradict others outside of the report. Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 239.

<sup>28</sup> The Lanham Act during WWII gave women safe and free child care services if they were employed in war time factories. Many communities fought to keep these centers open and affordable once the Lanham Acts expired and funds were repealed. See, Natalie Fousekis, *Demanding Child Care: Women's Activism and the Politics of Welfare, 1940-71* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> Guggenheimer helped to create the Women's Political Caucus with Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, and others.

steps to provide child services as essential to civilization. The goal of Guggenheimer's report was to address the lack of services accessible to all mothers, working or in the home. To soften the blow of her argument, Guggenheimer used moderate language to describe the failure of child care as a failure to acknowledge women's changing status in society. She directly addressed the relationship women had with child care and the role of the family in an increasingly post-industrialist America.<sup>30</sup>

Guggenheimer report did not declare the end of gender roles in society, but her use of data on women in labor argued that the assumption of a single breadwinner household was eroding as new generations of women pursued their own careers.<sup>31</sup> She navigated the difficult political environment by challenging popular Cold War rhetoric which defined the family as the best defense against Communism, stating that "If the family is to continue to be the core institution of society... new and expanded community services [including child care] are necessary."<sup>32</sup> In the her conclusion, Guggenheimer created the language that many mothers, educators, activists, and politicians would follow well into the next decade, "Child care facilities are essential for women in many different circumstances, whether they work outside the home *or not*... those who *decide* to work should have child care service available."<sup>33</sup>

## Historiographical Rift: Head Start is not Where the CDA Starts

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<sup>30</sup> *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 18-19.

<sup>31</sup> *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 19-20.

<sup>32</sup> Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 239. *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 18-19.

<sup>33</sup> Italics added. *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 18-19.



This chapter focuses on various influential shifts in American politics during the 1960s that have undermined the scholarship of the CDA due to the lack of perspective given to the bill. Historians have until this point focused on the significance of interviews by Marian W. Edelman, Walter Mondale, and John Brademas in which all are guided in question to discuss Head Start and its relationship to the CDA. The bias of the interviews assumed that Head Start was the justification for the CDA, and these interviewees sealed this theory with their vague responses. Only Edelman described her experience with Head Start as the main influence of her involvement in the CDA. Edelman stated,

As Headstart's existence was increasingly threatened, those of us who felt the importance of these local institutions knew that Headstart's survival depended on broadening the base of its constituency. This meant identifying the need for child care services in the larger population...Meanwhile child care proposals were introduced in the Congress that virtually would have turned over control of child care services to the states and, I feared, the public schools. One thing became clear. If we were going to get the kind of legislation that would ensure quality comprehensive care to poor communities, it was necessary to take the initiative, to try to formulate what we wanted, and to see what kind of support we had.<sup>34</sup>

Historians have run far and in every direction with this Edelman quote with a consuming misinterpretation of the CDA. Many have declared the CDA to be the next probable step of Head Start and interpreted the bill simply as a larger and more inclusive program. The goal of this chapter is to read the CDA from a different perspective than those involved in Head Start and traditional child welfare policies. This chapter will specifically look at the work of women rights organizations and their efforts to uplift wage-earning women to declare child care a right. The evolution of this rhetoric moved beyond just wage-earning women to include women who worked full-time in their household or were forced out of work to tend to their children. This chapter therefore argues that the ideological

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<sup>34</sup> Rochelle Beck and John Butler, "An Interview with Marian Wright Edelman," *Harvard Educational Review* 44:1 (February 1974): 68.

construction of the CDA happened separate but parallel to Head Start. By viewing the policy as a new direction to create comprehensive care for all women, the CDA begins to detach itself from programs that fit into the narrative of public assistance for targeted demographics, such as Head Start. When comparing the two pieces of legislation, Head Start influenced the CDA only as a skeleton for the framework of its administration, one which allowed the CDA to build a much more complex system of services.

Once both bills have been placed within their own proper context of creation, Head Start was birthed from the need to create local programs that directly engaged poverty-stricken communities.<sup>35</sup> A golden egg for the OEOs community action programs, Head Start gave the overall power needed to expand policies and funding in hopes that liberals would achieve “maximum feasible participation” from communities.<sup>36</sup> Sargent Shriver’s fixation on achieving “maximum feasible participation” played a major role in designing Head Start to be a blank template to help communities solve any problem they saw necessary if it offered a day care center and family focused initiative.<sup>37</sup>

Although Shriver was engaged in the public discourse on the effects of poverty on child development, his role in the creation of Head Start was stunted by his responsibility to the OEO and the War on Poverty in general. Therefore, Head Start was on paper a

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<sup>35</sup> Research on the history of Head Start and its influence on the War on Poverty is dense in secondary scholarship, the most recent monograph written by Edward Zigler and Sally J. Styfco, *The Hidden History of Head Start*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> To understand the range of flexibility in OEO legislation under the objective of “maximum feasible participation” refer to the edited collection Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian, *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011).

<sup>37</sup> A powerful example of the Head Start flexibility in sponsorship programs is Crystal Sanders’ deep analysis of the history of the CDGM and its efforts to uplift black families from systematic poverty set by segregationist politicians. Crystal Sanders, *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi’s Black Freedom Struggle*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016) Maris Vinovskis, *The Birth of Head Start: Preschool Education Policies in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

federally subsidized day care for poverty-stricken families created and operated by the civil leaders of America's poorest communities. In practice and due to the vague wording and minimal requirements, Head Start granted thousands of communities funding to build centers that offered services to unemployed parents, disenfranchised minorities, and poverty-stricken families and custodial child care. Edelman, who helped lead the largest Head Start program in the country, the Child Development Group of Mississippi, described the program as an opportunity to give black Mississippians jobs. Edelman reflected later "that 3,000 new jobs, free of the plantation and state system, was revolutionary. Black parents got a new vision of what their children could get, and Head Start was the most exciting thing."<sup>38</sup> The flexibility of Head Start sponsorship created opposition among segregationists, labor lobbyists, and even child care advocates who all viewed Head Start programs as being abused to fund politically charged centers of civil rights and were far from functioning child care services for poor working parents.<sup>39</sup>

Although the CDA policy and goals of administration resembled some of the policies of Head Start — such as its community led centers, priority to poor children, and advocacy of familial employment — the CDA was not an expansion of child care for the poor and disenfranchised families. Instead, the bill was a child centered policy which offered comprehensive services to all children regardless of the family's socioeconomic status. The CDA did not come from research on the consequences of poverty but from research on the effects of early child isolation and cognitive and emotional

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<sup>38</sup> Marian W. Edelman, Julieanna L. Richardson, and Paul Bieschke, *The HistoryMakers Video Oral History with Marian Wright Edelman*, (Chicago, Illinois: The HistoryMakers, 2016).

<sup>39</sup> Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.

development.<sup>40</sup> Unlike Head Start, the CDA was created by women of all backgrounds who were driven to pursue a policy to combat the societal pressure of domesticity and welfare restraints of maternal mobility. Academic research combatted work requirement welfare programs with no child care by proving that children, regardless of race or class, who are not given adequate attention and social engagement could mature to be a burden on the state, and found communal care to be the most effective solution.<sup>41</sup> Politicians and child advocates of the CDA attributed the growing number of youth infractions to the continual nationwide shortage of child care services as women of all socioeconomic backgrounds continued to enter the workforce. Therefore, the historical relationship of these two policies were simply similar solutions to different problems in American society. On one hand, Shriver and the OEO saw Head Start as an opportunity to gain civic engagement by funding and enfranchising impoverished communities behind the goal of creating family focused centers; and on the other hand, Mondale and policymakers viewed the CDA as an opportunity to stunt the achievement gap between all families by offering a variety of services to communities as an incentive to gain community participation in child rearing.<sup>42</sup>

### **Social Security Act of 1954 and Required Employment**

Before *American Women*, the issue of child care gradually climbed to critical condition, but this issue was seen as economic reverberation from the economic boom following the American Homefront. Politicians strategically defined the crisis as a matter

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<sup>40</sup> *White House Conference on Children-Child Development Recommendations: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Children and Youth*, 92nd Cong. (1971).

<sup>41</sup> *White House Conference on Children-Child Development Recommendations: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Children and Youth*, 92nd Cong. (1971).

<sup>42</sup> *White House Conference on Children-Child Development Recommendations: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Children and Youth*, 92nd Cong. (1971).

of poverty among families below the poverty index and were able to confine matters of child care as issues of welfare.<sup>43</sup> Change in political opinion and federal intervention was gradual partly due to the classism which divided most Americans opinions on child care. Prior to the 1960s, child care was confined by societal norms that dictated comprehensive services were either an economic privilege or solution for the disadvantaged. The Cold War reinforced these norms as the federal government promoted male breadwinner households consequently reinforced child care a matter of the mother at home.<sup>44</sup> The quality and types of service in the private sector was separated by its own classist terminology. Poor families were associated with public assistance services or babysitters known as “custodial” care, middle class families often opted for “developmental” child care centers, and upper class households preferred costly professional “caregivers” who worked in the home with the mother.<sup>45</sup> The class and inherent racial division in services available divided child care advocates and fragmented their political power.<sup>46</sup> This gap left most of the voting demographic oblivious to changes in status of women desires to work or willingly denied the possibility of this shift ever reaching a point of crisis. Guggenheimer’s report in *American Women* aspired to unite advocates under a shared

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<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 27-30.

<sup>44</sup> The historiography on child care during the Cold War overlaps into the discussion of American incentives of capitalism at the Homefront. Like encouragement of private ownership of a property, child care services based around class and degree of maternal domesticity was also encouraged to combat socialism and Communism. See Michel, Rose, Dinner, Morgan.

<sup>45</sup> The terminology was used to define different services of quality, services, and educational objectives. “Custodial” services usually mean a center with adult caregivers and provides children meals but does not have an educational curriculum. “Developmental” refers to child care centers similar to “custodial” services but are operated by educators and paraprofessionals with educational curriculums. Michel, *Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights*, 236-7.

<sup>46</sup> Michel, *Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights*.

interpretation of the crisis and its effects across all class, racial, and gendered boundaries, but no unionization happened for another five years.

*American Women* went against the grain of federal politics and declared child care an issue for all Americans and not just those on welfare and employed. The prior decade, Congress had constructed multiple policies that defined child care as an issue of welfare and limited Federal responsibility to the average family. The largest social policy for children since the end of the Lanham Act funded child care centers was not a child care policy at all. The Social Security Act of 1954 (SSA) focused on providing families on welfare guaranteed employment opportunities. To protect single mothers, the SSA incentivized states with increased funds to construct child care services.<sup>47</sup> The high hopes from Congress that the SSA would solve single mothers' cyclical dependency on welfare and uplift them from poverty failed miserably as the number of new mothers applying for welfare nearly doubled from 1954 to 1964.<sup>48</sup> Mixed opinions on the SSA divided advocates of child care as education and welfare advocates despised the “custodial” services only offered to those on public assistance who were willing to work. Regardless, women and civil rights advocates called the SSA “liberating” for mothers who wanted to work and those who had been forced into welfare to raise their children.<sup>49</sup> Far from inclusive but popular among moderate Democrats and conservatives, policies on child

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<sup>47</sup> Maris Vinovskis, *The Birth of Head Start: Preschool Education Policies in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 23.; Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 190-200.

<sup>48</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.

<sup>49</sup> Dona C. and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda: Race and Social Welfare Policies of Civil Rights Organizations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997);, Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 236-42.; Andrew Karch, "A Watershed Episode: The Comprehensive Child Development Act," in *Early Start: Preschool Politics in the United States*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 59-85.

care continued to follow the SSA model and expand incentives for required employment for mothers.

### **Child Welfare Movement and the League Day Care Project**

The Kennedy Administration maintained the status quo of child care being an issue of public assistance for those on welfare, only expanding services under various amendments of the Social Security Act of 1954. While gradualism continued to dictate legislation in the Kennedy Administration, various executive commissions were created to tackle the issues of education and maternal welfare in America, the most influential being the PCSW.<sup>50</sup> Considered a moderate solution to the rise of demand by child welfare and women advocates, the PCSW did not create legislation, but published and spoke on various policies to assure the public that the Administration was working towards gender-conscious legislation.<sup>51</sup> The PCSW, assumed to be a more favored option than legislation by Congress, challenged the traditional familial roles in order to address the shifts in labor, and often sided with more radical views of government assistance. They constructed liberal arguments that went against employment requirements as being an ineffective solution to welfare dependency. Instead they supported efforts for universal services for women who are required to work but for those who chose to work.<sup>52</sup>

The PCSW was an early supporter of the concept of universal child care by a federal committee, but not all members were willing to objectively support legislation.

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<sup>50</sup> Vinovskis, *The Birth of Head Start*, 36-43.

<sup>51</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 239. While historians have acknowledged the significance of the PCSW, many historians of gender studies have challenged the impact they had on influencing legislation. While President Kennedy accredited them to the inclusion of gender in the Equal Pay Act of 1963, there is little record of them influencing other policies that only addressed equality in race.

<sup>52</sup> The use of "liberal" in this context refers to liberal Democrats who argued that work requirement does not protect children.

The largest barrier to unison support to act in Congress was the moral grounds of American motherhood and the gendered roles of the family. Not all members of the committee shared the same national sentiments but contradicted themselves to appease traditional methods of child rearing and no policy would ever come from the commission. Guggenheimer's efforts to acknowledge new research on the positive effects of communal services for child development was often undermined by other members who commented that "It is regrettable when women with children are forced by economic necessity or by the regulations of welfare agencies to seek employment while their children are young."<sup>53</sup> *American Women*, although a half step in support of feminist views of child care, undeniably made child care a national issue by the mid-1960s. However, advocates of the child welfare movement were moving at a much faster pace to replace tradition with practical solutions.

Child welfare organizations were more alert to the crisis forming at the ground level, as more women chose to enter the workforce to provide supplementary income or entered employment requirement programs. Researchers of child welfare and labor found that by 1964, more than half of all working women were mothers and the country had an inadequate supply of private services for families above the poverty line.<sup>54</sup> Child welfare organizations were more forward thinking in their acceptance of mothers' absences from the home to work. Large and small organizations of child welfare released reports that defended maternal employment, even if it was not out of necessity. The most shocking was the notable shift by the leading child welfare organization, the Child Welfare League

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<sup>53</sup> *American Women: Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 18-19.

<sup>54</sup> By 1962, eight million mothers with children under 18 were employed. Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 240.



of America (CWLA). Created in 1920, the CWLA worked to protect and defend children of impoverished families while simultaneously supporting the traditional familial roles that kept mothers-work in the home.

Surprisingly in 1964, the CWLA shocked the public when it released its report from the Child Welfare League Day Care Project, which helped to destigmatize maternal employment, expose the child care crisis, and propose a solution viable to all wage-earning mothers. The director of the Project, Florence Ruderman, outlined the reports' main objective to "deproblematize" the child care crisis as not just an issue of poverty. Influential to the status of federal child care services, the Day Care Project studied all social demographics

To see what patterns of supplementary daytime care occur in all families, what social and economic circumstances are associated with all arrangements, how families feel about them...We [CWLA] were not predetermining the relevant population (the population for whom it is or should be a child welfare service), as is done when studies focus on ADC families, low income groups, broken homes, etc.<sup>55</sup>

Through this wide range of study, the Day Care Project found that large percentages of wage-earning mothers came from households with above average incomes, even acknowledging that "the rise has been particularly sharp, among women whose husbands earn \$79,999."<sup>56</sup>

Unheard of at the time, the Day Care Project report added a new categorization of mothers who *stayed* at home out of necessity to the lack of available and affordable services. Ruderman described this phenomenon by acknowledging that "they would like to work but feel they cannot do so because they are unable to make satisfactory child-care

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<sup>55</sup> Florence A. Ruderman, "Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care: Some Conclusions Drawn from the Child Welfare League Day Care Project," *Child Welfare* 44, no. 4 (1965): 208.

<sup>56</sup> Ruderman, "Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care," 208.

arrangements."<sup>57</sup> This mostly has to do with what child care looked like at the local level in America. The Day Care Project found that only 1 percent of all children of working mothers were in organized child care services, while the other 99 percent relied on unregulated and informal arrangements.<sup>58</sup> Many families were uncomfortable with unregulated services and had little information about alternative services forcing mothers to quit in order to raise their children. Secondly, relatives were no longer consistent sources of child care as more women entered the workforce, grandparents included. Traditional babysitters were also entering into different markets of labor or retiring at an older age, meaning that reliable and affordable options of child care were dwindling. With non-related nannies and in-home caregivers becoming more prominent, it was also a risk as many did not require licensing or formal training. Lastly, the classist myths of child care persisted, often becoming the primary source of information known among unaware parents. The CWLA saw this as a common trend as "class-and-caste character, of individual facilities, and to a great extent of the entire institution of organized day care, tends to be self-perpetuating. Many families who might like group care, and for whom it may be appropriate, associate it with the very poor. . . . and are reluctant to use it."<sup>59</sup> With traditional services dwindling and classist assumptions perpetuating domesticity, the CWLA sought to inform the public on the benefits of child care in hopes it could persuade the average American to consider the benefits of available communal services.

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<sup>57</sup> Ruderman, "Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care," 209. Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 241.

<sup>58</sup> The CWLA report outlined the range in informal services as being relatives, neighbors, nannies, teen babysitters, and even self-care.

<sup>59</sup> Ruderman, "Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care," 212. Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 242.

While Americans were starting to warm up to the concept of wage-earning women, providing all mothers with child care was still seen as far-fetched and federal legislation would continue to follow targeted services until the end of the decade, the most successful being Head Start. But the PCSW, the CWLA, and other child welfare advocates had created public sentiment that without an expansive and comprehensive child care program, families would be limited in their socioeconomic mobility, or as Ruderman stated

There is no evidence that the majority of working-mother families are in any way abnormal, that there is an absence of parental love, or responsibility, or that indeed there is any problem other than the need for a good form of supplementary care. In our definition... this is a normal, not a pathological need.<sup>60</sup>

### **The Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Act of 1969**

The year after the Day Care Project was published, Lyndon B. Johnson declared “unconditional” war against poverty, unveiling the largest social welfare program since the New Deal. One of the most successful ventures during the Great Society was Johnson’s child care program, Head Start, which strived to uplift impoverished communities in order to gain “maximum feasible participation.”<sup>61</sup> While the program was viewed as a success by the media and populace, it did not resolve the issues of child care for the average American. The average cost of private services continued to climb, and more women above the poverty line were entering the workforce than in the previous two decades.<sup>62</sup> While Head Start showed the “cleavages” of child care, it only drew more

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<sup>60</sup> Ruderman, “Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care,” 209.

<sup>61</sup> Vinovskis, *The Birth of Head Start*, 178.

<sup>62</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.*

attention to the crisis forming outside of the poorest pockets of America.<sup>63</sup> Importantly, Head Start proved the feasibility of the government to improve and regulate services in child care, all while uplifting communities of young parents. Unfortunately, Johnson followed the same ideology of Eisenhower and Kennedy and made it clear that poverty intervention would be Congress's priority and coerced politicians to table, dismiss, and remove any efforts of child care that went beyond the scope of Head Start.<sup>64</sup>

The success of Head Start and progressive acceptance of women's inclusion into the workforce created an America ready for federal child care. The 1969 Gallup poll found that 64 percent of Americans favored federal child care and newspapers began to run headlines on the "Child Care Crisis." Almost all national social organizations had child care on their agenda.<sup>65</sup> Politicians were surprisingly on top of this social shift with federal commissions, executive initiatives, and formal pieces of legislation acknowledging the need for robust child care. Democratic party leaders like Minnesota Senator Walter Mondale and Indiana representative John Brademas led the charge to put child care on Congressional dockets. Both worked tirelessly for years to convince the nation that comprehensive federal child care was more than feasible outside of America's poorest communities. Mondale made the issue a focal point of his Congressional reelection in 1966.<sup>66</sup> Although Mondale was a public supporter of universal child care,

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<sup>63</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 237.

<sup>64</sup> Edward Zigler, Katherine W. Marsland, and Heather Lord. *The Tragedy of Child Care in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).; Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 237.; Rose, *The Promise of Preschool*, 58.

<sup>65</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 237.; *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*.

<sup>66</sup> Walter F. Mondale, "Children: Our Challenge," *Young Children* 27, no. 2 (December 1971): 77.

Brademas took the first step towards legislation in 1969 when he attached a sizable day care bill to an already costly preschool bill. H.R. 13520 or the Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Act of 1969 addressed the need for more educational services for families on public assistance, but also gave access to programs to families who were not on public assistance. Policymakers of H.R. 13520 relied on the research generated in the child welfare movement to prove that poverty was not the biggest hindrance to a child's intelligence, but instead the lack of consistent engagement with adults and educational stimulation. Sponsors of the act gained public favor by supporting the success of Head Start to promote parental and community engagement to boost educational standards. Academics of early childhood and education conducted similar studies done by the League Daycare Project which proved that poor and middle class children who attend custodial day care while their mothers work had an equivalent negative effects on their intellectual development.<sup>67</sup> Finally, after years of work by child, welfare, civil, and women's rights organizations to expose the lack of private services of equal quality, policymakers had a favorable argument that without available services to all families, child development would decline nationally.<sup>68</sup>

H.R. 13520 never passed through the third revision of the Selective Subcommittee of Education; however, the Act was vital for politicians to flesh out what "universal" child care could be in America. At first glance, H.R. 13520 was an Act to provide early

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<sup>67</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, 23-31.

<sup>68</sup> In his opening statement, Brademas noted that out of the 22 million children under six, only 250,000 children were receiving services by the federal government. Most of them in Head Start. *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, 7.

educational standards to all children to curb stagnation in child development, but the Act also gave women outside of public assistance the opportunity to claim a stake in employment. The Act prioritized services that would ensure modern methods of child care which promoted parental engagement, curriculums run by child care professionals, and an integrated population of children. Put bluntly,

The purpose of this Act is to provide comprehensive preschool educational programs which will assist children of preschool age to attain their full potential. It is further the purpose of Congress in enacting this Act to enhance the ability of families affected to become *or remain* self-sufficient and to more fully participate in regular educational, employment, training, and other social and economical activities.<sup>69</sup>

The prioritization of children was an intentional decision to make universal child care acceptable. The subcommittee accepted women's rights to work as a social necessity beyond the requirements of public assistance and acknowledged that federal child care could no longer remain an issue of welfare. One of the biggest issues policymakers faced was trying to navigate the waters of “universal” child care in a country at war with the very idea of universalism. Throughout the committee hearings, speakers supported previous policies of employment requirements and poverty prioritization for families on public assistance, but also worked to extend the program to all families with employed mothers. Subtle “*or remain*” was policymakers attempt towards negotiating universally available programs and allowed the subcommittee to work with working women, child care advocates, and politicians who represented mothers outside of welfare.

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<sup>69</sup> Italics added by author. *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, 1.

H.R. 13520 was the first attempt to remove child care from public assistance and in practice it meant creating a new definition of child care, although policymakers and advocates relied on Head Start to sell the Act, H.R. 13520 could not be sold as an anti-poverty act. Politician's efforts to separate and attach H.R. 13520 to Head Start created practical challenges that stagnated the bill in the subcommittee. First, it challenged the federal government's responsibility in child care, but also communal traditions to childrearing. Head Start being an antipoverty effort supported myths of organizational care being only effective for welfare purposes. To sell a bill beyond antipoverty, politicians and advocates had to remove the myth of communal care being only effective in terms of poverty intervention. Advocates and politicians continually cited the work of the CWLA and PCSW to prove that communal care was both practical in policy and effective in providing necessary child development that could not be achieved through traditional child rearing. They promoted a service that mirrored Head Start, but they stressed the new goal was to provide care that met the modern standards outlined by education advocates and child academics, most of which relied on the reports used in the child welfare movement.<sup>70</sup> However, unlike Head Start, the Act did not give control of federal funds to the Community Action Agency (CAA) but instead gave funds to state commissions to distribute funds to grassroots organizations throughout the state.<sup>71</sup> This decision to give states control of funds concerned advocates during the hearings who felt

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<sup>70</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, pg. 8.

