Race Politics, Religion, and the Social Welfare State

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Claudia Cassidy Theater
Chicago Cultural Center
78 E. Washington

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Social welfare policy is not commonly thought of as an arena where relationships between church and state are worked through. The White House Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, now called the Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, is only a recent development in a deeper history in this regard. Since the New Deal, the federal state has expanded its ability to defend social policy platforms and programs among religious publics—especially politicized black religious publics. As such, race politics have joined social policy formation to become key drivers of church-state relations in the United States.