Race, Class, Gender, and the American Welfare State (1930s-1990s)

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Abstract : The American society, like all societies, is fractured by social divisions between different groups of people. It is divided by race, class, gender, and other social and cultural characteristics. Social divisions affect the way and the manner welfare is delivered for citizens within the American society. The welfare state exists to guarantee the promotion of well –being for all the different components within a society without taking into account their age, gender, their ethnicity/race, or their social belonging (class). Race, class, and even gender issues are the main factors that affected the formal structure, the nature, as well as the evolution of the American welfare state and led to its uniqueness. They have affected the structure and the evolution of the American welfare state since its creation in the 1930s, and led to its uniqueness in an international level. This study aims therefore at enhancing the readers' awareness of social divisions: race, class, gender and their implications for the distribution of welfare resources and life chances in the USA from the early 1930s to the late 1990s.