<sup>71</sup> CAA were administrative committees created at the local level and overseen by the OEO. They were run by community leaders and received federal funds directly once proposals were approved. *H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, pg. 3-4.

that states would abuse and disproportionately divide funding against communities of color, especially in the South and Midwest. Many leaders focused on child care believed communal leadership and control was the reason for the success of Head Start and the OEO, arguing that state control could have the opposite effect. H.R. 13520 would be revised to require state commissions to have at minimum a third of parent leaders on the state committee board of decision but ultimately most power would still be held by local and state politicians. The issue of state control of funds resurfaced throughout the lifespan of H.R. 13520 and ultimately affected the writing of the CDA.

### **The CDA Ad Hoc Coalition: Years in the Making**

The most influential contribution H.R. 13520 gave to the Child Development Act was the subcommittee hearings on the Act that stood as the foundation of uncovering the plethora of issues with child care in America and uniting activists to cooperate in their efforts to lobby for change two years later. When H.R. 13520 was sent by the House to the select subcommittee on Education, John Brademas who chaired the select subcommittee, approached the Act with an open forum for any person associated with child care to speak. Brademas viewed the policy as new territory for child rights and the Act was to resolve the “growing need for a comprehensive, unified approach to early childhood education and day care services” which at the time affected four million mothers.<sup>72</sup> The subcommittee's testimonies were not only held to fine tune the Act, but also to “investigate the whole area of early childhood programs.”<sup>73</sup> Lacking foresight,

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<sup>72</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, pg. 7.

<sup>73</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide*



Brademas unlocked a Pandora's box of mayhem that had been locked away from the political sphere since Truman's removal of the Lanham Act. For the first time in almost three decades, women who represented all facets of society took to Congress to dictate the future of child care in America, and the quantity of leaders prepared to speak on H.R. 13520 showed how long they had silenced.

The effort to condense all matters of child care was not a simple task for the Subcommittee on Education which devoted seventeen days of hearings over the course of five months. More than a hundred speakers provided testimony on the status of child care, each one representing a different demographic of society. Many organizations overlapped but continued to add nuances to the committee through their efforts to publicize how regional and local child care must be in America. Urban wage-earning women who wrote to the committee had different necessities than those in suburbs, and of their values of child care similar to the ones asked by mothers in rural communities. Problematic, policymakers wrote the Act to be a "one size fits all" for matters of sponsorship, income bracket for cost of services, parental involvement, state control and many more issues. Leaders who spoke on H.R. 13520 took issue with the lack of flexible services their constituents demanded, which complicated politicians' efforts to meet all the demands. When the first round of hearings concluded in November of 1969, members of the selective subcommittee noted that "comprehensive" was not feasible and that only the most common necessities were plausible in the bill. Brademas and Representative Patsy Mink noted that build a bill to be inclusive to all the desired services would be

political suicide.<sup>74</sup> To leaders of social and political organizations it became clear that unification was necessary to achieve their goals.

Unfortunately, unification did not happen during H.R. 13520 and the quantity of divided opinions stressed the Act to its breaking point and overwhelmed policymakers to deliver practical refinements. When the hearings ended in early 1970, the Act did not pass. All members of the selective committee, after months of testimonies, had expanded their interpretation of “comprehensive” programs and found that the Act was not a strong solution to the issues that limited mothers' employment opportunities.<sup>75</sup> After it failed to pass it was clear that a ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy was not an effective means of providing universal child care. Policymakers, especially Brademas, blamed the number of outside demands from the large demographic of lobbyists, state politicians, and general activists. Brademas would state in the CCDA hearings that confusion and lack of cooperation among organizations weakened the language and practicality of the Act and only flooded the committee with more issues about child care than it could afford to resolve.<sup>76</sup> Although there was a need for a new perspective to the child care crisis, compromises were impossible to please all parties and the open forum achieved as much as it hindered.

## **Conclusion: The Stage is Set**

Although Brademas and other sponsors never attempted to revitalize H.R. 13520, the failed Act was a necessary evil for what would become the CCDA, as it showed

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<sup>74</sup> *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*, pg. 76-8.

<sup>75</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-second Congress, first session on H.R. 6748 and related bills.*

<sup>76</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-second Congress, first session on H.R. 6748 and related bills, 7-16.*

members of the committee what women in America valued in terms of child care and their full commitment to creating a policy that would guarantee protection in labor well beyond the sphere of welfare. The issue with H.R. 13520 was not that America was not ready for federal child care, rather the act was too complicated and lacked a plan effective at all regions. Since the publication of *American Women* in 1963, most Americans with or without young children were becoming increasingly more informed and concerned about the child care crisis. The concept of child care programs only provided to mothers on welfare was no longer practical as Head Start proved the federal government's ability to uplift entire regional communities. All forms of media publicized reports created by child care committees and no political election could avoid discussing the topic since 1966. Slowly, America accepted the social shifts that created the crisis, but they quickly supported efforts for a federal solution to protect children. H.R. 13520 was the first attempt to pass a definitive solution, but that meant understanding the entirety of the issue, one that had suppressed mothers and leaders for over two decades. While H.R. 13520 had a nice price tag of ten million dollars and ensured that children would be given the best education, there was no assurance that a mother in Nebraska would get the same quality services while adhering to her needs if the act favored mothers in Manhattan.<sup>77</sup> In other words, in 1969 policymakers viewed child care as a simple solution in need of federal funds with a department to monitor and enact requirements. When the act failed it was clear that they were all wrong in their assumptions. Members of the subcommittee learned that their failure was the assumption that one solution could resolve four million

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<sup>77</sup> Chisholm testimony in the *Selective Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor House of Representatives Ninety-First Congress First and Second Sessions on H.R. 13520 A Bill to Provide Comprehensive Preschool Education and Child Day-Care Programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*,

individual problems. The imperfect act was merely a flawed theory of federal child care, but that does not mean its failure meant universal child care was not possible.

After the seventeen-day cacophony of opinions that drove the Act into the ground, advocates realized their responsibility to reshape the imperfect Act meant getting an Act that was favorable to Congress. The responsibility had to be shared if they were given the second chance they were promised by Brademas. Disorienting opinions in 1969 energized speakers to reach out and form the ad hoc coalition of 1971 for the CDA. This ad hoc coalition was vital to motivating the grassroots support and political appeal of universal child care, and after the failure to produce a suitable act in 1969 they were now dependent on each other's constituents and political reach. Many of them never spoke on the national level until 1969, while others made their career on Capitol Hill. Members of the new coalition were dependent on the assets of one another and united around the shared failure of 1969. Hawaiian Representative Patsy Mink, who served on the selective subcommittee, spoke on the House floor the week before the CCDA was announced, acknowledged how far the leaders of child care organizations have come since H.R. 13520. Mink stated that the new child care bill would succeed because this time everyone involved is clear minded in their mission, a mission which is to “provide every American the possibility to work with the American promise, the promise that they do not have to make sacrifices for their children that they cannot afford.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-second Congress, first session on H.R. 6748 and related bills*, 127.

## 2: The Balancing Act of the Selective Subcommittee and the Women Who Led It

I am concerned. I am also concerned because when you have been in the business for a while you recognize that votes are required to get legislation through the House. Here you have an opportunity not in terms of trying to get votes but also in terms of the fact that this is a need for people in city, rural, and suburban areas. So why burden the legislation down in terms of this number which may cause some real concern? Maybe I am not politically sophisticated.

From across the tables that divided the committee members from the public where guest speakers, journalists, and honored policymakers observed quietly, sat a disruptive presence to the 1971 Select Subcommittee on Education hearings. House Representative Shirley Chisholm of New York folded her arms across the tabletop and pushed herself into a position of attention and control. Her stern face remained emotionless as she listened in on each speaker for the entire four hours of testimonies. She never wavered from boredom or exhaustion, attentively she listened and strategized.<sup>79</sup> Her participation in 1969 day care hearings had taught her a lesson in federal child care and in 1971, she used every opportunity to speak to her advantage. Her contributions to the first day proved that she was more than prepared to take control of this bill and her presence in the subcommittee did not go unnoticed as John Brademas understood that the “fighting” Shirley Chisholm had a clear objective to pass the CCDA.<sup>80</sup>

### The “Fighting” Shirley Chisholm

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<sup>79</sup> Chisholm wrote in her autobiography how much effort she put into remaining emotionless. This was a critique of her behavior in response to the sexism she faced in politics. She saw being a woman who showed emotion in politics as being effective in both positive and negative situations. Shirley Chisholm, *Unbought and Unbossed* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970).

<sup>80</sup> Shirley Chisholm, *Unbought and Unbossed* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970).

Shirley Chisholm viewed herself as an educator, not a politician. Unlike most advocates of child care and educational legislation, Chisholm never had children of her own. After earning a degree in early education, she would marry in her late twenties and put her passion and love of children into her work as an educator.<sup>81</sup> She taught for decades before entering politics and climbed the ladder through Brooklyn's early education program to become one of the lead consultants to the New York City Division of Day Care in the Bureau of Child Welfare.<sup>82</sup> Chisholm's sense of responsibility as an educator drove her into the realm of politics. When Chisholm joined Brooklyn's Democratic Party machine, it was out of her "complete devotion to the profession of child welfare and early childhood education."<sup>83</sup>

In 1972 Chisholm announced her presidential campaign to her hometown crowd and shocked the crowd when she announced "I am not the candidate of black America, although I am black and proud. I am not the candidate of the women's movement in this country, although I am a woman and I am equally proud of that."<sup>84</sup> Although this shocked the crowd in Brooklyn, it exemplified the intersectionality of being a devoted educator and a woman of color that constructed Chisholm's "paradoxical" political tactics. Carol Berkin described Chisholm's tactics as being radical and "yet she just as often was a realist, forming alliances with establishment politicians and compromising on issues in

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<sup>81</sup> Barbara Winslow, *Shirley Chisholm: Catalyst for Change*, (Boulder: Taylor and Francis, 2018), 23-9.

<sup>82</sup> Winslow, *Shirley Chisholm: Catalyst for Change*, 36-7.

<sup>83</sup> Winslow, *Shirley Chisholm: Catalyst for Change*, 27.

<sup>84</sup> Associated Press, "Rep. Shirley Chisholm Formally Enters Contest for Presidency: First U.S. Negro Congresswoman, a Democrat Says She is Not Just 'the Candidate for Black America'," *Los Angeles Times* (1923-1995), Jan 25, 1972; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times. 2.

order to enhance her political influence.”<sup>85</sup> Chisholm fought for small victories and supported policies outside of her scope to build political relationships and power. She sponsored or voted on moderate policies and constructed alliances until she was assured a victory for a radical political shift. Historians have interpreted her 1972 presidential campaign as the final step in her long game as it was one of her largest risks taken.<sup>86</sup> However, Chisholm continually worked on defining her values through her relationship with politician and within the political machines, never spending her time in session on one goal, but instead multitasking radical with practical.

### **“Battling Bella” Abzug**

If Chisholm saw herself as an educator, then Bella Abzug viewed herself as an activist before a politician.<sup>87</sup> Although Chisholm and Abzug had very similar upbringings, both raised in New York City to working-poor immigrants, their young-adult life could not have been more different. Abzug attended Columbia law in 1942, married a wealthy stockbroker and author, and served as a public defender for over two decades. Abzug defended people who she defined as being on the “outside of power.”<sup>88</sup> By the late 1960’s, Abzug was a national figurehead for women and antiwar activism.

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<sup>85</sup> One of the best examples of Chisholm’s “paradoxical” political identity would come in 1972 when campaigning for the primary bid, she went against her own political conscience to help gain white votes. During the campaign Chisholm would visit Southern white supremacist George Wallace in the hospital after an assassination attempt. The loss of Black voters was staggering, but the relationship she built with Wallace would allow her to gain a minimum wage bump for domestic workers in 1974, something that would not be possible if Wallace did not sway the Southern vote. Carol Berkin “Series Editors Foreword” in Barbara Winslow, *Shirley Chisholm*.

<sup>86</sup> While many historians have argued that Chisholm built alliances to support her presidential campaign, it contradicts their argument that many of her allies did not publicly supported her presidential campaign.

<sup>87</sup> “Abzug, Bella (Savitzky),” *Current Biography Yearbook, 1971* (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1971): 1–3.

<sup>88</sup> This included African Americans, working women and immigrants, or Americans targeted as political dissenters during the early years of the Cold War. Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973): 334-6.

After a decade of fighting for social justice in the national sphere, she was elected to the House of Representatives in the wealthy and predominantly white district of Manhattan in 1970. Abzug had no formal experience in politics but earned her seat in Congress with the promise to dismantle the political machine that many believed kept women out of politics stating that “This woman’s place is in the House ... the House of Representatives!”<sup>89</sup>

Abzug saw her responsibility in politics as a two-front war. On one front she battled for women to become the forefront of many civil and social policies. Abzug made it her objective to ensure that a variety of bills on labor, welfare, education, and political rights all directly stated their contribution to the livelihood and rights of women. On the other front, Abzug also found that her role as a woman in politics must break the internal political boundaries of the party machines.<sup>90</sup> While Chisholm was paradoxical in her political tactics to gain seats and power, Abzug was well defined on her political ideologies and dauntless on how she exerted them. “There are those who say I’m impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash and overbearing.... But whatever I am—and this ought to be made clear from the outset—I am a very serious woman.”<sup>91</sup> Abzug used her natural talent of debate to strategize her own political route, one that forced politicians to hold difficult conversations about abortion and birth control, women

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<sup>89</sup> Richard L. Madden, “Badillo Wins House Race; Rooney, Scheuer Victors; Powell is Beaten; Farbstain Loses,” 24 June 1970, *New York Times*: 1.

<sup>90</sup> Abzug viewed herself as a capable politician and a tool used to unhinge the misogynistic system of favors that tethered the political machines together. In her first year in the House of Representatives she attempted to force herself into the Armed Service Committee, a high-ranking committee and on the first day attempted to put legislation to end the Vietnam War on the floor. Laura Mansnerus, “Bella Abzug, 77, Congresswoman And a Founding Feminist, Is Dead: Bella Abzug, 77, Congresswoman, Founding Feminist and Staunch Radical, Dies,” *New York Times* (New York: NY), 1998. B12-3.

<sup>91</sup> Bella Abzug, *Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1972).



in the military, and gender discrimination in labor and welfare. However, while her character and tactics in politics were good for giving these issues publicity, her style of politicking came at a cost when it came time to rally in support.<sup>92</sup> Historians have interpreted her as a figurehead for second wave feminism who strived at one of the highest levels of politics for women's rights, but during the 1970's she made countless headlines for her strong and dedicated fight to end the Vietnam War, one that distracted the public from her more diverse agenda.

## Relationship

The relationship between Chisholm and Abzug is a difficult one to define. While they were never close allies, they worked closely together in Congress to pass and sponsor legislation that complemented their individual goals. Abzug worked in Congress to push the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and would receive Chisholm's support. Although Chisholm supported the Amendment she later criticized to the internal racism within the ad hoc coalition for the ERA, an issue Abzug would work to remove to gain popular support for the ERA. Abzug was also a wide supporter of many of the welfare policies proposed by Chisholm, the CCDA included, and advocated for the rights of people of color and spoke highly of Chisholm's work in that field. However, there is very little record of their private meetings, their honest opinions, and ultimately their friendship. While they shared common goals, they did not support one another outside of

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<sup>92</sup> In his critical report of Abzug by Ralph Nader in 1972, the political analysts found that a cosponsor or public support of a policy by Abzug could cost up to thirty votes on average. Laura Mansnerus, "Bella Abzug, 77, Congresswoman and a Founding Feminist, Is Dead: Bella Abzug, 77, Congresswoman, Founding Feminist and Staunch Radical, Dies," (New York: *New York Times*, 1998) B12-3.

those goals. Chisholm never defended abortion rights during her presidential campaign and Abzug never publicly supported Chisholm's presidential bid. The relationship they had was strictly political and a limited one at best. While they would cooperate to rewrite the "Brademas bill" their testimonies exemplify their conflicting relationship.<sup>93</sup>

The reason for their unification on the CDA was to resolve the issue that women's voices were not the focus in the original writing of the CCDA. It would be the voices of women, like Abzug and Chisholm, who would determine its future. Since the bill was introduced in 1969, women used all of their influence to revise, publicize, and eliminate sections in order to protect their rights. The role of Abzug and Chisholm in the CDA exemplify the various demographics of women in the ad hoc coalition. Although Chisholm and Abzug worked together to rewrite the CCDA, they only agreed on the need to expand the budget and allow for leniency in prime sponsorship. Their justification for these changes were similar but not identical and their reasoning for these changes created some of the largest divisions in the ad hoc coalition. Their political identity clashed in their testimonies meant to defend their shared Amendments. Abzug's notorious character created friction with Chisholm's who desired to pass the CDA, even at a cost to the integrity of "universal" care. To take a step back, Abzug saw the CDA as a policy to gain the momentum seen as feminists liberation, and Chisholm saw it as the undeniable policy to expand the guaranteed rights of American welfare to all children.

### **Setting the Stage Once Again: The First Day of Hearings on the CCDA**

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<sup>93</sup> Countlessly have speakers on the Committee in support of contested revisions would refer to the original bill as the "Brademas bill" in the House of Representatives and the "Mondale bill" in the Senate. *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 63, 81.

Prior to the first day of hearings by the Committee, Abzug and Chisholm quickly constructed think tanks on child care with advocates from New York City to fine comb the “Brademas bill.” Abzug relied on the research conducted by private child care centers in Manhattan and Long Island, while Chisholm pulled statistics from public child care centers and the work of African American graduate students in New York University Sociology Department.<sup>94</sup> While Abzug’s think tank focused on the bill’s language and its congruence to the ERA, Chisholm’s think tank conducted a small survey in Brooklyn’s 12th District to understand the common goals of working-class parents.<sup>95</sup> By the start of 1971 both think tanks still relied on the racially and socioeconomically diverse boroughs of New York City along with the collected data published by the New York Child Task Force in the late 1960s.<sup>96</sup> Their shared revision for the “Chisholm Abzug Amendments” asked for large edits to be made, some of which would completely change the makeup of the original program.

The first day of hearings in the House of Representatives Select Subcommittee on Education was jam packed with big names in politics and child care. The meetings were authorized by the House after H.R. 6748 was put on the floor not a month earlier, a rushed decision to gain popularity by holding hearings during “the Week of the Young Child.”<sup>97</sup> The first hearing had two of the most publicized politicians, Bella Abzug and

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<sup>94</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971. Hearings, Ninety-second Congress, first session on H.R. 6748 and related bills*, 63-6, 74-6.

<sup>95</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 66-8, 74-6.

<sup>96</sup> “Maternal identity” was a political term that had surfaced since the creation of Head Start. Used passively and not academically Edward Zigler defined it as how a mother views her role in society and in her own family, for start working-mother, single-mother, stay at home mother, etc. See the introduction of Edward Zigler, Katherine W. Marsland, and Heather Lord. *The Tragedy of Child Care in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). For Information on the NY Task Force see *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 83-4.

<sup>97</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 61.

Shirley Chisholm.<sup>98</sup> While the Senate's Committee on Children and Youth gave a platform for academics and politicians to speak in favor of universal child care, the House's Selective Subcommittee gave a platform for community leaders to enter the National debate. However, in 1971 both committees only allotted a short amount of time with limited testimonies, a questionable decision that left guest speakers new to selective subcommittee frustrated that "these hearings are scheduled for only 2 days, and were called rather suddenly."<sup>99</sup>

While publicity on child care became an upward trend in 1970, the Selective Subcommittee continually pushed for child care legislation along with constructing a revised version of their 1969 daycare bill. By 1971 the selective subcommittee had expanded to include representatives who had spoken and participated at the 1969 policy hearings, including Chisholm.<sup>100</sup> Brademas acknowledged the limited time on the 1971 subcommittee was intentional and practical to the fact that "work on this bill took as its point of departure the bill on which many members of the subcommittee worked in the 91st Congress, the bill that was favorably reported by the subcommittee... Over 1,000 pages of testimony during 17 days of hearings," and that if "we put in such a great deal of time in the last Congress, far more than is normally given to any bill, we are anxious not to let the time run out... which happened last year without a bill."<sup>101</sup>

Brademas as well as Senator Walter Mondale, both made it clear to their committees that the failure of 1969 to not create a bill cannot repeat itself and

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<sup>98</sup> List the name of all the speakers. Abzug declared herself the first feminists in Congress and

<sup>99</sup> See Bella Abzug in the *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 66.

<sup>100</sup> During the 1969 hearings on H.R. 13520 the selective committee consisted of fourteen members including John Brademas. In 1970 and 1971 the Selective Committee added more representatives to be eighteen total.

<sup>101</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 61, 69.

emphasized that they must be expedient while public support for child care was still high. As explained in the previous chapter, by 1971 the expansion of child care in America had already become favorable amongst most members of Congress. Since Head Start had created the dialogue of comprehensive child care nationally, a majority of Congressmen across the political spectrum favored an expansion of child care outside of the poverty-stricken communities and the CCDA was a moderate interpretation. Many who supported the original writing of the bill in Congress saw it as a bold step for the average American family. While on the floor of the Capitol and in the corridors of the Rayburn House Office Buildings Brademas was bold in his assertion of the original bill's potential and the work of the committee, not all members of Congress and the Selective Subcommittee were as pleased with the original bill and fought for more time to edit what would be coined the “Brademas bill”.<sup>102</sup>

### **From “Brademas bill” to a “Women’s bill”**

Abzug, with her hat pushed down the back of her neck to expose her face, spoke loudly and slowly. Her attention to tone showed constant confidence which allowed her to maintain the spotlight and control of the room as emotions spiked throughout the subcommittee when issues of the “protection of all women” were weaved into the failures of the “Brademas bill.” By the end of the first day, Abzug stole the media spotlight as newspapers grabbed at the opportunity to coin the CCDA the “women’s bill.”<sup>103</sup>

The notion of the CCDA being a “women’s bill” was not a publicity grab or a political statement to Abzug. Most feminists argued that the lack of child care services

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<sup>102</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 63, 81.

<sup>103</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 64.

given to women is what redistricted their social and economic status in society to being mothers or taking on maternal-centered jobs. Most feminists' organizations advocated for child care policy as a foundational step towards liberation from their oppressive class in America. Abzug's statement represented an affirmation that if child care becomes a communal responsibility, it needs to protect women crippled by the social construct of motherhood, and force Americans to recognize that it is the women, rather than the men, who assume the burdens of child care.

We can't deny that women, not men, lack the opportunity to achieve their full employment potential. We can't deny that women, rather than men, are underpaid in the job market, and yet it's women- particularly the women who are heads of households-who must singlehandedly pay the costs of child care.<sup>104</sup>

While testimonies spoke on the issues of prime sponsorship and budget which struggled to gain political support, she had attended the Selective Committee hearings to throw her hat into the ring of uplifting mothers and women.

Along with essential edits to the prime sponsorship and budget of the “Brademas bill”, an extensive list of additions and changes to the original bill were added to protect and include the rights of women. Her additional amendments included federal protection from discrimination in employment and education of CCDA centers including requirements of percentage of women employed in each center. Abzug viewed this change as necessary for women's right to work, as well as supporting the idea of communal child care and parent involvement.<sup>105</sup> She would also argue for twenty-four-hour child care centers to provide services for women to pursue higher education and fair

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<sup>104</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 64.

