



## Beyond the Safety Net: A Brief Review Forty Years after the War on Poverty

By Douglas J. Besharov

This essay was originally going to be about forty years of real, if uneven, progress against material poverty. But in writing it, I found myself excluding large numbers of African Americans from the general progress that has been made. For them, poverty is deeper, more persistent, and, I fear, more difficult to ameliorate. I want, therefore, to focus on just one aspect of poverty policy: poverty in the African-American community, and what can be done about it. Although I will focus on the plight of low-skilled African Americans, all but one of my policy recommendations applies to all poor Americans.

First, some good news. Between 1968 and 2005, the black poverty rate fell from 35 percent to about 25 percent.<sup>1</sup> As table 1 shows, between 1974 (the first year such data are available) and 2004, the percentage of African Americans with

any earnings at all grew over 20 percent faster than their increase in numbers, their mean earnings rose 57 percent, and their per-capita earnings rose by 72 percent, to \$12,696. At the same time, per-capita earnings for whites rose from \$12,882 to \$20,328, about a 58 percent rise.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, some African Americans are mired at the bottom. Figure 1 portrays just one dimension of their situation: it shows the income of males ages 25–34 by race. For present purposes, the most striking thing is the high portion of black men with zero *reported* income: about 18 percent for blacks, compared to about 7 percent for whites and Hispanics.<sup>3</sup> Although some of these men are in school, this figure is a fair measure of how many black men are disconnected from the mainstream economy. Another issue, of course, is the relative absence of African Americans from the right side of this distribution.<sup>4</sup>

In 2005, blacks were more than three times as likely as whites to be in “deep poverty”— that is,

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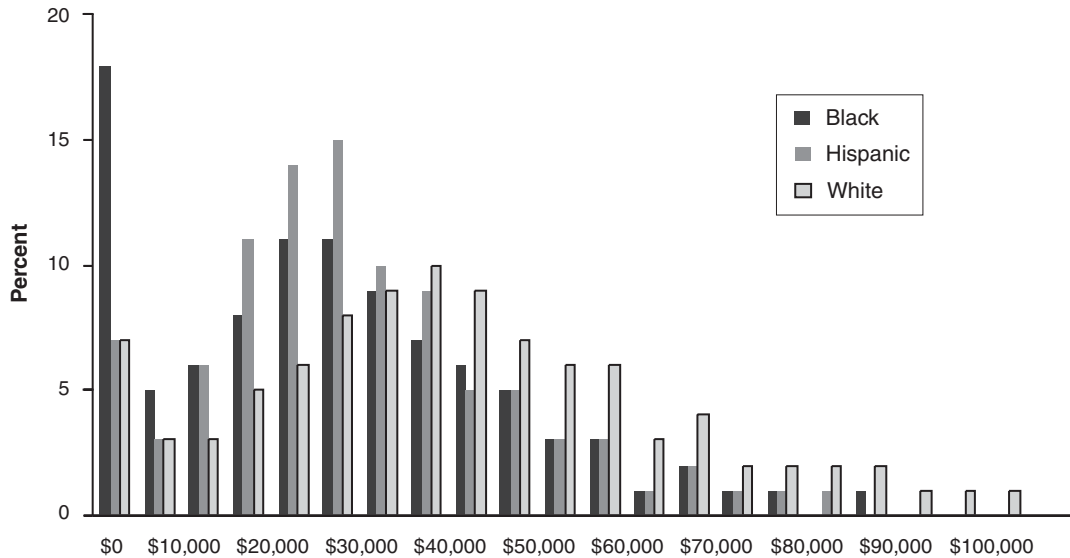
TABLE 1  
BLACK EARNERS AND EARNINGS, 1974 vs. 2004

	Total population (thousands)	Number of wage/salary earners (thousands)	Earners as % of total population	Mean earnings*	Per capita earnings*
1974	24,402	9,870	40.4%	\$18,262	\$7,386
2004	39,229	17,382	44.3%	\$28,652	\$12,696
Increase	+61%	+76%	+10%	+57%	+72%

\*In 2004 dollars.

SOURCE: Author's calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, “Population Estimates,” available through [www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php](http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php) (accessed July 27, 2006); and U.S. Census Bureau, “Historical Income Tables—People,” table P-43, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/p04.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/p04.html) (accessed July 27, 2006).

