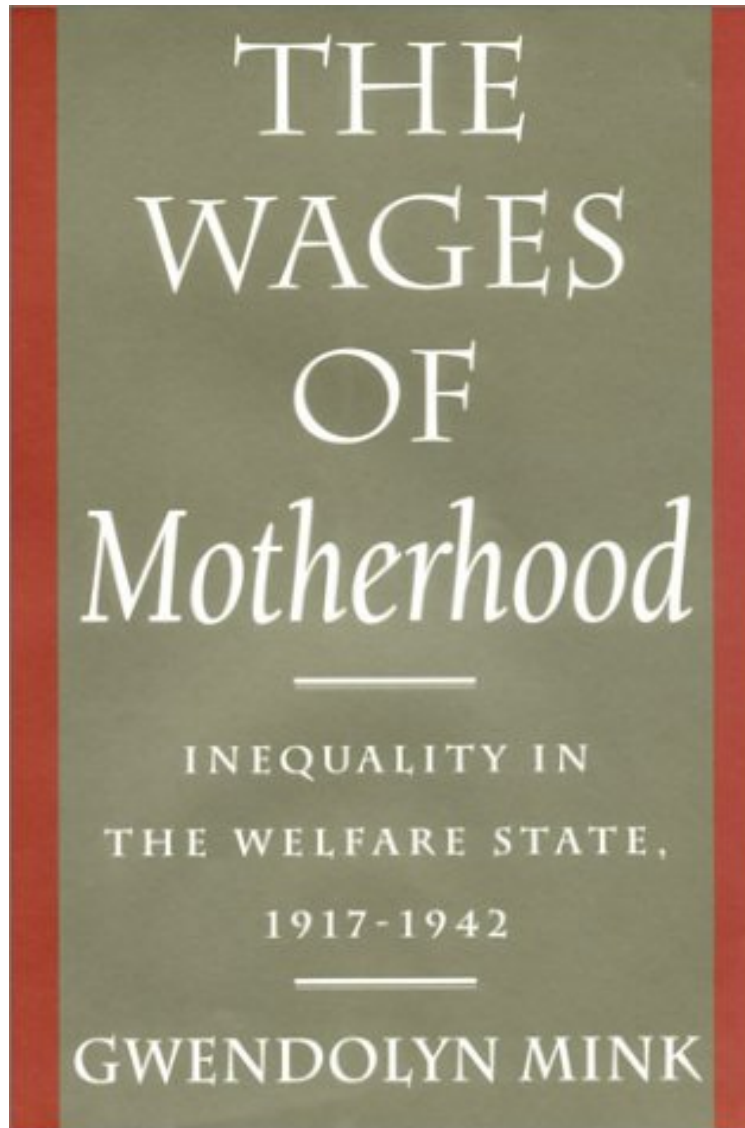


[Library ebook] The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942

The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942

Gwendolyn Mink

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Gwendolyn Mink : The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917-1942*:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating expose By missmao Mink provides a history of the maternalists, a little-known group of women who created the idea of "mother's pensions", a precursor to welfare in

America. The maternalists' views were similar to those of first-wave feminists in their protectionist outlook. Roosevelt and other New Dealers were sympathetic to the maternalists' goals, including that of Americanization of immigrants and their descendants. This book is an eye-opening look at the origins of welfare and how the original welfare system operated in America.

Winner of the Victoria Schuck Award given by the American Political Science Association for the best book published during 1995 on women and politics Entering the vigorous debate about the nature of the American welfare state, *The Wages of Motherhood* illuminates ways in which a "maternalist" social policy emerged from the crucible of gender and racial politics between the world wars. Gwendolyn Mink here examines the cultural dynamics of maternalist social policy, which have often been overlooked by institutional and class analyses of the welfare state.

"The book's brevity and repetitiveness enhance the clarity of its argument, making it a quick and accessible read for policymakers and students alike. Its challenge to contemporary liberal thinking about poor women's work make it a provocative text for courses in public welfare policy, women's labor history, and recent feminism, as well as a needed reminder to activists for social justice." *Labor History* "In this fascinating book, Mink analyzes the development of early welfare policies and programs. . . . She sheds considerable light on the forces of racism and sexism as continuing influences on the structuring and restructuring of American social responsibility." *Choice* "Mink places racial and . . . 'cultural' differences among women at the forefront of her analysis. She underlines the chasm that lay between women who had the power to make policy and women who needed public funds and services to keep their families alive. . . . Mink's work suggests that, indeed, we do need to 'end welfare as we know it,' and to replace it with a generous, universal system of social protection something we've never yet had." *In These Times* "Carefully researched and tightly argued, *The Wages of Motherhood* illuminates the source of today's social policy dilemmas." Linda Gordon, author of *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* "What happens to race and gender equality, and to the reach of the welfare state, when welfare programs are proposed as maternalist interventions to save the family and improve moral character rather than as class and universal entitlements of citizenship? Mink shows how debates and policy in the Progressive period cast their shadow over the fundamental issues of contemporary domestic politics." Michael Rogin, author of *Ronald Reagan the Movie; and Other Episodes in Political Demonology* From the Back Cover Entering the vigorous debate about the nature of the American welfare state, *The Wages of Motherhood* illuminates ways in which a "maternalist" social policy emerged from the crucible of gender and racial politics between the world wars. Gwendolyn Mink here examines the cultural dynamics of maternalist social policy, which have often been overlooked by institutional and class analyses of the welfare state. Mink maintains that the movement for welfare provisions, while resulting in important gains, reinforced existing patterns of gender and racial inequality. She explores how Anglo American women reformers, as they gained increasing political recognition, promoted an ideology of domesticity that became the core of maternalist social policy. Focusing on reformers such as Jane Addams, Grace Abbott, Katherine Lenroot, and Frances Perkins, Mink shows how they helped shape a social policy premised on moral character and cultural conformity rather than universal entitlement.