<sup>105</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 64.

employment opportunities at businesses with irregular work shifts.<sup>106</sup> Her testimony for twenty-four-hour centers focused more on the benefits of allowing women to pursue night classes and achieve upward mobility in labor. She also included the rhetoric of testimonies from 1969, which argued that centers should have professional night courses to train parents to become educators in their community centers.<sup>107</sup> Abzug saw these changes in comparison to the language used in the “Brademas bill ” crucial to ensuring women's place in communal child care while also not holding all the responsibility of child care on their backs.

If the language of the CCDA validated the role of women beyond the means of child care, then equity in other social and political facets of American society could be challenged. The CCDA could change the role of motherhood and be applied to other issues incorporated as tools of oppression such as birth control, divorce, welfare, and political status.<sup>108</sup> Abzug was aware of the potential the CCDA had for women and tackled the issue head on in her questionnaire. “Yes, women’s rights is definitely an issue here. For this reason Representative Chisholm and I have added a number of strengthening Amendments... to recognize that thousands of American women suffer themselves through the absence of child care.”<sup>109</sup>

## **Women’s Rights Starts in Welfare**

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<sup>106</sup> While many women rights advocates found it to be important in protecting single mothers who work or study at night, it became an issue of budget and role of prime sponsorships control over administration. While all organizations wished for community control parameters needed to be made federally to ensure all centers were meeting barebone requirements. 24/7 child care would be removed from the requirements as welfare and civil rights leaders argued the budget could not afford that requirement over more essential services. This history is what will make up the following chapter of the thesis.

<sup>107</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 64.

<sup>108</sup> Deborah Dinner, "The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966–1974" *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010): 581-7.

<sup>109</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 64.

Chisholm's argument to the rights of women was selective in comparison to Abzug's as she viewed the CCDA as being essential to mothers who have been forced out of the economy because of their expectations in motherhood, yet their lack of available services due to their race or socioeconomic status. Chisholm believed that the civil rights started in the American welfare state, one that was systematically against immigrants, African Americans, and impoverished communities. Chisholm understood the national argument that the oppression of women in American society existed in all facets, she viewed them from a different perspective than Abzug and predominantly white organizations.

Although this can be seen as contradictory to the notion of women's rights, the "paradoxical" politician saw it as a strategy of political entrapment that forced politicians to acknowledge that the majority of working mothers in America were below or around the poverty-line.<sup>110</sup> While many politicians were not ignorant of the possibility the CCDA posed for women's labor and class mobility, Chisholm drove home the argument that the failure of federal welfare policies to uplift working women was due to their efforts to incentivize labor without offering practical safety nets to ensure they can work. For years, welfare advocates argued that child care was the largest of these safety nets.<sup>111</sup> Without a comprehensive child care policy all welfare legislation focused on incentivizing mothers to join the workforce would remain a waste of taxpayer money.<sup>112</sup> As an educator she

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<sup>110</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 73.

<sup>111</sup> Although this argument would first be addressed in an earlier chapter, and in the history the 1969 subcommittee hearings, Chisholm would knit pick the statement of Elizabeth Koontz, Director of Women's Bureau, to explain the failure of the Work Incentive Program (WIN) to actually get its prospected goal of women to remain employed. Many who found work in the program had to leave within a year of employment due to a lack of consistent child care services. See *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 73-4, 97-102.

<sup>112</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 73-4, 97-102.



was horrified by the social norms of custodial care which endangered thousands of children yearly which would persuade her to interpret women's rights as being the right to work and demand ethical and educational services without being confined to the welfare system.

To accomplish this, she therefore argued that women rights were dependent on universal child care being available to all women who must work first. She believed firmly that if the language of the CCDA was administered properly, then child care for all mothers would become a possibility in due time. At the time of her testimony Chisholm was timid in how she would define “universal” child care. Prioritization was the most crucial element of her argument. The budget could not be large enough for all mothers and without excluding some demographics the CCDA would not survive and be political suicide.<sup>113</sup> Chisholm viewed the order of prioritization and the slow process of accessibility to CCDA services as the only logical answer to uplifting women in society.

By 1971 it was clear that Chisholm had come to a compromise with NOW and Abzug and expanded her interpretation of “universal” care to be protective of women who have been deemed able to access child care but have been pushed out of the labor market due to the cost or availability of safe and comprehensive services. Chisholm would defend her interpretation of “universal” child care in the revised CCDA by acknowledging that it was not meant to be fair but was politically practical.

I am a very realistic person and I am going to speak exactly from where I am coming and how I see the situation. There is no question about it that day care facilities are needed for the majority of women in this country if from the standpoint that this is a service and this is an opportunity for women to develop to their fullest potential. Over and beyond that we have to talk in terms of dollars and cents. We have to talk in terms of priorities; we have to talk in terms of needs.

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<sup>113</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*, 98-99.

It seems to me that the focus must be on the poor, the working poor, the persons also that work on night shifts... that's all other categories can fall after priorities are given in these categories.<sup>114</sup>

During the first hearings in May of 1971, Abzug and Chisholm made compromises to present their written amendments. However, their individual testimony would define the cracks in the coalition and the polarity in the definitions of “universal” child care. The two politicians had to have a bill that would pass but that did not mean they advocated for the same reasons or had confidence in all they wrote. What would set Abzug and Chisholm apart from one another would therefore be their interpretation of “priority.” While both agreed to the need for poverty intervention, Abzug understood priority as the percentage of children in poverty per center while funding remains consistent to all centers nationally given their necessities. This unbiased approach at the national level was in respect to the feminist’s goal that if every woman got child care then solutions of poverty would also be addressed unbiased. Chisholm however, viewed it as complete poverty prioritization until funding can afford to offer services to upper classes. To Chisholm the concept of adhering to all women and providing universal care was to come after intervention of the child status.

### **Budget: Pay Now and Collect Later**

The original H.R. 6748 did not have an explicit budget, but rather an assumption that “such sums as may be necessary” would be provided by the Secretary.<sup>115</sup> On the other hand, S. 1512 which was recently revised before the first hearings, proposed that two billion dollars would be allocated for 1973 and work on an upward trend until

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<sup>114</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 102.

<sup>115</sup> The original wording of the CCDA under Section. 108, pages 29-30. See original wording of H.R. 6748 in *the Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 2-60.

reaching seven billion dollars by the fiscal year of 1975.<sup>116</sup> While H.R. 6748 did not have explicit numbers on the budget policymakers used the same White House studies and reports as S. 1512 and had created an assumption by all in the subcommittee that their budgets would align. The budget proposal of S. 1512 used the conservative numbers of the White House report, based on the lowest costs per child and of cost of living in the country. Many on the committee believed the budget offered in S. 1512 was worthless, but Abzug and Chisholm looked at the vague wording in H.R. 6748 as an opportunity to propose a larger budget and force the Senate to revise their bill. Abzug and Chisholm argued that even with the conservative numbers the budget in S. 1512 needed to be expanded just to cover all children under the age of five on welfare.<sup>117</sup> In order to pay for all children whose mothers worked, the budget would have to be eight billion dollars at the lowest estimate. The issue was the budget of S. 1512 does not match the vague language in the CCDA, ironic of the fact that “we are the richest Nation in the world, that we need these services desperately and that we have the capacity to pay for them if we only would.”<sup>118</sup> Their new Amendment called for five billion dollars in the CCDA first year and to follow the same scale as the senate's bill. Additionally, they rewrote section 108 to include the language of all American families with children under the age of five to be considered in the budget, in hopes that the language of their revisions would force S. 1512 to increase their estimates significantly.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> The original wording of the CCDA under Section. 108 (pg. 29-30). See original wording of H.R. 6748 in the *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 2-60.

<sup>117</sup> The reports used to define the cost per child and statistics of working women and children under the age of 5 came from the National Center of Social Statistics, and the Ways and Means Committee. See *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 72.

<sup>118</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*., 63.

<sup>119</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 63, 74.

## Rockets or Women: Abzug Testimony on the Budget

Although Abzug was focused on taking funds out of the Cold War efforts and remained hostile to the endless budget given to the Department of War and Defense. Her proposal for the increase of the CCDA budget was also a commentary for the reduction of wartime funds.

Such figures seem “unrealistic” to us only because we have learned to give human needs low budgetary priority. We spend upwards of \$70 billion a year on weapons and defense, and no one bats an eye. We pour a billion dollars into a useless white elephant like the SST, and when the plane turns out to be a dud we pour in millions more. Yet we refuse to support a program like this one—an innovative, creative program which enriches our children and liberates our women—at anything like an adequate level of funding.<sup>120</sup>

Focused on a political statement that fitted her overall aspirations in Congress, Abzug was not cooperative in her critique of federal war funds, nor the CCDA budget. Abzug found it more effective to rattle the cage of conservatives by mentioning the research of communist countries' child care efforts in comparison to the United States, pressuring the committee to accept that “we're terrorized that they might beat us in building a supersonic transport but when it comes to child care, that's something else again.”<sup>121</sup> Her attack of the American economy and admiration of the eastern Europeans social programs, fits once again into her literal interpretation of “universal” welfare. There is no doubt that her testimony on the CCDA budget allowed her to push her anti-Cold War rhetoric. Abzug was not willing to concede to political entities but rather respect the wishes of those she represented. While scrapping military research fit her agenda, so did a complete universal child care program and with the monies going towards rockets and not mothers her

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<sup>120</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 63.

<sup>121</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 63.

argument grew bitter and she demanded that politicians across the aisle “stop falling prey to the notion that because we have never had a child care program that has been universal, because we have never really given any kind of real money to a program like this, that if we now ask people will think it is preposterous.”<sup>122</sup>

### **To Fall Flat on Your Face: Chisholm Testimony on Budget**

Having worked closely for years on the “Brademas bill” and having spoken on the 1969 subcommittee and being elected to the 1971 Selective Subcommittee, Chisholm understood that the bill would fail if it did not receive a larger budget but could stall and die in the committee if it gave too large of a number. Chisholm preferred vague wording; she viewed it as a bipartisan demand for more money that avoided the complicated questions that followed monetary arguments around social welfare policies, or the “where will the money come from?”

Therefore, on the first day of hearings, Chisholm was focused on articulating an argument that an *underfunded welfare bill can never become universal, and a universal bill with no budget must start as a priority for those on welfare*.<sup>123</sup> Her goal was to expand the budget to be inclusive to all on welfare to ensure it survives the first three years of administration, but it must also have the proper language to ensure it will become universal by the end of the initial budget proposition.<sup>124</sup> In her testimony she focused on arguing that a universal child care program with a limited budget must first

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<sup>122</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 70.

<sup>123</sup> The “Freedom Budget” was a “new deal” proposed by long civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph. It included a change in federal responsibility for labor. Guaranteed works programs, unemployment, and disability, all exceeding the living wage. See Mathew Forstater, “Jobs and Freedom Now! Functional Finance, Full Employment, and the Freedom Budget,” *The Review of Black Political Economy* 39, no. 1 (2012): 63.

<sup>124</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 72, 78.

address mothers on welfare but can and will overtime, be expanded as a right to all children and parents outside the welfare state. The conservative numbers under the “Mondale bill” were a threat to that agenda, one that most members on the subcommittee understood. If the numbers were too low then at best it would be a weak welfare program offered to only a select few of impoverished communities, another Head Start if administered properly. At its worst it could create a bidding war between those close and below the poverty index.<sup>125</sup> Therefore, child care as an effective targeted welfare policy is impossible, but an underfunded universal social program is wasteful.

To her advantage, Chisholm targeted Nixon’s proposed Family Action Plan (FAP) as an example of the failure of the two-tier welfare state. Her argument centered around the concept that if child care policies are not universally accessible then they could never be successful, FAP especially.<sup>126</sup> The FAP would have been a tax subsidy for working mothers and a finite amount of federally administered centers for those well below the poverty line. Under the FAP there was no insurance to who would receive the limited spots as well as where and who would administer the child care centers.<sup>127</sup> Targeted welfare policies creates two major issues, the first being that politicians are allowed to invest in certain demographics and neglect others. This allows politicians to minimize the expense of the welfare policy.<sup>128</sup> Second, by expanding only the second tier

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<sup>125</sup> This is a concern shared not only by Chisholm, but Mink, Mondale, and Abzug and guest speakers. While many of them argued this was a problem of size and scope of prime sponsorship the solution would also need a much larger budget. This fear would be ever present in both committees and would even be used by the bill’s opposition in Congress.

<sup>126</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 72.

<sup>127</sup> Robert Lampman, “Nixon’s Family Assistance Plan,” in the *Institute for Research on Poverty* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

<sup>128</sup> Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian, *The War on Poverty: a New Grassroots History, 1964-1980*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011).; Dona C. and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda: Race and Social Welfare Policies of Civil Rights Organizations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

of welfare it would limit the accessibility of child care to those who were barely above the poverty index and could not afford child care services, thus perpetuating the stereotype of desperate mothers forced out of the labor market as “lazy bums on the welfare roll.”<sup>129</sup> Chisholm was well aware of the FAP intended lack of allocated money for physical child care services which was packaged into distractive daycare subsidies. Her angst against the FAP was simple and widely supported by Democrats who argued that to hand money to a mother who has no private and non-profit child care options in their community was offensive to the fact that “unless we have a massive appropriation for daycare, the Family Assistance Plan is going to fall flat on its face.”<sup>130</sup>

Chisholm’s budget proposal was centered around appealing to moderate Democrats and the failures of the American welfare state; create a program that ensures all mothers will *eventually* be entitled to child care, while initially protecting the necessities of those on welfare. By expanding the budget in the initial year from two billion dollars under S. 1512, to the moderate five billion dollars would allow the bill to reach more working mothers, but only those still dependent on welfare. Chisholm's plan was that by 1975 with a five billion dollar budget, it would steadily grow to be ten billion dollars and begin eligibility for mothers who are not under welfare. Thus, monetarily, Chisholm viewed universal child care as one that would take time.

However, Chisholm herself was not pleased with the numerical value placed in her Amendment. Like the argument used by Abzug, she found that relying on the most conservative statistics was a sacrifice for comprehensive childcare. As an educator she

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<sup>129</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 73, 99-101.

<sup>130</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 73.

was horrified by the social norms of custodial care which endangered thousands of children yearly and argued that the budget could not provide comprehensive and educational standardization was inadequate. Instead of arguing against Cold War expenditures, Chisholm was more concerned over the wallet of other federal expenditures within the United States, interstate infrastructure especially. While Chisholm's budget limitations was a strategic compromise to win votes and appeal to the wishes of her own party, she argued that to rely on bare minimum numbers set a precedent of centers to cut corners and withhold community necessities to survive each fiscal year, all while roads underwent the largest rejuvenation since the Eisenhower presidency.<sup>131</sup> Instead of targeting the popular effort of the arms race and Cold War rhetoric, Chisholm criticized the race to build overpasses, mega highways, and HOV lanes.

There is something which ought to be considered when we discuss funding; \$1,600, the cost per child, per year, is roughly equivalent to the cost of one foot of Federal Highway. Congress must decide which is more important, the foot of the highway or the child.<sup>132</sup>

However, frustrated with the federal expenses, she was not willing to jeopardize the CCDA to prove her point. Her goal to reorganize the welfare state for children did not surpass her efforts to construct a policy that would be favored across the aisles. She remained confident in her amendment's ability to pass as moderate and her argument to challenge the moral high ground of any opposition. Unlike Abzug, Chisholm was not prepared to hand Americans universal child care instantly, but instead gradually.

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<sup>131</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 74. Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 252-7.

<sup>132</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 74.



## The Budgetary Compromise

Chisholm, like many of the other sponsors, had spent years fighting the uphill battle to find enough money in the federal budget to afford comprehensive universal programs. By 1971, they understood that it was not possible on paper and would need to come at a cost. Chisholm supported the compromise that universal child care would have to come slowly, giving priority of the budget to poor mothers and setting an imbalanced scale to meet the needs of those under the standard of living. Abzug was then forced to decide her stance on the new Amendments. Stand with Chisholm or stand her ground and fight for the implementation of the program universally.<sup>133</sup> Abzug had in less than one term already isolated herself from even the most moderate Democrats and knew that this decision had to be made to coherently argue for a larger budget.

When the time came to make the decision, Abzug trusted her allies who sat across from her on the subcommittee floor and argued for poor prioritization starting at 65 percent of the entire yearly budget. She put her faith in Chisholm that universal child care was guaranteed in writing but would not be accessible to all until the following decade. Although this contradicts her belief of universal child care for all mothers to pursue work and education for the first three years the CCDA would be administered, on the first day she spoke about her belief that by making the CCDA initial fiscal years fit into the typical welfare policy of the Great Society, it would allow them to practically argue for more funding and foremost get it passed through Congress quickly.<sup>134</sup> It took sponsors in the

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<sup>133</sup> Dinner, "The Universal Childcare Debate," 611-3.

<sup>134</sup> This is clear by the difference in the written testimony by Abzug and her spoken hearings. The minute changes pertain to her use of what she left out of her public hearings that were included in her written testimony. Abzug at first skipped over the poverty directive but would return to it. As if by a change of heart she wished to include the argument of sustaining the CCDA as a permanent policy.

selective committee four years to make that agreement and only a few months for Abzug to understand why. As Brademas, who worked closely with women legislators, summarized in his final statements to Abzug, “If we could get away with getting that kind of money authorized and something in that order of magnitude appropriated, I would be a very happy man. So in that respect I think it is a matter of what we think we can sell to our colleagues.”<sup>135</sup>

### **The True Priority: Winning Votes or Rights?**

Directing the room with her presence and her knowledge, Representative Chisholm controlled the first day of hearings in the Selective Subcommittee on Youth, both as a member and as a guest speaker. After the first day of testimonies ended it seemed as though Chisholm had asked and answered all of the questions and ultimately justified her revision of the CCDA by herself. She and Abzug set the stage for how, in the most conservative definition of “radical”, future speakers on the CDA could politically define “universal” child care. At the end of the first day the politicians of the CCDA, divided on their own morals and agenda, worked together under cooperation, and at times coercion, that to get what they all wanted they first needed to win votes. Unlike the leaders of the coalition, they were the lobbyists and the politicians. No matter their opinions they needed to walk the tightrope of what was right and what would reach Nixon's desk.

To Chisholm the decision was not difficult. She was calculated in her language of how welfare would be forever changed by universal childcare, only breaking character when forced by the committee. The committee's questionnaire, filled with many of the

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<sup>135</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 69.

colleagues who had spent the last four years working with her on the CCDA asked her how she could define the role of “universal child care in the welfare system?” Simply put Chisholm clearly asserted that “broadly, I have to say that we cannot talk about any kind of reorganization or restructuring of the welfare plan in this country unless we bring out the interrelationship between said plan and child care services.”<sup>136</sup>

Brademas boldly asserted that Abzug and Chisholm had set the stage for the ad hoc coalition and other speakers to return to their constituents and spread the word.<sup>137</sup> However, to members of the ad hoc coalition, the stage was no longer in their community centers or backyards, it was in Washington D.C. For years these grassroots and national organizations worked tirelessly to build a child care program for their neighborhood but lacked the jurisdiction and money. These organizations already had unitary support in their communities and saw it wasteful of their manpower to start another grassroots campaign. Instead, the leaders of these organizations found it more valuable to bring the fight to Washington and stake their claim to the CCDA. When given the opportunity they pushed for more radical amendments, often undermining the rights of other organizations to prove their definition of “universal.” However, united under one coalition they would, in the end, come together, each forced to make large sacrifices, under the notion that if failed to do so, the CCDA would never make it to Congress.

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<sup>136</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 101.

<sup>137</sup> *Comprehensive child development act of 1971*. 213.

### 3 “Ironing Out the Difficulties”: The Ad Hoc Coalition of the CDA

I am encouraged by and deeply appreciative of the efforts of a broad based coalition of child development and education groups, civil rights and community organizations, labor unions, mayors, church groups, women's organizations, blacks, Indians, Chicanos and citizens groups, middle class and poor, who have put aside narrow organizational concerns in the interest of children, families, and the nation's future. They and I are determined to do whatever is required to help this Congress pass comprehensive child care legislation this session.<sup>138</sup>

The failure of H.R. 13520 to pass in 1969 sent a message that public support of a child care policy needed to have a shared consensus of interest. Politicians of H.R. 13520, Patsy Mink, John Brademas, Jacob Javits, and Walter Mondale understood that if their new policies were to succeed, they needed to convince most of the country that the child care crisis affected the entire nation, not just families with young children. The new strategy for publicity was partly funded by social activists' committees but also federal departments such as the department of Health Education and Welfare and the Office of Economic Opportunity who funded college research and published reports.<sup>139</sup> Newspapers followed suit and cited these reports and concluded that Congress was working on a policy which generated a boost in public sentiment for child care by the start of 1971. After the subcommittee hearings ended in mid-June, the CDA was a hot

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<sup>138</sup> Marian W. Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman before the Joint Hearings of the Senate Subcommittees on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, and on Children and Youth,” (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Office), May 1971. 1.

<sup>139</sup> One of the most influential case study reports funded by government departments AND outside organizations would be the OEO and AFL-CIO was “the Rolls-Royce of Child Care.” The report was to create the most “comprehensive” service in Chicago and evaluate the cost and effectiveness of each on child development. See *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 1971. 471- 508.

topic that experienced “spontaneous combustion” with the surge in media coverage which planted the CDA in almost every major newspaper and media outlet.<sup>140</sup>

### **Senates Child Development Act S. 1512**

On April 6, 1971, Walter Mondale introduced the Senate's Child Development Act S. 1512. The CDA followed the proposal of the House's Comprehensive Child Development Act (CCDA) but was more favorable among all Americans.

Overshadowing the CCDA, S. 1512 attracted hundreds of social activist organizations to Washington, D.C., to support the Senate's bill which was boosted by the recent hearings on the Chisholm and Abzug amendments. The newly united ad hoc coalition came to the CDA hearings with clear objective goals to push for a revised CDA that will pass.

Interviews, op-eds, leafleting, public speeches, policy reports, and other efforts taken by members of the ad hoc coalition and their respected organizations boosted the CDA, but in some instances feminist leaders hurt public support due to their organizations main objective or public perception. By the Spring of 1971 the ad hoc coalition had come to a convoluted consensus on what the CDA needed to be to provide all Americans universal child care. They all agreed that the Chisholm and Abzug amendments were the best backbone of their support and with few changes a consensus and coalition was formed.

This chapter will discuss the complicated relationship of agenda among four of the most influential organizations of the ad hoc coalition, specifically the leaders who represented the four organizations on welfare, civil rights, and feminist rights. Marian Wright Edelman of the Washington Research Project Council and unspoken leader of the

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<sup>140</sup> For Mondale's comment see Jack Rosenthal, “Vast Plan for Health, Educational and Social Service to Children Gains in Congress.” *New York Times* (New York: NY) June 14 1971. 22.

coalition, Jane Galvin Lewis who spoke on behalf of the National Council of Negro Women's (NCNW) president Dorothy I. Height, Cecilia Suárez and Dr. Leonard Mestas for Chicano and Migrant civil rights, and Vicki Lathom who headed the Child Care Task Force for the National Organization of Women (NOW). While the ad hoc coalition was composed of twenty-three organizations, attention to these four organizations provides enough evidence in their influence on the Child Development Act (CDA) and later Nixon's veto. This chapter is centered around the agenda of these organizations and focuses on their shared objectives and different goals for universal child care. The shared goals surfaced when leaders testified in the Senate's subcommittee on Children and Youth as many of them used the same terminology and language to define their shared stake in universal child care. Use of literature presented by these organizations offers better insight and justification to its cooperation and how they built support within their organizations and constituents for child care. In the early stages of the CDA, the coalition shared interest in expanding the budget with poverty prioritization, socioeconomic and racial integration, protecting community or parental control of centers, and protection of existing programs from being dissolved or absorbed into the CDA. However, these vague goals each had different interpretations that varied as many organizations never shared an interpretation of the CDA.