FIGURE 1  
 MALE EARNINGS DISTRIBUTION, 2005  
 (AGE 24–34)



SOURCE: Author's calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, "Table PINC-03. Educational Attainment—People 25 Years Old and Over, by Total Money Earnings in 2005, Work Experience in 2005, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin and Sex," available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/dinctabs.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/dinctabs.html) (accessed November 1, 2006).

to have incomes below 50 percent of poverty (11.7 percent versus 3.5 percent). Hispanics were about twice as likely as whites to be poor (8.6 percent versus 3.5 percent).<sup>5</sup> These patterns have not changed for at least fifteen years.<sup>6</sup> African Americans also have longer spells in poverty. According to the Survey of Income and Program Participation, from 1996 to 1999, African Americans were about 50 percent more likely than whites to have had spells lasting more than a year, about 80 percent more likely to have had spells lasting more than two years, and about 70 percent more likely to have had spells lasting more than three years. Hispanic spell rates, by contrast, were about a quarter higher than white rates.<sup>7</sup>

What lies behind these numbers? I have always believed that, beyond any structural problems in the economy that may have aggravated black poverty (and poverty in general), the hundred-year history of Jim Crow oppression and exploitation (on top of a century and a half of slavery) left African Americans especially vulnerable to the economic and social shifts of the second half of the twentieth century. (Daniel Patrick Moynihan called it "the earthquake that shuddered through the American family."<sup>8</sup>)

We tend to forget that the Jim Crow era was a reality for many African Americans as recently as the 1960s and early 1970s. As a civil rights worker in Mississippi

in the late 1960s, I saw the conditions that Nicholas Lemann described in his book *The Promised Land*.<sup>9</sup> Tenant farmers lived in tar paper shacks and in perpetual debt to the landowner or local grocery store. Entire towns were denied water and sewer service because they were black. Diseased black children were refused admission to county hospitals. Separate schools for "colored" people made a mockery of the claim of "separate but equal." In the black and white schools that I visited for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund, the differences were palpable and shocking. In one white school, an entire gymnasium wall was covered with the musical instruments for the marching band. The "equal" black school had only one beat-up trumpet—and nothing else. Mississippi welfare policy, when I was there, could have been called "move first" instead of "work first." Black mothers signing up for assistance were told that there were jobs (and better welfare benefits) in the North. In Clarksdale, where I was located, the migration flow went to Chicago, so the black mothers were given bus tickets to Chicago.<sup>10</sup>

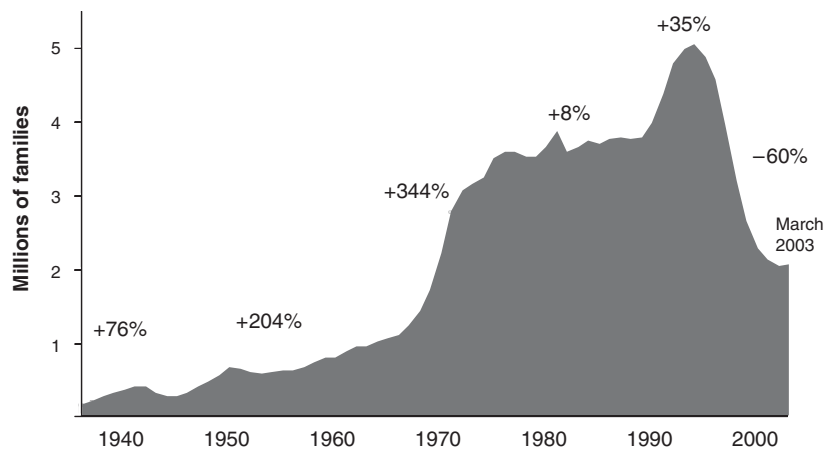
My main complaint, thus, about the last forty years of poverty policy is that it has not sufficiently appreciated the terrible impact of this experience on so many African Americans, and it has not mounted the kinds of programmatic interventions capable of undoing it.

The explosion of welfare recipro-  
 ency is just one small example of  
 what happened when an oppressed,  
 often illiterate, and predominantly  
 rural population was finally given  
 access to welfare benefits. Figure 2  
 portrays the AFDC/TANF caseload  
 from 1936 to 2003. During the  
 period 1960 to 1970, the national  
 welfare caseload more than tripled<sup>11</sup>  
 at the same time that the unemploy-  
 ment rate was cut in half, from  
 almost 6.7 percent to under 3.5  
 percent.<sup>12</sup> This sharp rise in the  
 national caseload was the direct  
 result of the liberalization of welfare  
 policies that allowed an ever larger  
 number of legally eligible African  
 Americans to receive welfare, first in  
 the North, then in the mid-South,  
 and then in the deep South.<sup>13</sup> It is  
 concrete evidence of pent-up human  
 need, finally addressed with the end  
 of Jim Crow welfare rules.

