

Title: The Child Poverty Action Group 1965-1974 : the origins and effectiveness of a single-issue pressure group

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Abstract:

This study raises two key questions about the Child Poverty Action Group between 1965 and 1974. Firstly, it seeks to offer an explanation as to why the Child Poverty Action Group was formed at this time. Secondly, it draws on the empirical evidence set out in this study to ascertain how effective CPAG was as a group during the period; both at drawing attention to the problem of family poverty and at persuading the government of the practicalities of its solution. In answering both these questions the study uses the framework of the theoretical literature. This theoretical framework is used to structure and interrogate the empirical evidence, which is drawn from archival, interview and published sources. The study argues that the origins of the Child Poverty Action Group can be attributed to a number of factors converging at this time and that the rediscovery of poverty acted as a catalyst for the formation of the group. The study concludes that the Child Poverty Action Group was effective as a catalyst, which forced the government to take action about the problem of family poverty. The group was not consistently successful in persuading the government of that its solution was the optimal solution but gradually the solution became mainstream. It argues that the Child Poverty Action Group played an important role. The study aims to be both a detailed historical examination of the Child Poverty Action Group, as an organisation and a case study of an influential pressure group of the period. Thus, it furthers knowledge of academic disciplines of History and Social Policy.