### **Ironing Out the Difficulties: Edelman and the Coalitions Message**

Marian Wright Edelman became the leader of the Ad Hoc Coalition on Child Care by simply mailing letters, as many as she possibly could, to every single organization who had interests in federal child care policy. At first, many organizations dismissed Edelman's olive branch and had little interest in supporting another federal

“work requirement” policy under the Nixon Administration. But in her effort to cast as wide of a net, Edelman discovered that a majority of labor and women organizations were in the same works to construct a policy that moved out of “work requirement” welfare and agreed to meet with Edelman and other organizations to lobby in Congress.<sup>141</sup> In their first meeting, Edelman remarked that the crowded room was full of excitement and hostility, as leaders refused to substitute their stake for another. However, after a dozen sessions, the ad hoc coalition had come to a firm agreement on five issues “delivery systems, eligibility criteria, priorities for services, roles for parents, and funding levels.”<sup>142</sup> The coalition quickly formed their alliance and submitted their work with “key congressmen” who quickly validated and pushed their agenda to the front of the CDA.

Edelman testified before the subcommittee and made it clear that all social activist organizations in the coalition supported policies of federal child care since the 1960s and after the failure of H.R. 13520 to pass, “I have never seen as much interest among private organizations, and I think it is fantastic the number of groups that have come together and have *ironed out their difficulties* to get behind a bill which hopefully will get through the Congress.”<sup>143</sup> Edelman promised that her testimony was proof that the coalition was united in the sole objective of ensuring the CDA passage and work to make the national policy effective at all levels. The process of aligning each organization's objectives was a difficult task that produced a dense testimony, but that did not affect Edelman who weaved the major points of the coalition into her welfare argument, only referring to her

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<sup>141</sup> Rochelle Beck and John Butler, "An Interview with Marian Wright Edelman," *Harvard Educational Review* 44:1 (February 1974): 68-9.

<sup>142</sup> Rochelle Beck and John Butler, "An Interview with Marian Wright Edelman," *Harvard Educational Review* 44:1 (February 1974): 68-9.

<sup>143</sup> Italics added by author. *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 521.

complaints as ones of the coalition. For example, if welfare organizations did not approve of the voucher system, Edelman made it clear why women and migrant leaders disapproved of the voucher system.<sup>144</sup> Her argument was careful of its language, and she was mindful of her responsibility as a leader to all leaders.

Edelman's written testimony was twice as long as her hearing and made it clear that the ad hoc coalition was united around passing any comprehensive child care as all members saw it morally, nationally, politically, and practically necessary in modern society.<sup>145</sup> Breaking down these four justifications Edelman pressured Congress to accept their neglect of the promises to provide all Americans equal opportunity, incentivized moderate politicians to gain favor in their states from one of the largest demographics — mothers — and gave ample evidence to the historical failures of child welfare policies after World War II.<sup>146</sup> All members of the coalition believed that the CDA had the ability to change the lives of millions and secure women and welfare recipients place in labor, but the bill was far from perfect and Edelman took responsibility of outlining its core issues; expand the budget, remove state rights of sponsorship for empowerment of parents and communities, and protect low-income families.<sup>147</sup> These issues agreed upon

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<sup>144</sup> The voucher system was an amendment that would allow families to request an individual sum of money from federal grants for private child care services based on the family's income level and choice of services. This was originally proposed in H.R. 13520 and was unfavored by civil rights and welfare leaders who saw it as an impractical solution to the lack of child care services. *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 530.

<sup>145</sup> Marian W. Edelman, "Statement of Marian Wright Edelman before the Joint Hearings of the Senate Subcommittees on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, and on Children and Youth," (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Office), May 1971. 2.

<sup>146</sup> Marian W. Edelman, "Statement of Marian Wright Edelman before the Joint Hearings of the Senate Subcommittees on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, and on Children and Youth," (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Office), May 1971. 2.

<sup>147</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 521.



by the coalition and expressed by Edelman were almost identical to the arguments of Representatives Shirley Chisholm and Bella Abzug a month prior. However, each organization had a different stake in these amendments or an entirely different opinion on these changes. For Edelman, the expansion of the budget was not just a matter of prioritization, but also providing fair opportunities of employment.

## **Budget**

In the House subcommittee on Education, Representatives Abzug and Chisholm argued that the budget trajectory was too small to realistically promise all families universal care. The two had different solutions with the budget, each one supported by their respective interpretations of universal child care. Abzug, a member of National Organization of Women (NOW), was determined to prove that only a larger budget could ensure universal care. NOW and Abzug came to a fragile agreement on poverty prioritization with welfare leaders and Chisholm, where after its first three years comprehensive programs would become widely available to people above the low-income index. This agreement inspired women, supportive of instantaneous universal care, to put their faith in gradual inclusion of all socioeconomic classes into programs.

In respecting the goals of women and child organizations, Edelman used the same rhetoric as Chisholm a month prior, in defending the CDA objective goal of universal services but its priority in protecting impoverished children first. Mirroring the language of the Abzug and Chisholm amendment, Edelman and the coalition supported the “65/35” split in fund prioritization and she made it clear that the move to expand the parameters of “economically disadvantaged” to be inclusive of working-poor families

was a small step in proving its determination to expand services more universally.<sup>148</sup> If the CDA was to deliver all of its objective goals “then we must be prepared to make the kind of financial commitment necessary to go beyond tokenism and promises.”<sup>149</sup> Using the resources of the coalition Edelman added nuances to the argument made by moderate politicians that a larger budget would be pointless without more professional and trained personnel. Therefore, a larger budget would only make sense after the first three years of enactment of the CDA. Rejecting this argument, Edelman proved that various organizations within the coalition already had trained personnel in their centers and training programs were created under Head Start and have been continually taking in new educators since 1965. This proved that thousands of young adults and mothers wanted to work in child care centers.<sup>150</sup> To Edelman and many who participated in Head Start programs, the CDA was one of the largest work programs to come out of child care legislation, promising employment opportunities to now working-poor families and mothers across the country and not just in poor regions.<sup>151</sup> While academics and politicians such as Jules M. Sugarman argued that training and professional employees was limited in its current state, Edelman stated the CDA amendment to fund only training and construction of centers will only surge the number of professionals by its third year to resolve the issue. Therefore, Edelman provided countless data to prove that without adequate funding during the first three years and not after, centers would not be able to

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<sup>148</sup> Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman,” 12-3.

<sup>149</sup> Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman,” 13.

<sup>150</sup> Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman,” 15.

<sup>151</sup> Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman,” 15-6.

fulfill these opportunities and will be ineffective by the time of its review. In the end, Edelman supported the fragile Abzug and Chisholm amendments.

### **“Not Another Broken Promise”: Civil Rights in the Coalition**

Only a finite number of civil rights organizations represented large populations of America, those being the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) for African American civil rights and the Mexican American System (MSA) for leaders of Chicano and Migrant civil rights. However, Black welfare organizations, such as the Black Child Development Institute (BCDI), were given substantial opportunities to discuss the CDA creating a link between antipoverty and civil rights leaders. This was not a deliberate effort as many of the objective goals of these welfare organizations viewed uplifting Black recipients as a means of achieving civil and material liberty for African Americans.<sup>152</sup> In terms of the CDA, all groups were united under the coalition and most discussed their shared stake. However, not all civil rights groups shared similar stakes in the CDA, and these differences were not separate from race and civil rights activism, but also more deliberate inclusion in the bill’s language.

### **National Council of Negro Women**

Speaking on behalf of the NCNW President Dorothy I. Height, Jane Galvin Lewis read a prepared statement and never went off script until questions were presented to her.<sup>153</sup> The NCNW was the largest of the African American civil rights organizations to speak in support of the CDA, and their political influence on the bill was noticeable in the

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<sup>152</sup> Dona C. and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda*.

<sup>153</sup> In my research and use of over 2 dozen testimonies on the CCDA and CDA, I have found that the average spoken testimony prior to questionnaires was about 7-9 pages. The entire NCNW testimony was five pages. See *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. I-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 471- 508.

final language. Speakers for the BCDI and MSA targeted specific areas of the CDA that needed improvement or inclusion of their constituents, but the NCNW gave a broad stroke of the entire bill handing out critiques, compliments, and practical additions to the subcommittee. Lewis noted two of the most critical issues of the CDA in just two sentences of Height's statement

We hope the concept of economic mix expressed in S. 1512 will be retained because all people, and especially children, gain when exposed to a variety of experiences and life styles. But we also encourage and recognize the need for a priority to be given to the poor and working head of the family who is in training.<sup>154</sup>

With over four million members nationally divided among 125 local sections in forty states, the NCNW did not provide testimony on their stake in the CDA, rather they testified to support its potential to expand their own services. The brevity of the NCNW testimony demonstrates how the NCNW viewed the CDA in relation to their own child care program and services, a focal point of the organization for over fourteen years. Since the end of the Second World War the NCNW had undergone a massive effort to create, fund, and lobby for child care centers. Over a decade prior, the NCNW created a diverse network of child care centers, from multiple state funded centers in New York city to completely private centers in Mississippi. Their programs were considered abnormal over how they controlled them, completely removed from administration at the national level, they played a passive role to support regional programs who had constructed the centers to their necessities.<sup>155</sup> Height's remarks that the CDA for the NCNW at both the national and regional level was a crucial expansion of their own efforts to provide comprehensive

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<sup>154</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 363.

<sup>155</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 361.

care to communities in need. The NCNW testimony was brief because members of the subcommittee valued the NCNW experience in providing child care for regional services, as Representative Richard Schweiker pointed out in questioning Lewis, “What key ingredients do you think are the most important to secure the success, of say, a national program?”<sup>156</sup>

The political power of the NCNW meant that their criticism and critiques of parental engagement and types of services funded by the CDA were reflected in the final draft of the bill even if it was not shared by most members of the coalition.<sup>157</sup> Parental involvement was at the core of the NCNW testimony as it encompassed community participation in administration, training of community members for child care, employment opportunities outside of centers, and types of services provided for at-home care. The notion that most positions in regional administration and policy councils be held by parents and community leaders was shared by all organizations within the ad hoc coalition. However, the NCNW took it one step further to say that HEW, who would approve and administer funds for programs, could not approve applications until “local policy councils” approved the application.<sup>158</sup> Lewis justified community authority by remarking that previous anti-poverty policies have underestimated or secluded parental involvement, commonly leaving them in the dark about administrative changes.

The stress we place on community participation relates directly to our tremendous investment in the black community. We must assure this community that S. 1512 will not be another *broken promise*. We must further give assurance that this bill will not birth programs that once again insult the ability of black people to plan

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<sup>156</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 363.

<sup>157</sup> The final bill placed on the vote in October added or revised all sections asked on by the NCNW.

<sup>158</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 362.

for themselves. We must assure this community that their leadership and skills will be utilized for their gain and they will earn and spend their tax dollar.<sup>159</sup>

## Vouchers

In her final remark on the CDA, Lewis confused members of the Subcommittee and even ad hoc coalition when she took a tangent to support a voucher system in the CDA. The voucher system would give money directly to parents to pay for traditional and nontraditional services. While Senator Mondale and the dozens of cosponsors of the bill, mostly in education, avoided the arguments for a voucher system, Lewis associated it with the CDA promise to fund “noncentered” or in-home child care.<sup>160</sup> Contradictive to her argument, Lewis supported the recent scholarship which suggested that communal centers were the most effective option for comprehensive services and disapproved of the voucher system. But to the NCNW, vouchers were important for a small number of mothers who did not want or could not work with centers due to obligations of the family or work. Vouchers were only to ensure that the best option for all families and their children were being met. The NCNW asked the subcommittee to provide separate funding or more lenient requirements for applications to allow for funding of individual or small in-home child care services.

This was a shock to members of the coalition, specifically Edelman, who repeatedly favored the amendment to remove language of “noncentered” which allowed the claim for vouchers. To Edelman, “What good are vouchers going to do if the facilities

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<sup>159</sup> Italics added by author. *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 362.

<sup>160</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 363.

are not there?”<sup>161</sup> The NCNW commitment to supporting the individual needs of each family was not a radical stance. Congress contemplated the voucher system in H.R. 13520 and women rights organizations supported 24-hour child care to support nontraditional labor and education. Advocates for children with disabilities won rights in the CDA that required all communities to include separate provisions for disabled children in their proposals to receive funding and the HEW controlled an exclusive portion dedicated to handicap and intellectual disabilities that could not be met in centers.<sup>162</sup> NCNW was on the minority of the coalition in support for vouchers as many agreed that optional expenses in the budget only weaken program’s fiscal ability that would be used by the majority of Americans and support centers that could legally segregate and exclude certain children.<sup>163</sup> Still, the NCNW respected mothers' rights of independence and empowerment of options.

While the NCNW kept their testimony straight to the point under Lewis, they made it clear that they supported the CDA and the coalition entirely. They gave praise to its efforts to prioritize low-income children and to give community control to the smallest populations possible. The CDA to Lewis was reflective of their own efforts to provide services such as day care but ensured that “comprehensive” would not undermine child development just because it is a free or federal service. In opening her statement Lewis made it clear that, “we recognize that an individual's ability to take advantage of the

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<sup>161</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 258-230.

<sup>162</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007*, 82.

<sup>163</sup> “Donations” were a system used in private childcare to exclude children of color and poor-working families from the voucher system. In their final hearing, HEW noted that their disapproval of the voucher system was due to private centers' rights to also ask for “donations” to gain acceptance in the center. See testimony of Elliot L. Richardson, Secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., June 15, 1971.

opportunities of this land are contingent on the experiences and care received in his childhood and youth.”

## Chicano and Organizations

Dr. Suárez and Dr. Mestas, the only two speakers for the Chicano movement, had a heavy burden to make their testimony hold as much weight as others civil rights groups who were given more time and reference in the Subcommittee hearings. Both speakers emphasized the shared objectives of community control and parental engagement as being the backbone to Chicano and migrant inclusion. Symbolically, the inclusion of Chicano leaders was a mixed message by the subcommittee and their efforts to provide universal and comprehensive services to the Chicano and Latin American community. Only one testimony slot out of twelve-days worth of testimony was given to representatives of this civil rights movement. Only two leaders, Dr. Cecilia Suárez of Chicano Cultural Center at UCLA, and Dr. Leonard Mestas of the Colorado Migrant Council, were given a single slot to split between them on behalf of all Chicano leaders, scholars, and organizations. They had been given that privilege for their work in the MSA, which Suárez defined as being “an advisory committee to the Office of Child Development on child development programs for the Chicano child.”<sup>164</sup> No other leaders of the Chicano movement spoke in the Senate or House subcommittee on either proposed child care legislation, but that does not mean politicians were not interested. Mondale in fact was more enthusiastic to work with Dr. Suárez and Dr. Mestas than any of the other civil rights organizations, asking Dr. Mestas “if you will talk to Mr. Sidney Johnson my

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<sup>164</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 351.



assistant, we will see that it is done properly, if it's not done now."<sup>165</sup> Yet Chicano leaders were given the least amount of opportunities to speak on behalf of their constituents. Scarcity of time in testimony affected the tone of these leaders who viewed the Chicano stake in the CDA as being essential. Dr. Suárez and Dr. Mestas viewed their testimony as an opportunity to redirect the culturally oppressive state of American education which segregated Chicano children to classes in the basements of schools, or what Dr. Suárez defined as the American "Chauvinistic Problem".<sup>166</sup> This issue was so substantial to Chicano civil rights that much of Dr. Suárez's testimony rested on her defending the notion that "the teaching of English and the repression of Spanish has many sociological and psychological implications."<sup>167</sup>

The history of bilingual activism in education did not begin with the Chicano movement and its history dates to the start of the century and involves some of the earliest Mexican American civil rights organizations of the Southwest. Activists fought against the systemic racism of IQ testing and the refusal to recognize Chicano children in their own appropriate demographic, limiting accessibility to necessary educational equity. Historians have given ample evidence of the national movements by middle-class advocacy for bilingual education and others have focused on women's activism and elite organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) to both

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<sup>165</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 356.

<sup>166</sup> The "Chauvinistic Problem" was defined by Suárez as the American education system to label a child disadvantaged if his culture is different and if he speaks a language other than English. *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 353-4.; Carlos K. Blanton, "From Intellectual Deficiency to Cultural Deficiency: Mexican Americans, Testing, and Public School Policy in the American Southwest, 1920–1940." *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (2003): 39–62.

<sup>167</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512 : Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 352.

include bilingual education and desegregated schools. Historians such as Guadalupe San Miguel and Carlos K. Blanton have argued that while societal racism created unequal segregation in education throughout the Southwest, the national faith placed in racist intelligence test had continually denied Chicano children fair education after desegregation.<sup>168</sup> Blanton argued that the popularity of IQ tests came from the rise in eugenic sentiments and that the inability of Chicano students to test well in English-only assessments as evidence of racist stereotypes of hereditary inferiority.<sup>169</sup> San Miguel argued that it was a shared belief by many that allowed public schools to segregate education along the language barrier which until the 1940s was not considered the cause of low test scores.<sup>170</sup> However, after World War II, when eugenics was no longer acceptable publicly, promoters of the IQ test cited environmental factors such as poverty, homelife, language, and culture, to be the causation of Chicano low-test scores. This change to deny racist stereotypes, bred new stereotypes to the lives of Chicano families and forced children into “special classes” segregated from the rest of the school and course curriculum. Both Blanton and San Miguel conclude that while IQ testing became less racist it was still enforced in schools to keep Chicano children out of the equal education and never addressed the “language handicap,” even after *Brown v. Board*.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Carlos K. Blanton, “From Intellectual Deficiency to Cultural Deficiency: Mexican Americans, Testing, and Public School Policy in the American Southwest, 1920–1940.” *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (2003): 39–62.; San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).; Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: the Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009).

<sup>169</sup> Carlos K. Blanton, “From Intellectual Deficiency to Cultural Deficiency: Mexican Americans, Testing, and Public School Policy in the American Southwest, 1920–1940.” *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (2003): 41–4.

<sup>170</sup> San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).

<sup>171</sup> Carlos K. Blanton, “From Intellectual Deficiency to Cultural Deficiency: Mexican Americans, Testing, and Public School Policy in the American Southwest, 1920–1940.” *Pacific Historical Review* 72,

By the 1960's IQ testing was seen as reference for intervention of all children, but Chicano students were lumped into the same racial demographic as white children regardless. Spanish-primary speakers were not recognized, and state politicians treated English education as an issue to be resolved in the home and supported in school.<sup>172</sup> Those who did not have the access or ability to learn English at home remained in "special classes" for their entire academic careers. The inclusion of bilingual education saw administrative resistance and was neglected in integration as it called for equity in a time where only equality was being offered. Texas politicians masked racist rhetoric with fiscal arguments that there was no available budget to afford new programs and training.<sup>173</sup> Societal racism segregated communities of Chicanos across the country and with opposition against the integration of busing and socioeconomic schools, Chicano demand of bilingual education was never respected to the demands of others, ones that required less commitment by the government. After decades of only being offered the bare minimum of equality and treated as second class white citizens, the start of the 1970s saw pockets of social activism by Chicano citizens throughout the Southwest as many demanded cultural recognitions as well as educational equity for students to be bilingual and bicultural.<sup>174</sup>

The inclusion of bilingual and bicultural in the education system was so important to Chicano civil rights that Dr. Suárez did not come to Washington to speak only on the

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no. 1 (2003): 53, 62.; San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).

<sup>172</sup> San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).

<sup>173</sup> San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).

<sup>174</sup> San Guadalupe Miguel, *Brown, Not White School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), xi-xiv.

CDA. She later represented the MSA in speaking on the entire American education system in her two-week long trip.<sup>175</sup> The heart of Dr. Suárez agenda rested on building an expansive bilingual and bicultural educational program across the country and having students learn their family's primary language first and then introduce them to English in order to succeed. Frustrated, she argued that because of English-only testing and curriculums, millions of minority children are excluded from higher learning.<sup>176</sup> IQ tests, primary school courses, and even preschool programs lacked bilingual educators and in return categorized Chicano children as being intellectually disabled when compared to European Americans.<sup>177</sup> Dr. Suárez asked the subcommittee to view the average Chicano child experience who faces an impossible task at an early age when they are responsible for learning US history, English literature, and the sciences, while simultaneously learning the English language.

The necessity of bilingual and bicultural education in preschool, separated the Chicano movements from all other civil rights organizations. Matters of integration carried a different meaning for Chicano activists as it was expected to mean the removal of Hispanic culture for assimilation into white American standards, one that still carried second class citizenship.<sup>178</sup> Spanish was a crucial part of Chicano culture and assimilation

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<sup>175</sup> Suárez testified that the average Chicano child is likely to drop out of school after only completing 7.1 years while white children are likely to complete 12.1, and African American 9.1. See *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 352.

<sup>176</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 353.

<sup>177</sup> Suárez testified that the average Chicano child is likely to drop out of school after only completing 7.1 years while white children are likely to complete 12.1, and African American 9.1. See *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 352-3.

<sup>178</sup> Cathleen Cahill, *Recasting the Vote: How Women of Color Transformed the Suffrage Movement*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2020).

was not an accepted form of integration, a unique idea in civil rights that separated Chicano from African American and welfare organizations.<sup>179</sup> Unlike African American and welfare civil rights organizations, Dr. Suárez critiques on the CDA were substantial to ensure that Chicano children were not given “cold custodial” care in the same facility that African American children were receiving exceptional services due to the majority shared culture and language. The issue was that bilingual and bicultural training was not happening at the necessary scale at the university and professional-training level in most areas of the country with substantial Chicano population. While Dr. Suárez was proud of her work at UCLA and the work of Dr. Palomares and Dr. Pantoja who created bilingual college programs for educators, there was not enough to provide for the huge demand the CDA required.<sup>180</sup> Both Mondale and Dr. Suárez came to terms with the even more daunting fact that all current and expensive educational programs from Head Start to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) have never provided funding specifically for bilingual training and centers, let alone accepted the need for bicultural educators. Unmoved by the obstacle of training and implementation, Dr. Suárez outlined all necessary steps to provide equality in services which meant bilingual training must be provided to the Chicano and other non-English-language communities if the CDA would live up to their promise of both “comprehensive” and “universal” and that “today these centers should not only emphasize a child development approach but a bilingual, bicultural approach for a Chicano child.”<sup>181</sup> Dr. Suárez was passionate about her

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<sup>179</sup> Cahill, *Recasting the Vote*.

<sup>180</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 358-9.

<sup>181</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 353-5.

testimony on the inadequate measures in the past to provide bilingual services to Chicano children and her tone and demands were evocative to members of the committee who knew the cruelty of the education system to these children. Mondale even interjected in the questionnaire to shed light on the exploitative nature of the American “Chauvinistic Problem.”

In some States, the school system gets a couple of hundred extra bucks per pupil if they find they are slow or retarded. So it's nice- and financially rewarding- to take a bunch of Chicano children, put them in slow classes, and get a nice check from the State.<sup>182</sup>

While Mondale was willing to point out the failure of the ESEA and public school system to protect Chicano children, he seemed to miss the point of Dr. Suárez’s argument that this neglect could easily happen in the CDA if not protected in the bill’s language. Dr. Suárez addressed Mondale’s enthusiasm by reminding the Subcommittee that – like the public school system – local programs could abuse the safety and education of Chicano children just to enlarge their budget.<sup>183</sup> While Dr. Suárez testimony hoped to redirect the focus of education on Chicano children to start bilingual earlier in a child development, the persistent fear of neglect remained after a long history and abundance of evidence proved that racist practices in education had monetary incentives. Before ending her testimony, Dr. Suárez, reminded the committee that while America had come to acknowledge the Chicano population socially, they have not culturally and it is reflective in the education system, the CDA with its efforts of empowering communities has a chance to empower Chicano culturally and politically. Chicano can demand the

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<sup>182</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 357.