I am less enthusiastic about  
 income support programs (cash and  
 non-cash) than are many others  
 engaged in welfare policy discussions.  
 I worry that incentives and phase-out  
 rates can discourage work, penalize  
 marriage, and encourage unexpected  
 and counterproductive patterns of  
 behavior.<sup>14</sup> More important, income  
 support is not designed to bring a  
 large proportion of low-skilled African  
 Americans, especially men, into the  
 labor force. And an increase in work  
 must be an essential component of any  
 successful poverty reduction strategy.

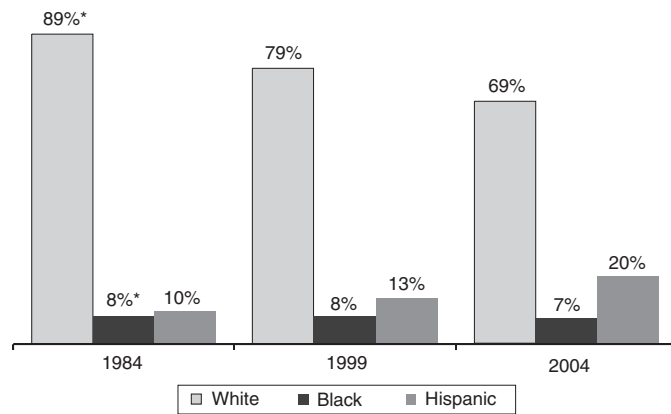
Many researchers have inventoried  
 the achievement deficits and behav-  
 iors that sharply constrict the job  
 prospects of African Americans, espe-  
 cially men.<sup>15</sup> In 2004, for example,  
 black males between ages 25–29 were seven times more  
 likely than their white counterparts to be in prison—8.4  
 percent compared to 1.2 percent.<sup>16</sup> A criminal record  
 makes it even more difficult to be hired. Further reducing  
 the job prospects of low-skilled blacks is the competition

FIGURE 2  
 WELFARE'S GROWTH AND DECLINE



SOURCES: Author's calculations based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "ACF News: Statistics," available at [www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/stats/3697.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/stats/3697.htm) (accessed November 1, 2006); and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Indicators of Welfare Dependence: Annual Report to Congress, 2005* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, September 9, 2005), table TANF 1, available through <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/indicators05/index.htm> (accessed November 1, 2006).

FIGURE 3  
 WORKERS IN PRECISION PRODUCTION, CRAFT, AND REPAIR OCCUPATIONS  
 (PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY RACE/ETHNICITY)



\*Percentages exceed 100 percent because Hispanics are included in white and black races.  
 NOTE: "Precision production, craft, and repair occupations" are shown in the figure for 1984 and 1999. For 2004, when a new occupational coding structure was used, precision production, craft, and repair occupations are approximated by the sum of construction and extraction occupations and installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.  
 SOURCES: Eva E. Jacobs, ed., *Handbook of U.S. Labor Statistics: Employment, Earnings, Prices, Productivity, and Other Labor Data*, 9th ed. (Lanham, MD: Berman Press, 2006), 69, table 1-14; and U.S. Census Bureau, "Occupation of Longest Job in 2004—People 15 Years Old and Over, by Total Money Earnings in 2004, Work Experience in 2004, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex," available at [http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032005/perinc/new06\\_000.htm](http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032005/perinc/new06_000.htm) (accessed July 11, 2007).

they now face from Hispanic immigrants.<sup>17</sup> This is evi-  
 dent in figure 3, which shows the proportions of blacks  
 and Hispanic workers in some skilled trades—mechanics  
 and repairers, construction trades, and precision produc-  
 tion occupations. Although the data for 1984 and 1999

TABLE 2  
EMPLOYMENT AND JOB OPENINGS  
BY EDUCATION OR TRAINING CATEGORY (2000–2010)

Education/training	Employment (percent distribution)		Total job openings (2000–2010)		Mean annual earnings (2000)
	2000	2010	Number (thousands)	Percent distribution	
Four-year or higher degree	20.7	21.8	12,130	20.9	\$56,553
Two-year degree or postsec. voc. ed.	8.1	8.7	5,383	9.3	\$35,701
Work-related job training	71.3	69.5	40,419	69.8	\$25,993