<sup>183</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 357.

rights to their children from the board room and no longer from the streets, but Congress must protect them.

Dr. Leonard Mestas represented a different demographic of the Chicano community; migrant families and children. While Mondale and the subcommittee were verbally sympathetic to create legislation that provides equity to Chicano children and to Mondale — redirect the public education system entirely — Chicano and other migrant children of color were seen by all involved as the most at-risk from their communal and societal ostracization, especially in providing protection in community programs. Dr. Mestas' testimony reported the failure of Head Start and the ESEA to provide adequate funds to protect migrant children. This was a serious issue as in 1969 only 1 percent of 700,000 migrant children were given child care even at the custodial level, and the number Dr. Mestas argued likely decreased by 1971.<sup>184</sup> The most obvious demand for migrant children was the need for more adequate funding and to not rely on ESEA. The issue of funding was also a problem of federal categorization of migrant children outside of the ESEA, where most often migrant families are deemed recipients of public assistance and therefore should be given the same prioritization and services of welfare recipients. Dr. Mestas mocked this problem of categorization where “the migrant people are not welfare recipients, because if they were, they would not be migrants.”<sup>185</sup> Dr. Mestas' point was that migrant workers were valuable assets to the American economy at

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<sup>184</sup> The number of migrant children provided by Mestas is not accurate. While 700,000 is the number provided by the HEW is the closest, they have, Mestas, Mondale, and Rep. Richard Schweiker, all agrees it is a low estimation. *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 355-6.

<sup>185</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 356.

all levels and the lack of acknowledgement only perpetuated what Chicano leaders viewed as a justification to underfund educational programs.

Dr. Mestas was frustrated with the lack of funds but did not focus on expanding the budget to construct separate programs for migrant children, rather he strategically aligned his agenda with the shared objectives of the ad hoc coalition— more specifically, the integration of all children along race and socioeconomic backgrounds.<sup>186</sup> The draft of the CDA presented in the subcommittee hearings reserved funds for “mobile childcare centers” for migrant children, similar to provisions made under the ESEA but with a heftier sum of money. While Mondale and policymakers were pleased with this social inclusion of migrant children, Dr. Mestas pointed out that, “We have commented on funds are provided for year-round mobile programs for migrant children, and, sir, that is wrong, because that just continues to *segregate* the migrant children and not require that to be a part of the comprehensive planning.”<sup>187</sup> By aligning migrant children issues with the coalition effort to enforce integration, Dr. Mestas' argument on the contradiction of inclusion in the CDA allowed for a clear argument that offered financial and educational protection of migrant-children. Required integration of Chicano and more specifically all migrant-children meant that communities would not be divided over fiscal percentages of funds at the local level. Civil rights believed they were avoiding this issue of community control prioritization that could diminish migrant children by creating a separate system of funding, even creating mobile services specifically for them, but it could follow the

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<sup>186</sup> Marian W. Edelman, “Statement of Marian Wright Edelman before the Joint Hearings of the Senate Subcommittees on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, and on Children and Youth,” (District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print Office), May 1971.

<sup>186</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 356.

<sup>187</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 356.



same pattern as the ESEA and stretch out funds nationally making migrant programs ineffective at the local level compared to community created centers. However, without recognizing the specific risk migrant families face, communities could purposefully underfund services to adhere to other issues deemed more important. Dr. Mestas addressed the benefits of separate federal funds for Chicano children that allow communities to include migrant services proposals and centers to receive increased funding.<sup>188</sup> By allowing communities to receive and construct migrant programs in their community centers, Dr. Mestas lastly acknowledged Chicano leaders' last demand that united them to the common objectives of the coalition, maximum parental involvement, and community control.

Without legal requirements to include Chicano families in community administration as well as provide bilingual and comprehensible proposals, councils, and announcements the effort of promoting bilingual and bicultural programs would be pointless. For the same reasons as the NCNW and other civil rights organizations, there was a cultural doubt in Chicano communities that federal programs were making efforts to protect them. The concept of the “broken promise” was a legible barrier in the cultural superiority most communities practiced over Spanish-speaking families. To the Chicano leaders, ensuring that parents and Chicano community leaders had power in the centers was the only viable way to ensure the promise was kept. When Mondale and Subcommittee member Richard Schweiker asked if the current CDA protected Spanish-speaking parents, Dr. Suárez stated that in its current state the bill lacks provisions on how bilingual communication and politics of policy would be protected between the

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<sup>188</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 356.

parent councils and the community. Dr. Mestas agreed with Suárez but in the end supported that

I have read that bill, and it's very good, sir. Because it specifically defines that any group, ethnic group in the United States must and should retain certain parts of the niceties that they bring to America or that was already in America, meaning the Indian and Chicano child... the Federal Government is beginning to realize, as you just stated, that there is across section of ethnic groups...and complimenting on that, because that is what makes America great. Diversity is strength, not one thing in the melting pot concept.

## Women: Radical and Rational

Women organizations on all sides of the political and social spectrum swayed the course of universal child care. Historians on feminists rights agreed that issues of childcare united almost all women organizations of all race, socioeconomic, and political identity, which in turn united feminists around the same ideologies of universal child care as a right.<sup>189</sup> Feminists created regional and national coalitions to popularize universal childcare through staged protests, underground journals, and organizational newsletters.<sup>190</sup> Prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, child and education rights organizations – made up by a majority of white middle-class mothers and educators – fought for child care on the basis of economic and social necessity.<sup>191</sup> However, after the Civil Rights Act, Feminists organizations viewed universal child care as the necessary social change in equity that could foster change for women's liberation, Black freedom,

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<sup>189</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.; Deborah Dinner, "The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966–1974," *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010).; Emilie Stoltzfus, *Citizen, Mother, Worker: Debating Public Responsibility for Child Care after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).; Mary Frances Berry, *The Politics of Parenthood: Child Care, Women's Rights, and the Myth of the Good Mother*, (New York: Viking, 1999).; and Stephanie Gilmore, ed., *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

<sup>190</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 579.

<sup>191</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*.; Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate."

and a just economy.<sup>192</sup> As historian Deborah Dinner stated, leaders of feminist rights all valued universal childcare for a plethora of practical issues prominent in their environment and culture.

Different activists emphasized childcare's potential to facilitate middle-class women's entry into the workforce, liberate women from the oppression of the patriarchal family, enable welfare recipients' economic autonomy, free children from constraints of social convention, and empower minority communities.<sup>193</sup>

Feminists' rights made up the largest civil rights sector to support universal child care and was undoubtedly the most troublesome for the CDA due to its agenda of liberation as its purpose, not poverty. Americans were not unanimous in their support of women's participation in the labor-market and matters of women's societal roles and responsibility to the family divided the country. A conservative spike in popularity from Richard Nixon's victory in the 1968 Presidential election was followed by a gradual retreat from the New Deal liberalism starting with a deceleration of Civil Rights policies.<sup>194</sup> Dinner's extensive work in the relationship of Second Wave Feminism and child care proved that while women organizations led the charge for universal services, internal disputes between organizations and leaders weakened the participation of organizations in the CDA and threatened the possibility of bicameral support.<sup>195</sup> Prestigious organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the League of Women Voters (LWV) represented the feminist coalitions and created task

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Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 579, 586-7.; Mary Frances Berry, *The Politics of Parenthood: Child Care, Women's Rights, and the Myth of the Good Mother*, (New York: Viking, 1999).

<sup>193</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 579.

<sup>194</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

<sup>195</sup> Second Wave Feminism refers to the massive movement to change the course of social history to incorporate gendered studies. For more on the concept of gender studies and its relationship to the gender revolution see Joan Scott and Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 577-628.

forces to work with smaller organizations and produce powerful lobbyist committees for universal services in Congress.<sup>196</sup> To maintain popular support and political favor, NOW and LWV stripped unpopular views from the coalition and public presence. Radical feminists' organizations were limited in power to the regional and communal level, however their influence on the liberal organizations is clear in the Senate testimonies. The ostracization of these "radical" groups was for social security and political validity, but the intellectual and practical work remained a key aspect of the organizations who spoke in Congress.

### **Radical: Powerful from the Bottom and Influential at the Top**

Organizations and leaders labeled "radical" never received a chance to speak in Congress as the prestigious liberal organizations, specifically NOW, excluded and at times defamed "radical" organizations from the ad hoc coalition and participation in the CDA due to its political identity and correlation to Communism, rhetoric of reproductive rights, and definition of universal services compared to the agenda of the ad hoc coalition. Conservative politicians and organizations used the work of radical feminists as examples of "agitators" to distract Americans from the practical language of the CDA.<sup>197</sup> This assumption was partly by the language used by all feminists' rights organizations as even NOW viewed lack of federal equity in child care as a source of oppression.

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<sup>196</sup> Stephanie Gilmore, ed., *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

<sup>197</sup> In scholarship, the term radical often relates to organizations correlation to political identity, but recent scholarship has noted that Feminists of color were also labeled "radical" for their dual consciousness of activism and relationship to different civil rights activism. Historian Becky Thompson defined the traditional narrative of second wave feminists by organizations comprised of affluent white women as "hegemonic feminism" and reclaiming the activism by feminists of color as "multiracial feminism." However, in terms of the CDA, feminists of color were both classified as radical at the grassroots, or leaders of other civil rights organizations. See Becky Thompson, "Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism," *Feminist Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 337–60.

However, radical grassroots took the concept of maternal oppression one step further to argue that motherhood itself as a form of oppression and sought to end the nuclear family.<sup>198</sup> Radical feminists aligned their theories with New Left academics and valued biological rights in order to resist cultural oppression. This was to protect the nature of motherhood while challenging the expected childrearing roles of oppression. Instead of claiming women's biological differences as the heart of oppression, feminists like Ti-Grace Atkinson and Linda Gordon, argued it was women's confinement to childrearing that deepened the oppression of women.<sup>199</sup> The popular underground journals across the country supported the notion that mothers who chose to remain in the home weakened women's status and "justified discrimination."<sup>200</sup> Other radical journals called motherhood the "the super-exploitation of 24-hour unpaid domestic labor" and women who chose to enter the capitalist market were only given low-income jobs due to their sex-based roles as caretakers.<sup>201</sup> To radicals, any form of labor by choice in childrearing perpetuated women's oppression and not simply conformed to the biology, it was the choice. All feminist rights scholars understood that society needed mothers and caretakers, but they also understood that being confined to only those avenues of work allowed society to exploit their labor.

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<sup>198</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 590.; Stephanie Gilmore, ed., *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

<sup>199</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 590.

<sup>200</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 590.

<sup>201</sup> The study of underground feminists' journals is a dense historiography. Following the work of Deborah Dinner and Sonya Michel, research was done on two of the most influential radical feminists journals who debated child care regularly. First is Massachusetts *Old Mole* and the writings from the organization The Socialist Workshop in Berkley. See Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 591-2.

To all feminist scholars a solution to biological, social, and economical problem was clear and necessary; "free, full-time, non-compulsory childcare centers."<sup>202</sup> In the early 1960s, this solution was not common with the traditionally middle-class white feminists, but among Black feminists. Black feminists' scholar Frances Beal explained this history in 1970 when she noted that white feminists experience privilege in only having to be relieved of domesticity, while mothers of color worked out of necessity at a much higher rate.<sup>203</sup> Until H.R. 13520, Beal and other feminists of color were skeptical of traditional feminists who viewed equality as equaling the status of white men, keeping all genders of color below them.<sup>204</sup> No matter their differences, Black feminists still formed coalitions with traditional organizations to support universal child care as all groups knew that any targeted bill for certain minorities would only expand two tier welfare and avoid acknowledging the efforts of women's liberation.

Although hegemonic and multiracial feminists did not always see eye to eye their shared interest in universal childcare influenced the agenda of both parties. NOW was influenced by multiracial feminist emphasis on expense of centers to meet mothers training and labor needs, the inclusion of all mothers no matter their socioeconomic status, and the expectation of centers and educators to practice "liberationists childcare" in order to change future generations cultural perception of gender.<sup>205</sup> Black feminists viewed "liberationists childcare" as the freedom to provide equality to their children's lives in the present while creating a just society for the future. Radical feminists only saw

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<sup>202</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 592.

<sup>203</sup> Frances M. Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female," in *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, ed. Toni Cade (New York: Penguin, 1970), 91.

<sup>204</sup> Frances M. Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female," in *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, ed. Toni Cade (New York: Penguin, 1970), 93.

<sup>205</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 598.

“liberationists childcare” possible through community control of centers removed from state entities which notoriously limited minorities. Regional child care centers by Black feminists in the late 1960s symbolized this notion as they were successful outside of state control. Dorothy Pitman, who created and administered the West 80th Street Community Day Care Center in New York City supported the opportunity of community control, stating “I think I can live without bureaucracy. I think most black people could, too. It is the real villain — bureaucracy is a way to exploit. I don't want my children to be stifled, to be the conformists that most schools turn out. I want them to be free.”<sup>206</sup> Along with the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM), other Black feminist groups aligned their efforts of liberation with black community's political and social activism that supported creating Black civic engagement. Lastly was the notion that motherhood itself was oppression and not one based on class and labor responsibilities. Radicals argued, regardless of their identity, that without inclusion of child care for all, women will remain oppressed as child care will never be viewed as right but an expanded privilege, the most radical argument to this being 24-hour child care free of charge. The NOW and other liberal organizations tweaked these radical theories and communal examples of child care until they had what they viewed as a comprisable solution to their demands. By 1971, the NOW committee on child care had come to an agreeable solution by most liberal organizations thanks to the work of NOW member and Representative Bella Abzug, but it came at the cost of ostracizing radical leaders from representation in the coalition and CDA.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Patricia Lynden, "What Day Care Means to the Children, the Parents, the Teachers, the Community, the President," *New York Times Magazine*, February 15, 1970, 88.

<sup>207</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate."

## National Organization of Women

Perhaps the greatest cause of women's second-class status is the traditional belief that anatomy is destiny. Women will never have full opportunity to participate in America's economic, political, or cultural life as long as they bear the sole responsibility for the care of children — entirely alone and isolated from the larger world.<sup>208</sup>

In 1971 NOW was not a historic women's rights group compared to the League of Women Voters, but the organization was founded by elite and prominent women of government, media, and business. NOW founder Betty Friedan was a household name by 1971 for her groundbreaking work, *Feminine Mystique* in 1963.<sup>209</sup> All founders of NOW were motivated to expand the rights of women after the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which “prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, and religion.”<sup>210</sup> Building off of Title VII, NOW stated, in their Statement of Purpose, that federal child care was essential “to innovate new social institutions which will enable women to enjoy true equality of opportunity and responsibility in society.” The organization delineated from their predecessors who supported poverty and societal intervention for mothers to demand universal care and communal acknowledgment to the changing societal role in child development.

Along with their publicized journal and newsletters, NOW gained massive attention for their public demonstrations, marches, and strikes in major cities across the nation. Their 1970 Women's Strike for Equality, held on the fiftieth anniversary of women's suffrage was the first to gain major media attention nationally landing in every

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<sup>208</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt. 1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 751.

<sup>209</sup> Stephanie Gilmore, ed., *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).; Dinner, “Universal Childcare Debate,” 588.

<sup>210</sup> Dinner, “Universal Childcare Debate,” 586.



major newspaper.<sup>211</sup> Hundreds of women ceased work in either the business or the home to march and lead demonstrations that would visualize the three major demands of NOW; universally free twenty-hour childcare, free abortions, and equal opportunity in education and employment. A public exhibition was undertaken by members of NOW in New York City where activists turned City Hall it into the ideal and operational child care center for the day.<sup>212</sup> The demonstration and importantly its location represented that only with universal care can women achieve full civic participation.

### **Defining Women's Rights in the CDA: Radical and National**

On May 18, 1971, NOW presented its written testimony which made clear that all feminist organizations demanded a sharp shift in the bill's prioritization of women rights as much as children's rights. In attempts to avoid this language academic, Chicano, welfare, civil rights leaders, and policymakers supported the language in which the CDA protected children's rights by providing necessities to families of all demographics. Most organizations agreed that the definition which inferred families were protected in their right to decide what is best for their community and child. Dissatisfied with the majority, much like Representative Abzug, NOW wanted to make sure that the CDA directly addressed the stake women have in universal childcare. Author of the testimony and member on the national board of Directors in charge of the NOW child task force, Vicki Lathom made it clear in the introduction that "Women's needs are inseparable to children's needs."<sup>213</sup> Lathom was not shy to directly challenge politicians and medias

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<sup>211</sup> Judy Klemesrud, "A Herstory-Making Event," *New York Times Magazine*, August 23, 1970.

<sup>212</sup> Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 4-7.

<sup>213</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 751.

efforts to separate the CDA from feminists' rights to protect the policy from opposition. Lathom interpreted the efforts of politicians to distance childcare legislation from women's rights organizations as negatively affecting both parties' efforts to create substantial policy. Lathom referred to the effects of stereotypes that seeped into Congress that "the demand for child care services is perhaps the most misunderstood of all women's rights demands. The most common misconception is that feminists don't care about their children; that they simply want warehouses to drop off their children so they can be free to do what they want."<sup>214</sup>

Seamlessly, Lathom's statement for NOW proved that the evidence shared by all organizations of the coalition on the benefits of childcare to enhance child development while offering those required to work the security of safe services, was not just for the rights of children, but for women. In other words,

Child care benefits children and the family just as much as the woman. A child whose environment is limited to his or her own small family unit cannot thrive. The one-to-one 24-hour relationship of mother and child can be as stifling to the child's growth as to the mother's. Children need to relate to a larger community and a preschool experience can offer this.

Lathom was not diminishing the status of women to only benefit the development of their child, rather the opposite. If a mother is not liberated from the cult domesticity, then a child's growth and development is also confined by consequence. Lathom, strategically, was mirroring the arguments of the coalition to redefine the CDA as a welfare, Black, Chicano, and now a women's bill. One of their defining arguments was their demand for the inclusion of women educators and equality in women employment at all centers. Like all the NOW testimony, Lathom kept the argument of sex seclusion straight to the point,

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<sup>214</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 751.

Sexual integration of center staff, as well as of the administrative level, would help to overcome another area of N.O.W.'s concern: sex role stereotyping of preschoolers. A good part of this testimony would not be necessary if small children were not tracked into arbitrary roles according to their sex. Doll corners and dress-up corners where only girls play, and truck and block rooms where only boys play are stifling to the full development of a child's unique, individual potential and talents. We feel preschool programs should be geared to individual strengths and weaknesses rather than narrow, preconceived roles.<sup>215</sup>

NOW worked closely with the ad hoc coalition to align women's rights to the legislation and agenda of all organizations involved. Lathom's written testimony clearly outlined each objective goal of the CDA by NOW and made it clear where policies aligned with other organizations and interpreted them to fit the priority of NOW. Combining the ideas of all organizations and speakers mentioned in this chapter, NOW aligned their agenda with parent control of centers, loosening licensing requirements, and socioeconomic integration. Lathom would first acknowledge the efforts of the ad hoc coalition to stress policymakers to prioritize parental involvement in their child's centers. Other civil rights organizations argued that parent control ensured that minorities of the communities were not excluded from decisions that affected their child's education, but to NOW it was also a cost-effective method of quality control.<sup>216</sup>

The focus on cost-effective methods of administration bled into other issues of NOW agenda, including licensing. Lathom's argument for loosening licensing requirements came from NOW and smaller women's organizations uphill battle to gain certification due to the endless "archaic" regulations required. NOW Task Force found that child care activists and communities were deterred from creating centers due to the

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<sup>215</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 753.

<sup>216</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 752.

costly fees and maintenance of building and maintaining a legal center.<sup>217</sup> If the CDA was to promise communities and small scale prime sponsors to maintain and control these centers then NOW argued that they first must address licensing at the local level.<sup>218</sup> Lastly, NOW constructed their argument of parent/community control and cost-effective licensing to ensure that socioeconomic integration was possible in all centers around the country. NOW shared the same justifications of integration as most civil rights organizations but expanded their argument to support their definition of universal. To Latham, by allowing communities to control centers without salaries that cut into the construction of programs meant that more parent, grassroots organizations, and national organizations could propose prime sponsorships and administer their own programs. NOW valued this amendment because it ensured that under their childcare programs all the objective goals of universal care to women's rights could be fulfilled along with other civil rights organizations goals.

NOW was not willing to support all the shared demands and made arguments against other organization's claims of poverty prioritization, which would draw a fatal line between the coalition as the CDA progressed in Congress. First, poverty prioritization was the Achilles heel of the ad hoc coalition. Common interests between civil rights, educational, and welfare organizations — made possible by shared demographics, solutions, or practicality — made poverty prioritization a popular policy. Going against the grain of the coalition, NOW and feminists leaders were unwilling at

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<sup>217</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 753.

<sup>218</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 753.

first to break away from their literal definition of “universal” childcare.<sup>219</sup> Lathom argued, like Bella Abzug, that prioritization of such a limited budget meant that middle-income families would still be responsible for affording and finding equal services.<sup>220</sup> However, Lathom and NOW were not willing at the time of the testimony, to dig in on the matter as they valued the work of Abzug and Chisholm’s revised amendments on the House CCDA. Lathom would in fact support not S. 1512, but instead the Chisholm and Abzug Amendments, “Although NOW is committed to work for universally available, publicly supported child care, we are in accord with flexible fees on a sliding scale, as an interim step, to reflect the urgent needs and varied resources of families.”<sup>221</sup>

In the end, NOW joined Abzug in arguing that the real issue of both policies was not prioritization, but instead a budget too small to accommodate universal child care within the decade. Like all testimonies between the House and Senate during the Spring of 1971, shared interest in expanding the bill's budget united or distracted members of the ad hoc coalition from their differences with the CDA. Hopeful leaders suppressed their constituents' agenda to support the coalition under the impression that a shared push for a larger budget would in return meet their demands. The issue of prioritization in May of 1971 was manageable for the ad hoc coalition, as the work of Chisholm and Abzug seemed to alleviate much of the tension. However, by October of 1971, prioritization

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<sup>219</sup> Sonya Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 252.

<sup>220</sup> Chapter 2 focused on maintaining the priorities of the women's organization as pure universal services could only achieve issues of community control, socioeconomic integration, and comprehensive services. See Chapter 2 and *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 752.

<sup>221</sup> *Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971: Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, on S. 1512: Pt.1-3*. District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1971, 752.

would be the largest issue for all parties involved as the budget for the CDA would not increase to substantial proportions throughout each revision.

### **Our Bill Will Be Passed: The Final Revision of the CDA**

At 11:15PM on June 16, 1971, Mondale ended the last open subcommittee hearing on the CDA. With the goal that by the end of the summer, the final revision of the CDA will be finished, and the bill would be passed before the calendar year ends. After 3 years, months worth of hearings in both the House and the Senate, policymakers had to produce a bill that would pass, not that would please every party involved. The ad hoc coalition hoped that by uniting members efforts, supporting one another, and defining the CDA as a good starting ground to achieving their goals, organizations' sacrifices were protected under the promise that the revisions would ensure that by the end of the decade every American would have access to comprehensive child care. The assumption that Congress was listening and revising the CDA to their recommendations was a lost gamble for these organizations in 1969 however, in 1971 it paid in full.

Leaders of the coalition saw dramatic changes to the CDA that favored their agenda and hard work in the CDA, especially on matters of parental control, size of prime sponsorship, and racial and socioeconomic integration. In the final July revision, the CDA supported the efforts of civil rights groups to protect parent control of centers and administration under

[Sec. 514] Subsection (a) provides that each prime sponsor shall establish and maintain a child development council consisting of not less than 10 members half of whom must be parents of children served in child development programs and the remainder of whom are to be appointed by the prime sponsor's chief executive to represent the public.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other*

Section 514 also protected the demographic makeup of the council to be inclusive of minorities of the community, including impoverished parents.

Mondale kept his promise to Chicano and migrant leaders Dr. Suárez and Dr. Mestas and included implicit and direct provisions that Chicano and migrant leaders to protect bilingual, bicultural, and migrant children from being excluded from community centers. Under Section 515, the CDA allocated special funding for prime sponsors to receive if they need bilingual professionals and resources for bilingual education in their centers.<sup>223</sup> Mondale proved his commitment to the Chicano advocates and parents of America to include the priority he spoke of with Dr. Mestas about after his testimony and off script, the need for bilingual communication between centers and parents. Under Section 512, the CDA protected bicultural and migrant families by providing funds to all sponsors for bilingual communication. Vital to the protection of this act, policymakers took it a step further and ordered that for any regional proposal with a “significant population” of Chicano residents to be accepted by the Secretary of HEW they must have

(D) programs designed (i) to meet the special needs of minority group, Indian, and migrant children with particular emphasis on the needs of children from bilingual families for the development of skills in English and another language spoken in the home, and (ii) to meet the needs of all children to understand the history and cultural backgrounds of minority groups which belong to their communities and the role of members of such minority groups in the history and cultural development of the Nation and of the region in which they reside;

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*Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 82.

<sup>223</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 120.

(K) dissemination of information in the functional language of those to be served to assure that parents are well informed of child development programs available to them and may participate in such programs;<sup>224</sup>

Lastly, the final revision of the CDA met the demands of the child coalition to shrink the size of prime sponsorship to authorize units as small as 10,000 to receive funding coupled with a raised poverty-index for free services for poor-working families. The original language set services at the Bureau of Labors lowest estimated working poverty line, \$4,320, but the final revision moved the poverty index up to almost \$7,000 yearly income for free services.<sup>225</sup> By increasing the income parameters for free services, the amount of eligible children in the first three years of the CDA doubled and arguments for a large sponsorship population were unable to defend how to best administer the comprehensive aspect nationally without adding a large sector of national and state administrative departments to oversee the daily processes. Neither side of the aisle was willing to expand the budget to accommodate for administrative development and conservatives and state officials had no choice but to concede momentarily.

Prime sponsorship was therefore a major success for liberals as it was the smallest population eligibility of any proposed bill in both the Senate and the House, but this did not pass without compromises by both parties. To get to 10,000, Democrats had to include a caveat of eligibility in prime sponsorship to state governments. The compromise to allow the Secretary to deny community proposals over state or local

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<sup>224</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 115-6.

<sup>225</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 115-6.



government proposals or to force communities to work with state governments if proposals are viewed as weak in comparison, threatened the very argument that made sponsorship small, state control. The CDA did, however, place checks and balances to protect local communities from losing bids for centers over state governments. First, states were the substitute of local community proposals only being reviewed for authorization if communities did not create a proposal that met all the requirements of comprehensive services, did not have an eligible parent council, or failed in providing service after one fiscal year.<sup>226</sup> Secondly, state governments who did obtain funds to administer programs had to still meet the requirements under Section 513.

(b) The Secretary shall approve a prime sponsorship plan submitted by a locality which is (1) a city, (2) county, or (S) other unit of general local government, if he determines that the plan so submitted meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this section and includes adequate provisions for carrying out comprehensive child development programs in the area of such locality... the Secretary shall designate to serve such area the unit of general local government which he determines has the capability of more effectively carrying out the purposes of this part with respect to such area and which has submitted a plan which meets the requirements of this section and includes adequate provisions for carrying out comprehensive child development programs in such area.<sup>227</sup>

Although section 513 threatened the protection of minorities in the South and urban settings, feminist rights organizations were indifferent to the compromise and supported the decision to protect their interest in budget prioritization, which they viewed as a success in the final revision with the increase in free services to more working-poor

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<sup>226</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 117.

<sup>227</sup> *Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971; Report, on S. 2007, to Provide for the Continuation of Programs Authorized Under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and for Other Purposes, Together with Supplemental and Individual Views.* District of Columbia: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971, 117.

families. To feminist rights organizations the scale of prime sponsorship was trivial if the bill was only accessible to impoverished families. While the budget was never increased, feminists and civil rights leaders supported the notion of expanding free services welfare rights leaders, however, did not support this change. Welfare rights leaders, especially Edelman, felt that without an increase in budget or in prioritization percentage which remained a 65/35 split in the first three years of administration, welfare recipients would be fighting for services in communities with few programs. The tension between welfare leaders and feminists' rights over the CDA would build up further until reaching it climatic explosion in November, but for policymakers the final decision for both free services and prime sponsorship was ultimately political strategy to win moderate votes and not to appease the coalition.

Nevertheless, the revised CDA was now the favored child care bill in Congress and in the grassroots communities. Although not every demand was met, members of the coalition praised the CDA as they were reminded of what brought on the failure of H.R. 13520. The necessary changes were made to the CDA to protect their constituents and by August Mondale reported that the CDA was likely to be passed by the end of the year. Instead of returning to Washington in the fall to lobby for perfection, leaders of the coalition took to their organizations to spread the words of success. The work of the leaders to spread the word sent a message to all members of feminist, civil rights, children, and welfare organizations that success was imminent that pressure on their representatives was the next step. Unbeknownst or undermined by these the Congressional and grassroots opposition was breaking ground under the fragile bicameral support while the Nixon Administration refrained from passing communication to

sponsors and policymakers on the President's approval until the Joint Commission scheduled for October and November. It would be the Fall that the CDA would descend from its promising status, but from July to September liberal media outlets ran optimistic headlines and organizations already began building committees across the country in the preparation that not only will a bill be passed, but that "Our bill will be passed."<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 614.

## 4: The Spiral of the CDA

It is not really a bill to help working mothers. If it were, the children of all income groups would clearly not be involved. It is on the other hand, a bill to remove the education and training of children from the home and church and turn it over to an agency of the federal government.<sup>229</sup>

On July 30th, 1971, the Senate Subcommittee on Education and Labor released the final report of the bill before it entered the Congressional floor for review where the bill would undergo front-facing attacks. After the final Senate Subcommittee hearing on the CDA in June, policymakers spent over a month revising the bill for the last time. After the July revision the bill remained in brief political limbo until September as sponsors of the CDA made public efforts to promote the bill to gain bicameral support and protect the legislation from the chopping block of the Nixon Administration welfare cuts.<sup>230</sup> In the four-month gap between the final subcommittee hearing and the Congressional votes, the bill experienced countless changes that influenced the final stages of the bill, either as efforts to protect or expand the potential of universal child care to all families in the future.

### Return to the Historiography

The rapid unraveling of the CDA from July of 1971 to March of 1972 has been the center of focus in the scholarship of the CDA. During this nine-month stretch, Congress passed S. 2007 and the CDA; Nixon vetoed S. 2007 for its attack on American values; Congress failed to overrule the veto; and New Deal Liberals spent the next three

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<sup>229</sup> “Nixon Must Veto Child Control Law,” *Human Events Inc.*, (Washington D.C., October 9, 1971), 1.

<sup>230</sup> Since Nixon took office in 1969, the administration had gradually influenced the political power of the Office of Economic Opportunity and weakening welfare policies of the former Johnson Administration. The welfare state was slowly receding not growing when the CDA entered Congress.

months struggling to regain the same momentum that created the CDA in the first place. Historians such as Sonya Michel, Deborah Dinner, Kimberly Morgan, and Elizabeth Rose all viewed these nine months as the most valuable aspect of the CDA, one that silenced the national outcry for federal child care for almost three decades. All child care historians agree that 1969 to 1971 was a “lost moment” or a perfect storm for national child care with public support and political popularity reaching a climactic cry to action. Each historian returns to the notion that such a climax has never returned.<sup>231</sup> However, their reasons for why this perfect storm existed and ended all focus on the Nixon veto. Michel and Rose states it was Nixon’s language that motivated grassroots conservatives to resist notions of communal child care.<sup>232</sup> Morgan expands on this notion and focuses on the Nixon Administrations influence to persuade moderate Democrats to support its Southern allies through identity politics that reinforced Republican’s rhetoric of the nuclear family. Morgan argued that Republicans built a narrative that American traditions were at risk with the CDA to align the Administration with radical opposition grassroots organizations that seeped into moderate conservative politics. What all these historians failed to acknowledge is that it was a combination of all conservative strengths that overpowered the politically fragile New Deal liberal coalition, who divided and retreated from the policy.

This chapter will expand this concept of the rising New Right overpowered attacks on the New Left from a standpoint of two factors that have been neglected in the

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<sup>231</sup> Kimberly Morgan began her influential article by noting that New Deal Liberalisms influence was only supported by the rapid public shift to want larger federal intervention in childcare. She noted that the spike in support was the backbone to passing childcare and as New Right opposition defeated the bill people quickly became disinterested besides those who have an essential stake.

<sup>232</sup> Sonya Michel, *Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights: The Shaping of America’s Child Care Policy*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 239.; Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 58.

scholarship of child care: the downfall of New Deal Liberalism and the fragility of the ad hoc coalition on child care once Republicans threatened the security of the bill. First, this chapter looks at the source base of New Right politicians, media, and grassroots leaders to show the gap in the historical narrative of how Republicans in Congress supported the Nixon Administration and made efforts to divide the bicameral support of the CDA amongst party loyalty and conflicting agendas inside the democratic coalition.

Conservative legislators were influenced by the radical New Right media and infused lies and myths to sway Southern Democrats and forced moderates to appease their white suburban constituents with loyalty to Cold War misconceptions.<sup>233</sup> The ability of bicameral control by Mondale and sponsors of the CDA were lost in Congress once Republicans successfully attached the nature of communal care to American values, a strategy that dissolved the relationship of the Democratic party with feminists rights groups. Resistance to feminist's inclusion only forced more supporters out of the CDA and out of the New Deal coalition.

Lastly, is the lack of explanation to why the coalition failed to counter the New Right opposition. This can be answered with support to the former. First was a matter of time; in which opponents of the CDA waited until the last months before the vote to stage a massive assault on the bill's ideology. The coalition did not have enough time to build a cooperative counter until after Congress had weakened the bill's language and thus divided the coalition. The counterattack by organizations within the coalition was not

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<sup>233</sup> This chapter will define and reference radical New Right media, or one that now builds its identity on the concepts of American Cold War values of capitalism, family, and anti-Communism. While these are core to its rise in the political sphere, socially it evolves and expands to encompass Civil Rights pessimism by suburban whites, or the Silent Majority. See Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

against opponents of the CDA, but instead against other organizations in the coalitions who maintained their loyalty to ensure the bill's passage in Congress. Internal divisions between feminist rights organizations and welfare organizations, divided almost half of the coalition against one another and a collective counterattack was never made possible.

### **The Joint Committee Conference: From Ideal to Realistic**

The Joint Committee Conference was the final necessary step of the CDA and S. 2007, in which influential leaders of all parties and those who wish to speak in both houses of Congress were allowed and adjustments to the bill were made before its final vote. The effort to merge the CCDA to the CDA and then add the bill to S. 2007 took almost an entire month to be finalized and the CDA almost died in conference on multiple occasions. The month-long battle to save the CDA was plagued by misinformation, targeted stalemates, and threats of executive veto of S. 2007 if the CDA was added.<sup>234</sup> Although the Joint Committee focused on all of S. 2007, the CDA received the most time and attention by Congressional opposition members of the committee. Congressional opposition in the conference entirely made up of Republicans as influential Southern Democrats and a handful of skeptical moderate politicians also voiced their distaste.<sup>235</sup> However, the Nixon administration, who until mid-November was silent over the CDA, threatened to veto S. 2007 if the CDA was not revised to limit its universal services and become more suited as a standard welfare policy.<sup>236</sup> Matters

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<sup>234</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (November 30, 1971): 43499.

<sup>235</sup> In the testimony of the Joint Committee Commission, Walter Mondale noted that many moderate voters in the House who voted yes to the CDA also voted to move the FAP into the committee on Children, contradicting themselves. See 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 44113-44158.

<sup>236</sup> The Nixon Administration was a divide among leaders who saw and valued the CDA differently, but each valued what the CDA could propose. In the middle Nixon did not want to expand child welfare. His FAP was an obvious expansion of work requirement welfare policies and made no effort to go

over prime sponsorship prioritization, budget, professional training, and the shift in Federal responsibility went beyond merger, as Republicans in support of Nixon stalled the vote in an attempt to push the CDA out of S. 2007 and back to the Subcommittee. Worse, moderates wishing to appease the Administration switched their votes silently or took a rigid stance against the CDA. These internal efforts failed to stop the CDA and its attachment to S. 2007 in the Joint Committee, however, they substantially weakened the CDA from its July revisions, affectively slowing down the process of universally available services for over a decade.

The most important changes made in the joint conference included decrease in free service income index from \$6,900 to \$4,300 and poverty prioritization was extended into the fiscal year of 1973 and threatened the planned shift of universal services.<sup>237</sup> These changes weakened the cooperation of the coalition and their support in the public sphere. In the Senate, opposition leaders swayed only seventeen votes, but in the House, S. 2007 only won by twenty-three votes after a week-long debate. It proved that the damage was done to the CDA, and enough moderates had changed sides for Republicans to confirm a no vote in Congress if a presidential veto were to happen.<sup>238</sup> The day before Congress published the joint conference report, *the New York Times* reported

It now appears that Mr. Richardson [HEW Secretary] underestimated the power of the Administration's budget-cutters and political manipulators. It is

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beyond the previous works of the early 1960s. While Nixon was a opponent of a large welfare state Spiro Agnew was against all ideas of communal and universal services as a direct threat to America. See William V. Shannon, "A Radical, Direct, Simple, Utopian Alternative To Day-Care Centers: An Alternative to Day-Care Centers." *New York Times* (Washington: November 29, 1971): 38.

<sup>237</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (November 30, 1971): 43499.

<sup>238</sup> The final vote in the House took place on December 7th and the bill was passed by the 210-187 vote.



questionable whether anything better than a baby-sitting service for the poorest children— or indeed anything at all— will emerge.<sup>239</sup>

### **“Crops of Programmed Citizens”: New Right Media against CDA**

In 1971, the concept of a “media tycoon” was a rapidly evolving political machine and one that carried great influence over the political identities of the country. Historian Nicole Hemmer’s influential work on leaders of media who shaped the conservative landscape of the 1960s and birthed the change in political media is crucial to understanding the subjective notions of what is considered radical, popular, prestigious, and conservative in 1971.<sup>240</sup> Political media changed rapidly with the rise of influential voices that bridged the gap of extreme political ideologies—the New Right agenda—to mainstream conservative politics. The importance of this scholarship to the history of the CDA was these leaders’ ability to mobilize the grassroots and influence their activism. New Right media found success in the mainstream by creating a dialogue that Hemmer viewed as the “us vs. them” political dialogue.<sup>241</sup> In the case of the CDA, conservative media built a dangerous case of “family vs. state.” The use of terms by New Right media like family, tradition, control, communal, and state, dug deep into the politically charged nature of welfare and the family. This continual battle of “good v. evil” was dependent on a shared set of values that elites in the media created in their resentment of Democratic change of the 1960s. This shared concept of morals allowed elites to influence most conservatives and politically validated their frustration.

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<sup>239</sup> William V. Shannon, “A Radical, Direct, Simple, Utopian Alternative To Day-Care Centers: An Alternative to Day-Care Centers.” *New York Times* (Washington: November 29, 1971): 38.

<sup>240</sup> Nicole Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

<sup>241</sup> Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*.

While broadcasting reached a wider audience, Hemmer focuses on the impact written media had on building foundational practices of conservative resistance. She divides the impact of written media into two forms — publications and direct mail. New Right journals and magazines were used as a system that linked rich benefactors to the growing grassroots organizations, but also influenced an alignment of their political agenda. From the top-down, conservative elites and men of power within the Nixon Administration were able to fund a campaign that since the 1960's had successfully built a strong bridge to the average conservative.<sup>242</sup> The politically charged language of these journals created a dialogue to all subscribers that their shared morals were being challenged by Democrats who supported a change in the status quo of child care. Although not used in this thesis, it is clear in the work of Hemmer that the “family vs. state” argument was not limited to written media and was argued on all popular methods of political news. This becomes obvious in the rise of direct mail against the CDA of later years. This subsection looks directly at the influence of journals and magazines to change the tide of support for the CDA.

On October 9th, 1971, the far-right magazine *Human Events*, urged Nixon to veto what it called the “Child Control Law.” It asked all readers to write to their State representatives, HEW, Republican Minority Leader Hugh Scott, and President Nixon demanding a veto.<sup>243</sup> The extensive article included a full analysis of Democrats' attack on American values and politics, and a hit list of the “Renegade Republicans” who

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<sup>242</sup> Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*.

<sup>243</sup> “Nixon Must Veto Child Control Law” *Human Events* (Washington) 31, no. 41 (October 9, 1971): 1.

supported the policy for readers to target in their letters.<sup>244</sup> Founded by former *Washington Post* editor Felix Morley in 1944, *Human Events* was far from moderate and defined itself as a magazine for libertarians, but by the 1960s seeped into the New Right with consistent contributions in publications from Pat Buchanan, Spiro Agnew, James L. Buckley, and more. These New Right conservatives used the “libertarian” audience to build uncontrollable fire of conservative opposition for supporters of the CDA, while *Human Events* reaped the benefits of a wider audience.<sup>245</sup> This is evident in *Human Events* consistent use of the “us vs. them” rhetoric which less than a decade later drove the Silent Majority to protest busing legislation.<sup>246</sup> The wide target audience of *Human Events* included middle-class suburban whites defined by historian Matthew Lassiter as the Silent Majority.<sup>247</sup> Honesty and integrity took a back seat for much of *Human Events* work, evident in their belief that the CDA was making an effort to drug children at the age of two in hopes of replacing traditional education with induced subjugation to certain “federal authority.”<sup>248</sup> *Human Events* was not protecting conservatives from just fictional narrative of mind-control but the immediate threat of communist totalitarianism that the CDA proposed. Throwing a grenade into the heart of the suburbs, *Human Events* declared

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<sup>244</sup> “Nixon Must Veto Child Control Law” *Human Events* (Washington) 31, no. 41 (October 9, 1971): 1.

<sup>245</sup> Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*.

<sup>246</sup> The most interesting aspect of the Conservative media assault of the CDA would be the headlines that they ran. Most outrageous being *Human Events* September 18, “Big Brother Wants Your Children,” Deborah Dinner, “The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966–1974,” *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010): 616.

<sup>247</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

<sup>248</sup> There is exaggeration here. On multiple occasions, October 9th, 29, and November 13, *Human Events* insinuated that if the CDA were to pass then the next step would be medicated conformity. Citing other alt-right publications *Human Events* went on to claim that

This [CDA] sounds dangerously like the kind of eugenics and thought control the civilized world learned to revile when practiced in Nazi Germany and in the Soviet Union.<sup>249</sup>

Outrageous as it was, *Human Events* was not the only conservative media platform to declare the CDA a threat to American civilizations. Not as extreme but still shocking, many more news outlets also benefited from attacking the moral grounds of universal child care, and deepening conservative ideologies of working women, motherhood, and child development, but unlike *Human Events* other formative news outlets were given clear instruction from the White House.<sup>250</sup>

By September it was clear the CDA was going to be a part of S. 2007, and the Nixon Administration took it upon themselves to rally conservative support in opposition to the bill through their relationship with prestigious conservative news outlets. The Administration created the Emergency Committee for Children (ECC) to orchestrate the national resistance effort, who in turn created an opposition coalition of elite conservatives and hired conservative columnists to publish articles attacking the policy. One of the most influential members of the ECC was *The National Review* founder William F. Buckley Jr.<sup>251</sup> Although a new magazine with its first publication in 1955, the *National Review* prestige was derived from the connections of its founder Buckley and relationship to conservative elites as an “insider” news outlet.<sup>252</sup> The influence of the

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<sup>249</sup> “Report on Proposed Child Development Program.” *Human Events* (Washington) 31, no. 46 (November 13, 1971): 1, 10.

<sup>250</sup> Kimberly Morgan, “A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care” *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001), 234.

<sup>251</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 234.

<sup>252</sup> Buckley was always an active member of politics and media, gaining powerful connections and status in Washington, even representing the conservative ideology through much of the 1960’s Civil Rights Movement. Buckley famously challenged activists and writer James Baldwin at University of Cambridge in the 1965 debate, “Is the American Dream is at the expense of the American Negro?” Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*

*Review* was powerful and the magazine stood as the centerpiece of conservative ideology for middle and upper class conservatives.<sup>253</sup> *Human Events* would never conform to such moderate political discourse and remain on the farthest corner of the Right, but the *National Review* often dabbled in conspiracy and New Right ideology, with their take on the CDA evidence to the power fear had on persuading the public of any political identity. The *Review* was not willing to cross the line into calling federal child care a communist plot, but they did address the notion that families should be the only authority in child development and that anti-poverty was the only crisis in America, not child care.<sup>254</sup> The *National Review* supported Congressional opponents of the CDA that the “child care crisis” was a fictitious attempt to pass feminist rights legislation and weaken the American economy to “accommodate for those who do not value their roles.”<sup>255</sup> The review would branch off from their conspiracy theory of the “child care crisis” to address the Nixon Administration's effort in anti-poverty and the threat the CDA imposed on protecting poor children. The *National Review*, a fervent supporter of Nixon's Family Action Plan, disapproved of the CDA theft of funds to include families who did not need welfare and the threat it imposed on affluent families to be mixed in with poor children.<sup>256</sup> The racist and classist rhetoric that integration of any kind could hurt a child's development supported the notion that day-care was only good for those who must work out of welfare requirements and that mothers who choose to work are selfishly sacrificing

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<sup>253</sup> Ironically, Buckley Jr. attended and responded to the Manhattan 12 opposition to Nixon FAP and China foreign policy in the New York Times Magazine in August 1971 asking, "Is he one of us?" However, in September he would make an agreement with the ECC to attack the CDA. See Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 235.

<sup>254</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 232-5.

<sup>255</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 232-5.

<sup>256</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 236-7.

their child's development.<sup>257</sup> The *National Review* was not subtle in its attack of the CDA but much less brazen than *Human Events*, but both created a foundational argument to universal child cares threat to American tradition and its relationship to Second Wave Feminism. Sophisticated, the *National Review* convinced members of Congress that a Silent Majority in America did not want and feared universal child care.

The efforts of conservative and libertarian media to smear the CDA was not the deciding factor for public perception of child care. Americans who defined themselves as conservatives in the previous decade had already constructed a resistance to the counterculture efforts of feminists and civil rights groups, a Silent Majority growing in the suburbs.<sup>258</sup> Historian Matthew Lassiter who has conducted extensive work on the Silent Majority, argues that opposition to the CDA in the public sphere was in retaliation to the perceived threats brought on by the social shifts of the 1960s, most significant were women entering the workforce and what the Silent Majority believed to be forced control over familial matters. Social conservatives blamed societal shifts in women wage-earners, rise in single parents, and in dual income households as not matters of economic shifts but rather liberal acceptance of cultural minorities and feared that American tradition was being ripped from them.<sup>259</sup> The influence of family politics was an important tool that the New Right used to change public support of the civil rights, feminist rights, and welfare rights movements that for the past decade had been the face of American politics. Conservatives attached a declining status in familial order to justify the resistance of

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<sup>257</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 236-7.

<sup>258</sup> For work on the Silent Majority in recent scholarship, see Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

<sup>259</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, "Inventing Family Values," in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 14-17.

racial and social changes in American labor, education, and welfare. In other words, conservatives found a new dialogue to engage in the racial and socially divided suburbs that validated their pessimism to the Civil Rights and New Deal liberal policies.

Politicians paving the path to the New Right had already won pivotal Supreme Court cases in the late 1960s over integration of school buses, mostly due to the ability of conservative suburban mothers to create powerful parent organizations. The work of parents to resist political changes in their communities was a decisive tool for politicians at the top to fuel their agenda, which is evident by the ECC definition the CDA as another attempt by the Federal government to intervene in family's freedoms.<sup>260</sup> Uneducated to the exact language of the CDA, conservative parent organizations believed the ECC campaign articles that if the CDA passed all families would soon be left with no option of child care or coerced into allowing their children to be experiments of "social-engineering."<sup>261</sup> New or former grassroots organizations who fought against the integration of bussing redirected their focus of public activism to inform their constituents of the horrific CDA. Under the advice of both the *National Review* and *Human Events*, conservative grassroots staged letter campaigns to their Congressional representatives to Veto the CDA, even writing to the Nixon Administration demanding a veto if their representatives failed to hear them.<sup>262</sup> Kimberly Morgan noted that conservative grassroots were so successful in gaining committed activists that "as many as 5,000 angry letters a week poured into HEW's Office of Child Development, and

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<sup>260</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

<sup>261</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).; Kimberly Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care" *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 2 (2001): 236-7

<sup>262</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 236-7.

Mondale's office received as many as 7,000 pieces of opposition mail a day.”<sup>263</sup> The ECC use of conservative media proved successful in generating oppositional activism by merely acknowledging the fear of the affluent suburban class and advocated for these grassroots to fight back. They successfully pressured moderates and conservatives in Congress to acknowledge the “large” number of families who did not want child care services at all and demanded an end to the CDA.<sup>264</sup>

### **Protecting the Children: The Congressional New Right**

Moderate politicians who opposed the CDA were still willing to negotiate revisions about and in the case of Senator John Beall insinuated that if revised it could pass in 1972. On the other hand, GOP politicians aligned themselves with Southern Dixiecrats to form the New Right and used the Joint Committee to defame the CDA with hysteria, bigotry, and conspiracies. No better New Right opposition leader was former Dixiecrat-Republican, South Carolina's Strom Thurmond.<sup>265</sup> Thurmond reaching into the rhetoric of the grassroots and New Right media opened his address on “the so-called “child development programs.””<sup>266</sup>

If there were no other reasons to oppose this bill, the child development provisions alone are enough. The ultimate impact of this section can indeed be revolutionary; and since revolutions can be for the good or for the worse, it behooves us to study such proposals carefully and enter into them after a great national debate.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 237.

<sup>264</sup> *92nd Cong., 1st session, Congressional Record 117* (December 2, 1971): 44120.

<sup>265</sup> Dixiecrat-republican defines the political identity shift of Jim Crow South democrats who changed their identity to politics

<sup>266</sup> *92nd Cong., 1st session, Congressional Record 117* (December 2, 1971): 44120.

<sup>267</sup> *92nd Cong., 1st session, Congressional Record 117* (December 2, 1971): 44120.



Since 1969, organizations in child care and especially those in the coalition made child care accessible public information. Across the nation, information on child care was available to women, minorities, single parents and in urban and rural settings, and even white males in the suburbs. To Thurmond, however, most Americans had no idea about communal child care, and specifically the CDA and took it upon himself to explain both. Thurmond defined the CDA as a policy that wanted all children to be raised communally “at the tender mercy of the behaviorists and other social scientists.”<sup>268</sup>

Thurmond did not attack prime sponsorship, budget, or anti-poverty effort directly instead he addressed the CDA as infringement on the American political relationship between the federal, state, and family. Issues over the power of the HEW secretary to administer programs was an issue of state rights for moderates, but to members of the New Right it was interpreted as the Federal “molding” of the youth, or that programs “across this country will be forced to slavishly follow the pattern or patterns developed by the bureaucracy here in Washington.”<sup>269</sup> Relentlessly, Thurmond and Colorado Senator Peter Dominick, assaulted the very ideology of the CDA as federal intervention of family rights.

There are those who believe that Washington experts have a better knowledge and understanding of what is good for people than the people themselves. I do not share that view; In my judgment, this bill, if enacted; will result in a federalization of the education and training of our young; particularly our low income young.<sup>270</sup>

Starting in the grassroots, the New Right successfully twisted the rhetoric and ideology of universally available child care to be a federal intervention on child rearing, one which

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<sup>268</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441120.

<sup>269</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441120-1.

<sup>270</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441121.

they fought to remain in the home in order to protect the American value of “character.”<sup>271</sup> Therefore, at the core of these misconceptions was fear over the implications the CDA would have on the role of women. Members of the New Right took direct action to stop this change without directly addressing it, using “child's development” or “child individualism” to imply the threat universal services brought to women wage-earners. Instead of saying America must protect domesticity, the New Right argued that Federal child care threatened to place American youth under state control. Thurmond stated that communal child care cannot support individualism in child development rather create a system of conformity and quoted Vice President Spiro Agnew's most recent address,

Character that was once molded in the home is now more often the product of the classroom, and there are some who would like to take it a step further and indoctrinate or condition all pre-school age children from infants on up to kindergarten age. They admire the Soviet system in which the State takes over this function from the parent.<sup>272</sup>

Senator Dominick took this communist notion one step further to argue that academics and federal administrators of education have “lost faith” in the ability of families to raise their children.<sup>273</sup> Never addressing women wage-earners or women's rights to work, Thurmond and Dominick instead focused on what they believed communal childcare was to a whole society, a chance to mold children to the wishes of the state and not to their own freedoms. To Dominick, Thurmond, Agnew, and more, communal child care was an attack on an individual's freedom than it was an opportunity to empower society. No matter the language used conservative Congressman all seemed to come to the same

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<sup>271</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441120.

<sup>272</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441121.

<sup>273</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441121-3.

solution. Childrearing should remain in the home and administered by the mothers. Thurmond even insinuated that mothers should feel grateful for such a rewarding job with little stress of travel, bosses, or deadlines.<sup>274</sup>

Not only did the New Right interpretation of the CDA attack the nuclear family and child's individualism, but they stated that Democrats were forcing Americans to accept communal care through the hyperbolized "crisis" that James Buckley stated was "exaggerated and inadequately demonstrated" to advance research.<sup>275</sup> Buckley discredited communal services through twisting the words of Edward Zigler, and stretched the idea that communal care has no concrete evidence to improvement of child development. Buckley and Thurmond argued that under the CDA future generations would become lab rats to unproven hypothesis, all the while at home child care was proven.<sup>276</sup> Therefore, the most important question by Buckley and eventually Nixon was 'if child care is only needed for a miniscule amount, why should the entirety of America be subjected to experimental communal child care which threatened American traditions and forced the federal government to acknowledge women's rights?'

### **The Damage had been Dealt**

Unsuccessful in their final assault in Congress, the report was passed in both houses by December 7th. Over those 82 days, the CDA had been crippled by the New Right media, the Silent Majority, and politicians. Americans who were indifferent or did not need child care were in most cases persuaded against the notion of universal services that they believed took more money out of their pockets and drove America closer to

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<sup>274</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441125.

<sup>275</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441122.

<sup>276</sup> 92nd Cong., 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117 (December 2, 1971): 441122.

socialist anarchy. Liberal politicians were the most prominent advocates of the CDA in the media to demystify and counterattack New Right conspiracies. Politicians in support did not directly address conservatives but instead informed the public on the actual language of the CDA and their benefits on the average family.<sup>277</sup> Organizations of the coalition focused on protecting their stake in the CDA which they felt were weakened by the Joint Committee. Internal disputes that divided the coalition weakened their cooperative ability to counterattack the CDA and in fact gave ammo to moderates that the language of the CDA did not represent the groundwork that was crumbling for federal services.

### **Welfare or Dates to the Art Gallery: The End of the Coalition**

The July revision had sent a surge of optimism throughout the ad hoc coalition but was quickly stripped from them as news of the Joint Conference pressured the coalition's unity to counterattack. It was made clear to all involved that the Nixon Administration needed a child care policy by the end of the year and in Congress Nixon's own Family Action Plan (FAP) remained under revision by HEW leaving only the CDA on the floor.<sup>278</sup> All of that would change by October when the influence of the Nixon Administration to smear the CDA in the public sphere made its way into the Joint Committee. While the CDA was slowly weakened by conservative pushback, members of the ad hoc coalition quickly removed themselves from the collective effort to work independently and ensure that their constituents were protected in the bill. Sacrifices were

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<sup>277</sup> William V. Shannon, "A Radical, Direct, Simple, Utopian Alternative To Day-Care Centers: An Alternative to Day-Care Centers." *New York Times* (Washington: November 29, 1971): 38.

<sup>278</sup> Richardson spoke often in the Senate Subcommittee and was in constant communication with Mondale during the construction and passage representing the Nixon Administration. See, Jill Norgren, "In Search of a National Child Care Policy: Background and Prospects," *Western Political Quarterly* 34:1 (March 1981): 133.

continually made by all parties however, women and education organizations fought back against welfare and civil rights organizations as they felt overpowered in the joint committee and blatantly removed from the CDA. Ultimately, issues over prime sponsorship and the free service index divided and killed the ad hoc coalition.

The relationship between the welfare and women organizations was always fragile and in fact both were in constant disagreement throughout the entirety of the CDA beginning as soon as the coalitions first meeting. Edelman recalled years later that "We fought fiercely over priorities. Welfare mothers almost came to blows with some of the middle-class liberationists who thought they should have access to daycare if they wanted time to go to an art gallery. . . But welfare mothers who have no choice but to work wanted their kids' needs to come first."<sup>279</sup> Hostility in the coalition would cool down after the success of Shirley Chisholm and Bella Abzug in 1970 and the House subcommittee in 1971 to persuade Congress in creating a community-controlled bill focused on a long-term shift to universal services. The fragile agreement between the two sectors of the CDA would be reinforced up until the Joint Committee final revision. Almost suddenly after the first day of the Joint Commission did these organizations turn on one another to protect the CDA from being killed immediately.<sup>280</sup> Political supporters of the CDA struggled to gain support from members of the coalition after the poverty index was lowered back to \$4,300 and the budget was remained at \$2 billion. Those in civil rights and welfare were displeased by willing to accept the changes if it meant the bill would pass, but others saw this as a double cross to the coalition's objectives. A legislator

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<sup>279</sup> Rochelle Beck and John Butler, "An Interview with Marian Wright Edelman," *Harvard Educational Review* 44:1 (February 1974): 69

<sup>280</sup> 92nd Cong., Senate. 1st session, *Congressional Record* 117. December 2, 1971. 44120.

present at the Joint Committee later accused the coalition and welfare leader Edelman as someone who “did not care about middle class kids at all,” and went on to say that “[Edelman] wanted to use the program as a political organizing base” and not as a chance for liberation and equity.<sup>281</sup> Although it would be welfare and women organization leaders who would trade blows behind closed doors, civil rights, education, and Chicano leaders remained focused on passing the CDA. Mondale and Brademas optimism reassured these groups that if the CDA was passed then changes would come from the success of its first fiscal budget, they just had to support this CDA.

The final blow for the ad hoc coalition came from feminist rights organizations departure from the CDA. This came at a pivotal moment of necessary counterattack to the New Right media campaign however, once feminist rights group felt conservatives had removed them entirely, they instead focused on different policies and looked towards the future. Welfare organizations united with civil rights leaders to support the CDA throughout the Joint Committee, unhappy with the changes they still had prime sponsorship and poverty prioritization.<sup>282</sup> More importantly, they still had public support as moderates were not willing to kill a child care bill and only weakened its universal amendments.<sup>283</sup> Civil and Chicano leaders still found the CDA to be the best policy compared to ESEA and especially Nixon's FAP as the CDA did not require any employment requirements for services and prioritization of prime sponsorship still remained in control of parents and minority communities. Attempting to salvage the stake

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<sup>281</sup> Most of the interviews used in this section were conducted by Kimberly Morgan throughout the late 1990's. Many of those who were interviewed chose to remain anonymous and all copies of the interview's official transcript could not be obtained due to the COVID-19 pandemic and thus my research into the exact primary sources are limited to her own scholarship. See Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 226.

<sup>282</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 234.

<sup>283</sup> Rose, *The Promise of Preschool*, 53.

of feminist's rights, Maurine McKinley of the Black Child Development who spoke in the Joint Committee Conference reinforced the agenda of all women and civil rights leaders in her testimony.

We believe that child development centers can be the catalyst for total community development. . . . It is to the advantage of the entire nation to view the provision of day care/ child development services within the context of the need for a readjustment of societal power relationships. . . . As day care centers are utilized to catalyze development in black and other communities, the enhanced political and economic power that results can provide effective leverage for the improvement of the overall social and economic condition of the Nation.<sup>284</sup>

Hypocritical, McKinley was the first member of the coalition to stand in support of Edelman and the final revision of the CDA. No women organization joined them, but women leaders would remark years later that their stance in opposition was insignificant compared to the willingness of civil rights and welfare leaders to eliminate their stake in the CDA.<sup>285</sup>

Feminist rights organizations who argued for strict universal services were far outnumbered and outranked within the ad hoc coalition, evident in their appeasement throughout the construction of the policy. Their decision to go against the coalition in the final months. When conservatives began their campaign against the CDA it was clear to supporters that another sacrifice had to be made to protect the CDA. The coalition decided to remove the feminist language of universal services or community-controlled child care outside the confines of welfare and primary state control. Feminist leaders had gained so much ground in the original drafts of the CDA but that was only made possible by the lack of conservative intervention in the liberal-dominated committees. When the

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<sup>284</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 228.

<sup>285</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 597.

coalition was forced to compromise, feminist groups held the minority voting power and the coalition supported the reduction in free services and the small budget.<sup>286</sup> Feminist lacked a cemented alliance with any powerful organizations in the coalition who were willing to rally around resisting conservatives' revisions. Compared to the influence of welfare organizations which since the 1950s had direct influence in child care policies and gained an unbroken alliance with women labor unions and civil right organizations, feminist were voiceless in their efforts to resist conservative changes.<sup>287</sup> Their efforts to gain national liberation came at a time when the Great Society was being stripped for parts and liberals were forced to make sacrifices to protect certain programs.

A member of NOW involved in the CDA recounted years later that this shift which removed them out of the CDA was due to their political stance of feminists outside of child care and the fear by supporters that it only increased the probability for Nixon to veto. The onslaught of attacks that targeted women wage-earners and the risk of communal care all circled back to second wave feminism in the minds of Americans. The New Right successfully attached the two together and sold America on the toxicity of its dependency on each other. Once New Right speakers in the Joint Committee addressed this relationship other advocate groups redefined child care away from feminist rights to avoid the same ostracization. Instead advocates argued that programs need to support the role of the family by providing comprehensive services, an entitlement to the child and not indirectly the mother. The removal the rhetoric of "rights based" services was hit for

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<sup>286</sup> While these committees had republican members, most were sponsors or co-sponsors of the comprehensive child care, since H.R. 13520 in 1969. In fact, influential conservative William Buckley (NY) would defend the CDA against conservative assaults in the Senate and supported the CDA up until the last attempt in 1975. See *92nd Cong., 1st session, Congressional Record 117* (December 2, 1971).

<sup>287</sup> Dinner, "Universal Childcare Debate," 597.



all supporters of the CDA as it froze the budget, shrunk the poverty index, and weakened its language of socioeconomic and racial integration. The choice was difficult for all supporters but was viewed as necessary to save the CDA from the chopping block of Congress. In the end the removal of feminist's rights and universally available child care sacrificed the powerful coalition to unrepairable status, and yet it still did not stop the Nixon Administration, who since September had already made their decision.

### **Tricky Dick and the Funky Bunch: The Symbolic Veto**

In early November, a month before the CDA would be finalized in the Joint Committee and passed in Congress, Nixon sympathetically asked one of the co-authors of the S. 2007 veto, John Ehrlichman "E—don't make the veto too hard."<sup>288</sup> The original decision to aim for a soft veto came out of the pleas of Edward Zigler and director of HEW Elliot Richardson who had stuck their necks out to support the progress of the CDA since the White House Conference in 1970, and constantly reassured Congress that the Nixon Administration was supportive of the policy up until the veto. Zigler, Richardson, and other advisors in the Nixon Administration who supported the step towards outside of welfare were the only ones who had continual communication with Congress while those indifferent or strongly opposed the CDA kept their opinions between only the Administration. Those opposed to the CDA in the Administration, Vice President Spiro Agnew and executive speech writer Patrick Buchanan, remained silent until October when it became clear that the CDA was going to pass through Congress and abruptly started the ECC smear campaigns as well as influencing Nixon to not only veto the CDA, but to attack universal childcare. Nixon himself had already decided to veto the

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<sup>288</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 233.

CDA but on more political grounds and to give a soft take on the societal intrusion. To Nixon the CDA threatened his own child care policy which maintained its place in welfare, his efforts to weaken the OEO, and keeping a strong relationship with white suburban voters after a year of losing popularity due to his neo-liberal political discourse.

First was the elephant in the room of the White House, Nixon's Family Action Plan (FAP), which was much more aligned with the Nixon Administration's agenda "Stay down the center."<sup>289</sup> Social policies for antipoverty, education, aid to cities, and pollution control were all deemed untouchable by the Nixon administration in fear of retaliation to his administration's popularity, and child care was no different.<sup>290</sup> So while Nixon feared making radical changes to weaken social policies favored by most on the left, his administration also campaigned on expanding services to Americans on the right. Nixon's "Hard Hat" political strategy was aimed at winning swing-states in previously embedded Democratic states in the North by targeting blue-collar, Catholic, and white populations who felt disenfranchised by the democratic party.<sup>291</sup> While the FAP was not directly related to "hard hat" politics, it was objectively mindful of the center only offering services to mothers on welfare and protecting the work requirement program. More importantly, the FAP did not have any language that supported parental, community, or private non-profit control of the centers created. Instead, the FAP authorized states to receive funding specifically to create and administer day-care

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<sup>289</sup> Quote came from Nixon's policy advisor John Ehrlichman. See Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 232.

<sup>290</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 232.

<sup>291</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, "Inventing Family Values," in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 14-17.

programs.<sup>292</sup> These intentional differences between the FAP and CDA allowed Nixon to argue that his stance on child care remained in the center. Yes, Nixon had kept his promise, made all the way back in the White House Conference on Children, to create a federal child care policy, however, it was never going to be universally available.

Secondly, Nixon had spent most of this first term eliminating the powers of the OEO and the bill S. 2007 along with the CDA posed a serious threat of revitalization. In fact, by 1971 the OEO had generated no new programs and its budget was limited to only matters of research and development for antipoverty. The end of the 1964 budget term meant Nixon was in control of the future of the OEO and made it clear that only programs which he politically had to sustain would remain operational in community action programs.<sup>293</sup> The CDA was in many aspects a community action program and if it was received well at the local level it could potentially revitalize the OEO back to its glory days in the Great Society.<sup>294</sup>

Lastly, Nixon and those in the Administration opposed to a change in welfare and in the status of the OEO, decided to take the veto one step further to address the complaints of his primary political audience, the Silent Majority. Those in the Administration of the CDA continually pointed to Nixon's various public statements, such as the Conference on Children and Youth, where Nixon said he would support any child care policy that addresses the crisis. Other Administrative supporters, including

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<sup>292</sup> Michel, *Children's Interests/Mothers' Rights*, 252-3.

<sup>293</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 232.

<sup>294</sup> While the ad hoc coalition and Congress made it clear that parental control and community control of centers was not to increase political participation as were the goals of CAP, Nixon would write months later that he was confident of his Veto and labeled the CDA as a CAP. Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 232.

political advisor Kevin Phillips, only liked the CDA for its potential to increase the president's national popularity. Phillips wrote in early May of 1971 that,

Politically, President Nixon should be leaping for this issue. Welfare mothers are hardly likely to vote for him, but working mothers, a huge slice of the electorate, are extremely reachable on the subject of day care—especially young women, aged 18—35, among whom the President is weak, according to the polls.<sup>295</sup>

Although voting for the CDA could have been a better opportunity to expand his voter demographic, Nixon sided with those opposed and reminded supporters of the CDA that it was the Silent Majority that had won him the presidency. In fact, when Nixon announced his efforts to expand child care, he made it clear who he wanted to support and who he did not, when he asked speech writer Ehrlichman “Forget the 'dialogue' with radicals—we have tried this on Hunger, Civil Rights etc.— each time with negative results, let's get some constructive action if possible.”<sup>296</sup> Advisors lobbying for the harsh veto took to the rhetoric of the grassroots to persuade Nixon and argued its language was too radical for conservatives to support. Along with the countless letters coming into the Oval office about threats to family autonomy, conservative Representative John Ashbrook extended conservative opposition when he declared the worst part of the CDA was “the socioeconomic and race mix of students would reach its greatest potential under this legislation.”<sup>297</sup> Influential to Nixon’s veto was his grasp of the conservative populace stance on the CDA, one that the ECC deliberately guided to be the most radical stance of opposition. Nixon’s selected news readings was found to have articles by *Human Events*,

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<sup>295</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 232.

<sup>296</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 232.

<sup>297</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 232.

Buckley Jr., James M. Kilpatrick, and more hired guns by the ECC.<sup>298</sup> Thus by November, Nixon found more reason to burn not just the CDA, but universal child care out of Federal politics and elected Patrick Buchanan, and not the empathetic John Ehrlichman who would have gone “easy.”<sup>299</sup> Buchanan in the early Fall had already made it clear that to save Nixon's relationship with the conservative party needed to take a strong stance of the CDA and child care in general and the final draft of the veto was viewed as watered down compared to the original draft which declared the CDA “the most radical piece of legislation to emerge from the Ninety-Second Congress.”<sup>300</sup> On December 9th, Nixon made it clear that the CDA could not live in the United States and that any attempt to pass universal child care was “a long leap into the dark for the United States Government and the American people.”<sup>301</sup>

## Post-Veto

After the Fall of 1971 where grassroots united to oppose the CDA paired with the final veto by Nixon, John Brademas in 1997 announced that “those attacks poisoned the well for early childhood programs for a long time—indeed, ever since.”<sup>302</sup> Supporters of the CDA were not only stunned by Nixon’s veto, they felt betrayed by his Administration for going back on the promise to pass child care legislation. John Brademas and Walter Mondale did not take this veto lightly and the day after Nixon, demanded a vote to overrule. However, moderates who were swayed by the possibility of passing child care

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<sup>298</sup> Patrick Buchanan was in fact the one in control of the ECC and Nixon's selected news readings. It was a cooperative effort to close in Nixon's perspective of the CDA. See Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 234.

<sup>299</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 235.

<sup>300</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 235.

<sup>301</sup> Dinner, “Universal Childcare Debate,” 614.

<sup>302</sup> This was taken from an interview conducted by Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 238, 249.

were now coerced to deny the CDA in fear of political backlash from the executive branch and united grassroots. The vote to overrule the veto failed in the Senate as most moderates switched over to support Nixon in a final vote of 51-36.<sup>303</sup> Mondale was not to be stopped by the failure of the CDA and in 1972 proposed a new bill, S. 3617. This bill took into consideration all critiques made by Nixon and conservatives and to secure its passage through the Oval Office was attached to the “untouchable” Head Start extension bill. The bill was not as strong as the CDA for two reasons. First, the coalition that had united so many politicians and activists was too fragmented in 1972 to build another coalition as powerful and leaders instead claimed their own stake in child care policies after. Second was that S. 3617 was created during a Presidential election year and conservatives doubled down on the conservative rhetoric that had killed the CDA and moderates had to realign with the nation and party sentiments, killing the 1972 CDA before it took flight in Congress.<sup>304</sup> Brademas’ reflection on the failure of CDA was in clear response to why a child care bill of that nature remained extinct during his interview in 1997, and touches on two major issues that have repeatedly halted universal child care in Congress: the permanence of New Right grassroots in matters of motherhood which supported conservatives efforts to keep child care an issue of welfare.

Kimberly Morgan's focus on how the CDA mobilized the grassroots in the opposition of the CDA is significant as it created a conservative political identity on issues of motherhood, reproduction rights, familial order, and child care that has persisted to this day.<sup>305</sup> As Morgan wrote,

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<sup>303</sup> To see the final vote board, check Library of Congress, *Floor Votes* CQ Senate Votes 417-23,”

<sup>304</sup> Library of Congress, *Floor Votes* CQ Senate Votes 417-23,”

<sup>305</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 238, 240.

The successful campaign against the CDA energized the growing conservative movement of the early 1970s. The CDA battle, as well as the successful fight against Nixon's welfare-reform proposal, showed many on the right that breaking with the administration and Republican party and staking out a strong stand on their own could sway the party toward the New Right's agenda.<sup>306</sup>

The grassroots movement sustained their supportive demographic to create the National Coalition for Children (NCC) in 1973. The motto of "preserving the family as the fundamental unit in society" found allies in other conservative organizations and in 1975 had expanded to hold regional offices nationally and allied with the American Conservative Union to almost triple their member body.<sup>307</sup> Throughout the 1970 as democrats attempted to pass other child care bills weaker than that of the CDA, the united grassroots mobilized their connections to push leafleting and letter campaigns to stop the policy in its tracks. After gaining recognition by Republicans in Congress, organizations become more radical in their interpretation of federal child care and tangled their constituents with misconceptions and intentional lies. In 1975 grassroots became distributing pamphlets were printed and spread through Parent Teacher associations and church organizations until the entire community learned about the dangers of Mondale and his bill. The anonymous authors of the pamphlet were effective in persuading Americans against the bill because they constructed a web of lies that falsely cited *Congressional Records*, where supposed Democrats declared

As a matter of the child's right, the Government shall exert control over the family because we have [to] recognize, further, that no parental, but communal forms of up-bringing have an unquestionable superiority over all other forms. Furthermore, there is a serious question that maybe we cannot trust the family to prepare young children in this country for this new kind of world which is emerging.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 238, 236.

<sup>307</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 238, 236.

<sup>308</sup> U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Background Materials Concerning the Child and Family Services Act*, 1975, 94th Congress, 2dsess., 1976, 17.

The hyperbolized pamphlet soon made its way to every inch of the country, through Christian organizations efforts, until even late-night talk shows, newspapers, and almost every form of media had covered the story.<sup>309</sup> The final straw Mondale was forced to withdraw any efforts to pass a robust child care bill.

What spawned in terms of activism, was a mobilized demographic never considered to be as powerful, the New Right. The once inspirational coalition was only a flicker of light compared to the opposition's groups of the CDA who for five decades have evolved to incorporate a moderate conservative agenda in order to expand their organizations numbers and political connections. The tactics of the New Right organization's survival created a political identity of conservatism that revolved around traditional motherhood, Christianity, and the influence of the nuclear family. The coalition for the CDA did not last long because they failed to cooperate with one another, the opposition organizations thrived in not cooperating with anybody who threatened their religious and outdated interpretations of female reproduction rights, women employment, and welfare. Even when the war on child care was won, these organizations did not die out, and in during the 1980s led campaigns to restrict conservative child care policies or "child-care tax credit" for years.<sup>310</sup> "Child-care tax credit" gave welfare recipients opportunities of employment in private child care services and allowed all families interested to receive funds to afford the high cost of private comprehensive services. In practice, the tax credit was extremely lowballed and working-class and lower middle-class families were still forced to put their children in custodial care to afford services, it was practically a policy for discounted services for the affluent. Even with its

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<sup>309</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 238, 237.

<sup>310</sup> Morgan, "Child of the Sixties," 238, 237.



flaws, conservatives, and liberals at all levels of government were indifferent to the concept of child-care tax credits but allowed its passage through Congress to meet the quote of federal intervention.<sup>311</sup> Outside of the Congress the credit system received little media opinions and was viewed as a moderate solution to all families. Problems with the credit system came from conservative organizations who by 1980 had expanded to a national level, took to the streets. Their leader in opposition, Phyllis Schlafly, viewed tax-credits as another attempt of the Federal government to incentivize communal childrearing, another universal policy.<sup>312</sup> Schlafly spoke on behalf all “respectable mothers” who stay at home full time to raise their children and received no tax deduction or credit for their labor. Her attack on tax credits was one that made conservatives feel as if once again the federal government was inconsiderate of their contributions. Although the bill passed, it shows that even when opportunities of universal childcare were nonexistent, Conservatives at the grassroots viewed any federal child care policy as a threat to their family’s rights and successfully impeded in federal policy for decades after the CDA.

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<sup>311</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 238-40.

<sup>312</sup> Morgan, “Child of the Sixties,” 238-40.

## Epilogue: Build Back Better or Maintain the Status Quo?

They did pass a bipartisan bill in 1971 [the Comprehensive Child Development Act], and it landed on Nixon's desk, and had he signed it, we would have a federally subsidized child care program and I wouldn't be talking to you about this today. But he vetoed it. And so here we are.<sup>313</sup>

Women did not stop entering the workforce and with the maintained pressure of feminists influenced the next generations of women to move away from “justified discrimination” employment and pursued “careers instead of families.”<sup>314</sup> The success of the 1960s and 1970s to prove that effectiveness and ability of communal child care to provide comprehensive services to propel a child’s social and intellectual education was not forgotten by those interested in the CDA, nor did the opposition of American tradition redirect young women from pursuing college degrees and full time careers. In other words, the failure of the CDA only proved communal child care was toxic for Congress, but essential to women’s liberation and American economic support. The industry experienced an explosion in the 1980s as demand and federal incentives provided funding for private sector’s construction.<sup>315</sup> States in the late 1990s took on the responsibility of funding’s and regulating child care, with a select few experimenting with universal care in preschool.<sup>316</sup> However, those programs begin when a child reaches

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<sup>313</sup> Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

<sup>314</sup> This term is in reference to the late 1960 radical feminists authors Ti-Grace Atkinson and Linda Gordon, critique of labor opportunities for women remaining around childrearing and familial responsibilities. See Deborah Dinner, “The Universal Childcare Debate: Rights Mobilization, Social Policy, and the Dynamics of Feminist Activism, 1966–1974,” *Law and History Review* 28, no. 3 (2010): 590.; Elizabeth R. Rose, *The Promise of Preschool: from Head Start to Universal Pre-Kindergarten* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>315</sup> Rose, *The Promise of Preschool*.

<sup>316</sup> Elizabeth Rose covers the history of state universal Kindergarten and explains its imbalanced relationship with federal block grants and national resistance to universal services in child care. See Rose, *The Promise of Preschool*.

the age of five or in few cases four, there is no guarantee or support given to families from ages two to four, a time that all academics and politicians cited as the most delicate period in child development. For those who must work there still remains welfare services but custodial care has not withered in the wake of modern research and robust scholarship on comprehensive care's essential need and in most areas of the country nannies are still not required to be trained and certified. The hierarchy of child care, separated by its modern comprehensive services, professional care, and most obvious cost, has only polarized since 1971 as new research calls for more expensive services but states maintain a believed soft interference.<sup>317</sup> After the CDA failed child care in America did not return to a believed normal, it developed unmonitored and unsupervised into a wild child.

The disheartening truth of American child care is its failure to be acknowledged as a failure of our government to provide to avoid economic grief and to ethically maintain a market that cannot survive on its own. In labor, the birth of a child has its own unspoken rite of passage where it forces mothers to make decisions where neither the child nor the mother rarely recovers from and one which through private or state security is a loss of manpower and liquidity for the employer, maternal leave and necessary leave of employment. Millions of families accept financial grief, “pause” their careers or take up a small wage part-time job and make substantial sacrifices to their material and economic status for over four years to raise a child. There are societal expectations to

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<sup>317</sup> The matter of “soft interference” is a concept this epilogue will cover but must be acknowledge. While the state does not interfere in child care as harshly as they do public education, they do have costly maintained and state requirements to employees, facilities, nutrition, etc. See Suddath, Claire “How Child Care Became the Most Broken Business in America.” *Bloomberg* (New York: NY) November 18, 2021.

maternal leave, child development education, and paternal absence for employment that makes having a child ultimately a costly choice. Like the arguments of feminist rights in the 1960s, America still stands by the ideology that to have a child is a liberty of your choosing, but its consequences are the family, almost entirely the mother, to bear. In 2021, journalists and mother Claire Suddath noted that in her years of journalism for financial magazine *Bloomberg*, "I have written a lot of stories over the years and interviewed women about their career decisions, and I can't tell you the number of women that I have talked to who have ... dropped out of the workforce or switched to part-time solely because they couldn't afford child care."<sup>318</sup>

In 1964 when the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) released their "Day Care Project" report, they announced a rising new category of mothers in America, "those who *stayed* at home."<sup>319</sup> This shocking category of mothers in 1964 is now one of the largest issues of child care, women forced to leave or take absence from their career for a unstable period of time to raise their child until affordable services become accessible, and in many cases it being the start of public education. In her interview with *NPR* Fresh Air host Terry Gross, Suddath noted that the ability of the women she has interviewed who returned to their careers and regained or improved their socioeconomic status was a unpredictable factor of their age, experience, and employment situation at the time of pregnancy.<sup>320</sup> Many of these cases, including herself, were "lucky" enough to have had their children in their early thirties, where they had already had fiscal and job

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<sup>318</sup> Terry Gross, "As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?" *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

<sup>319</sup> Florence A. Ruderman, "Conceptualizing Needs for Day Care: Some Conclusions Drawn from the Child Welfare League Day Care Project," *Child Welfare* 44, no. 4 (1965): 212.

<sup>320</sup> Terry Gross, "As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?" *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

security and whose position and employers offered extraordinary maternity leave benefits.<sup>321</sup> Gross noted that she was lucky as these privileges she has are rare for people with children just five years younger. Like the “Cay Care Project,” women continually leave the labor force to raise their children, and many do so without maternity leave or any benefits and security at all. This familial grief is not only a matter of wanting to raise their child on their own, but because they cannot afford to place them in any service they find suitable. America has not solved the matter of cost.

## Cost

The largest issue is that since America declared a wartime economy, the federal government has never put up enough money to effectively provide child care, even in writing most political failures never had enough to pay the costs. Even the concept that the CDA was universal child care is terminology used by historians to extract the hopes and failures of the bill. Today, journalists, political commentators, economists, and presidents refer the CDA as robust “federally subsidized child care program.”<sup>322</sup> The logistics of the CDA to set an affordable price range with a dynamic scale offering cheaper services the lower a family’s yearly income was until free services were provided to Americans below the poverty line. In practice this was simple, a welfare policy that also gains revenue through services accessible to those outside of welfare. Most American federal health insurance have followed this system since the Great Society, but for child care in 1971 the CDA was a phenomenon that people grabbed onto dearly.

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<sup>321</sup> Claire Suddath, “How Child Care Became the Most Broken Business in America,” *Bloomberg* (November 18, 2021).

<sup>322</sup> Edward Zigler and Sally J. Styfco, *The Hidden History of Head Start*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).; Claire Suddath “How Child Care Became the Most Broken Business in America.” *Bloomberg* (New York: NY) November 18, 2021.; Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

Quickly, accessible federal child care promising comprehensive services was coined universal. The term universal was the Shakespearean irony of misconception. Given its limited budget, had the CDA passed most Americans would not have found a CDA center in their community until the mid 1980s and accessible to all Americans by the 1990s. The matter of cost outweighed all federal solutions to child care and today it remains the largest barrier for all families.

In 2020, Suddath found that it is cheaper to send an 18-year-old to an in-state public college than it would be to place a two year old in comprehensive child care services for a year.<sup>323</sup> Cost is the career killer, not the child. In New York city child care can run a family upwards of \$2,000 a month.<sup>324</sup> Gross joked in her podcast that parents who give birth to twins or have children in close time spans don't receive discounts or "pay-one-child-get-the-other-one-free," and in most cases are paying more for child care than the average American yearly mortgage or rent.<sup>325</sup> The high cost for child care is not a gouged market targeted as optionless victims, it's a product of its environment, a unsubsidized market dependent on state and federal regulation quotas for public use. Yet centers that are adept have gone beyond the required minimum to ensure there is a guarantee of child growth, like a public to a private High School, some centers specializations. Ironically the most expensive services are communal care as child psychology has come to a consensus that children confined to homes and with little adult or child engagement are stunted socially, vocally, and intelligently. Comprehensive

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<sup>323</sup> Claire Suddath "How Child Care Became the Most Broken Business in America." *Bloomberg* (New York: NY) November 18, 2021.

<sup>324</sup> Suddath stated that in her area of Brooklyn most child care costs around \$2,400. Claire Suddath "How Child Care Became the Most Broken Business in America." *Bloomberg* (New York: NY) November 18, 2021.

<sup>325</sup> Terry Gross, "As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?" *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

services run high due to the staff, the resources available, and the effort of exploration, but more cheaper services are still costly and run a higher risk. Parents most often opt to finance a \$2,000 service over a \$600 nanny because they want reassurance that their children are in good hands, however, most can only afford to give up their career. which is when the price point for a good or a service — in this particular instance it's child care — is too expensive for the consumers, by which I mean families, and too expensive or unaffordable for the providers, the people providing that service, in [this] case, child care owners and workers. And there's no way to fix that in a private market setting. The choice of parents to want costly services is not a privilege it's a maternal instinct given the realities of child care federally unmonitored. The horror stories told in the House hearings in 1969 for H.R. 13520 of toddlers trapped in houses with schizophrenics, chained to heaters, locked in rooms for hours, or left wandering the streets alone not obsolete. In the age of camera phones, videos of child care “fight clubs”, nannies throwing children down flights of stairs, and a plethora of unexplained toddler deaths still gain national attention at a shocking rate.<sup>326</sup>

The failure for safe and comprehensive child care to be affordable to both receivers and providers has been defined Modern economists as a "classic market failure.”<sup>327</sup> The reason that good quality child care carries such a high price tag is because it is expensive to maintain quality child care. In fact, years before the pandemic

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<sup>326</sup> Jay Croft and Marlena Baldacci, “2 day care workers are charged after child ‘fight club’ video surfaces,” *CNN* (Atlanta: GA) November 7, 2018.

<sup>327</sup> Gross uses brevity to describe this complex economic term, “which is when the price point for a good or a service — in this instance it's child care — is too expensive for the consumers, by which I mean families, and too expensive or unaffordable for the providers, the people providing that service, in [this] case, child care owners and workers. And there's no way to fix that in a private market setting.” See, Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

obliterated the market, most child care business were operating on a one percent profit margin, the lowest of most industries and one that the most optimistic supporters define as having “not a lot of wiggle room.”<sup>328</sup> The reasoning for this is simple; child care heavily regulated, but remaining largely private.<sup>329</sup> While states require health and safety codes, staff numbers per child, nutrition meal planning, hours of indoor and outdoor activity, sleeping accommodations, and educational prep curriculum states and the federal are not required to provide any funding for every child care service to meet these regulations. Unlike services of healthcare, construction or infrastructure, and food processing which is dominated by powerful Small to Medium Enterprises (SME) and even Multinational Corporations (MNC), most child care programs are small businesses who hang on to their certifications by a thread. It is expensive to run a childcare center and in respect to state subsidies and private business incentives for child care, business owners make little to no profit after a fiscal year. The salary of a professional and paraprofessional day care specialists has plummeted to the once noble living wage it was during the CDA and Sugarman arguments of training, driving many young adults to pursue public education for the stable income and benefits. Suddath said best “No one goes into this industry because they want to get rich... In a normal year, about a quarter of child care workers leave the industry because they just can't afford to hold the jobs that they hold.” For over two decades the child care sector has been hyperventilating from uncontrolled cost-of-living inflation, 2009 Recession, the pullback of federal welfare benefits for Head Start in 2017, and sadly the list goes on. If it had not been for the

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<sup>328</sup> Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

<sup>329</sup> Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.



Coronavirus pandemic of 2020, America would not have had to face the harsh reality that America failed to protect their youngest children.

## **Build Back Better**

The 2020 Pandemic crushed many essential sectors of the American economy. Child care being one that never recuperated and received the largest federal aid intervention of any private sector, with almost 90% of all child care services asking and receiving aide to remain afloat during the quarantine.<sup>330</sup> The American Rescue Plan passed to protect state infrastructure and private markets through block grant stimulus was also mirrored by social activism on social media sites Twitter, Instagram, and Reddit where Americans were addressing the failures of capitalism to protect Americans from predatory rent and debt collectors, welfare work requirement services, and threat of depleting state unemployment funds. The 2020 Presidential election was entirely derailed candidates' platform to address the failure of the government to combat economic and societal rifts brought on by the coronavirus and how America can overcome. The election of Joe Biden as the 46<sup>th</sup> President was also America's election of the Build Back Better Act (BBB). The promise of the BBB was a complete revision of government's intervention in the American economy to benefit the bottom and no longer the top. Described by both Biden's press advisor and Representative John Yarmuth, the BBB

President Joe Biden believes that there's no greater economic engine in the world than the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. But for too long, the economy has worked great for those at the top, while working families get squeezed. President Biden promised to rebuild the backbone of the country – the middle class – so that this time everyone comes along.<sup>331</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> "WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Celebrate the First Anniversary of the American Rescue Plan." *Whitehouse*. March 15, 2022.

<sup>331</sup> Executive Branch. "The Build Back Better Framework," *Whitehouse*.

Student Loan forgiveness, environmental protection policy, expand affordable health care, tax credit breaks for middle class, and finally a reassessment of child care.<sup>332</sup> Closing in on the centennial anniversary of the largest expansion of public education in America, the Committee of Means created the American Family Plan (AFP) which would be the first step of the federal government to acknowledge and support the state initiative to provide universal preschool to six million children. The AFP would also create “the largest investment in child care in the nation’s history, saving most American families more than half of their spending on child care.” Half is conflicting term as the AFP language notes that the average middle-class family will pay no more than seven percent of their yearly income on childcare. The bill will save families with a shared income over \$100,000 up to \$5,000 a year on child care and be available to families who shared income is over \$300,000. Bidens announcement of the child care amendment of AFP acknowledged the goals of the feminists’ rights directly, by stating that its initiative to provide services to all children increase the chances of mother employment and pursuing higher education.<sup>333</sup> Influential policymakers of the amendment, Dr. Taryn W. Morrissey, defended the complete expansion of accessibility to child care in the AFP through the historical evidence that child care had failed to meet the goals of women and families since the CDA.<sup>334</sup> It was crucial to her and all policymakers that return to the CDA as closely as possible, but that does not mean they created a CDA.

In practice this is Americas largest federal block grant proposal for state incentivization in building universal child care, it is not a federal subsidy for child care.

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<sup>332</sup> Executive Branch. “The Build Back Better Framework,” *Whitehouse*.

<sup>333</sup> Executive Branch. “The Build Back Better Framework,” *Whitehouse*.

<sup>334</sup> T.W. Morrissey, “Child care and parent labor force participation: a review of the research literature,” *Rev Econ Household* 15, (2017): 1–24.

No significant change was made to the model of federal childcare under the AFP. Just like the first child tax credits of the 1980s, and block grants of preschool in the 1990s, the AFP is leaving universal child care entirely up to States and local government entities to construct and administer. Although the policy hopes to reach twenty million families a year, so did other federal block grants in the more recent past, but state only access has proved that state control limits the actual accessibility. In her interview with Suddath, Gross made a clear statement that certain block grants and tax cuts are not a strong enough incentives for all states to buy into the given program. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) allowed states to buy into Medicare for all but as of 2021, twelve states have still not bought into the program and their population does not have direct access to the federal healthcare policy.<sup>335</sup> The ACA and the AFP have the exact same framework and incentives for state buy-ins are mirror images. States without a current child care program, over ten as of 2021, are likely deterred from the high cost of creating one under a single block grant.<sup>336</sup> Lastly, child care advocates still distrust States ability to provide effective and comprehensive services that protect communities and centers parental inclusion, community engagement, and bias practices of location and training.<sup>337</sup> Once the AFP was added to the BBB it was clear that the bill was a modern solution, it was radical given the past forty years of child care policies, but what it was not was a CDA.

## Conclusion

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<sup>335</sup> Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

<sup>336</sup> Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

<sup>337</sup> New York Times. Terry Gross, “As child care costs soar, providers are barely getting by. Is there any fix?” *NPR* (Washington D.C.), Dec. 16, 2021.

Ironically, the closest resemblance the AFP had to the CDA would be its failure to pass and why. Conservatives in the Senate stalled the bill until it failed to gain 50 votes, and cited issues that too many controversial amendments were added to the bills framework and that not all Americans needed or would gain from the policies themselves. The failure of the BBB to pass has received little opposition by child care leaders in the mainstream and the AFP amendment was trivial in the media over other concerns. There was no grassroots ad hoc coalition, no public displays of protest, ultimately the policy was a conscious sidenote by Democrats and one that they were prepared to scrap in negotiation. However, it went completely under the radar by conservatives and by end of the joint committee was mutual ground for support across the aisle. America needed to solve child care crisis they believed was created by the pandemic. But conservatives didn't want BBB and child care was a causality of political ideology once again. Failure of a policy aiming to provide services to all American has been the normal for advocates. As the economy struggled to return to normal in 2022 and business were attempting to reopen their doors, a lot of child care centers across the country were never able to bounce back. Without federal intervention to save a business model destined to fail, it was only a matter of time before a shock to the economy would drive hundreds of proud women and mothers their communities to admit defeat.

The history of the CDA tells a powerful story of women who fought American tradition, oval office, and the fall of the New Deal politics to pass their policy. Not write it, not revise it, just pass it. It's a disheartening story of how powerful they all knew child care was to empowerment and liberation of women of all shapes, color, and sizes, and the sacrifices they made and accepted on speak to their end goal, universal child care. Poor

policy or not, Women and activists have for half a century given sacrificed and appeased the political machine just to get some federal support, and countless they are given crumbs and in the rare chance they even get a policy to the desk of the oval office, nothing. America politics is stuck in the loop of demanding and supporting the protection of women but denying women their liberation at the cost of child development. Every bill to come after the CDA generates large academic reports, each supporting the same argument.

Florence Ruderman in 1964:

The women's place-in-the-home shibboleth is a thing of the past if it ever was a legitimate concept.... Many are heads of families, others supplement family income, improve opportunities for other family members, and still others work to realize personal and career objectives... However, whether the mother works because of extreme economic need or for other reasons, this Nation needs her abilities and skills. We know we are losing contributions of many women because of obstacles related to child care.<sup>338</sup>

Dr. Morrissey in 2016:

American mothers today are more likely to be employed, and are on average more educated and older, than in years past, which may reduce mothers' employment responses to changes in child care because their attachment to the labor force is stronger. Generalizing findings from other countries to the U.S. context is problematic given that most other developed countries have stronger public early care and education systems, parental leave benefits, and other work-family policies.

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<sup>338</sup> Florence A. Ruderman, "Some Conclusions Drawn from the Child Welfare League Day Care Project," paper presented before the Maternal and Child Health Section of the American Public Health Association, Oct. 6 1964, CWLA collections, SWHA (hereafter CWLAC), box 23, folder 3, p. 2.

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