SOURCES: Robert I. Lerman, "Improving Links between High Schools and Careers," in *America's Disconnected Youth: Toward a Preventive Strategy*, Douglas J. Besharov, ed. (Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1999), 185–212, available through [www.aei.org/book9/](http://www.aei.org/book9/); Marie Cohen and Douglas J. Besharov, *The Important Role of Career and Technical Education: Implications for Federal Policy*, University of Maryland Welfare Reform Academy, College Park, MD, 2004, available at [www.welfareacademy.org/pubs/education/roleofcte.pdf](http://www.welfareacademy.org/pubs/education/roleofcte.pdf) (accessed November 30, 2006); and Daniel E. Hecker, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2010," *Monthly Labor Review* (November 2001): 57–82, available at [www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2001/11/art4full.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2001/11/art4full.pdf) (accessed February 1, 2002).

are not completely compatible with the data for 2004,<sup>18</sup> they are close enough to show the trend. During this fifteen-year period, the proportion of Hispanic workers in these occupations about doubled, but the proportion of blacks stayed about the same. The number employed in these occupations rose during this period (although at only about half the rate of total employment), but this nevertheless suggests that Hispanic workers took the place of those zero-income black men in the job queue.

And that is why analysts on the left and right—most recently the team of Harry J. Holzer, Peter Edelman, and the late Paul Offner<sup>19</sup>—have also focused their energies on those kinds of programs that might break the cycle of poverty that traps so many African Americans (and especially African-American men). The track record for such efforts is disappointing. So, briefly, let me outline what I would try to do differently in three areas:

- build human capital,
- reduce unwanted pregnancies, and
- undo hidden racial discrimination.

### Building Human Capital

Despite the political rhetoric and the advocacy of interest groups, few policy analysts seem to be strong proponents of remedial job training and education because of the disappointing results in so many studies.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps job training and education programs have not been given a full and fair test, but it is difficult to see how we could ever mount a large enough and successful enough

effort to put a significant dent in the problem. Instead, it is time to acknowledge that we have a serious, deep-seated problem that requires much more intensive and effective responses at various points in the lives of disadvantaged young people.<sup>21</sup>

Recently, there have been claims, for which I believe the evidence is weak, that expanded preschool programs (resembling Head Start) could eradicate the black/white achievement gap, reduce high school dropout rates, cut teen parenthood rates, raise earnings, and prevent crime.<sup>22</sup> Some of us find these to be wildly inflated claims based on weak research evidence. Properly oriented, such programs might be the basis of an effort to improve the child-rearing and other skills of young mothers, but such an effort would take a generation to show real results. Even then, it would probably not be enough to counter the other forces that conspire to hold back so many disadvantaged children.

We need a permanent, institutionalized platform from which to provide vastly more effective educational services to disadvantaged youth, starting in their early teen years. We have a name for that platform: it is called school. It is difficult to see how there can be a real improvement in the life prospects of disadvantaged children without better schools. The Department of Education's rigorous research effort under Grover Whitehurst and Phoebe Cottingham is a good start,<sup>23</sup> but the effort should be much larger so that it can test many more approaches simultaneously. We need to gain knowledge about what works and what does not work at a much faster pace than in the past. Besides academic subjects, I would argue for a sustained and clear-eyed commitment to career and technical education, including for various craft

TABLE 3  
CUMULATIVE ABORTIONS FOR WOMEN AGES 40–44, 2002

First pregnancy outcome as teens	Total number of women*	Number of abortions in lifetime				Cumulative abortions	
		0	1	2	≥ 3	Total number of abortions*	Percent distribution
		Percent distribution					
First pregnancy occurred in teen years	4,078	31.1	51.9	77.4	84.6	2,885	69.0
Live teen birth	2,545	27.2	18.4	6.7	33.0	690	16.4
Teen abortion	1,125	–	26.9	70.4	50.1	2,089	49.8
Other outcomes**	409	3.9	6.6	0.4	1.5	116	2.8
First pregnancy occurred at age 20 or over	6,339	68.9	48.1	22.6	15.4	1,301	31.0
Total	10,417	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	4,196	100.0

\* In thousands. \*\* Including miscarriage, stillbirth, and ectopic pregnancy.

NOTE: We tabulate the cumulative number of lifetime abortions for women in this age group to minimize the age bias of asking younger women about their pregnancy history.

SOURCE: Author's calculation based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, 2002 *National Survey of Family Growth* (Washington, DC: National Center for Health Statistics, 2006), available through [www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm#Datadocpu](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm#Datadocpu) (accessed October 16, 2006).

trades. College is not a realistic goal for many disadvantaged young people, but a dignified and well-paying job is.<sup>24</sup> As table 2 shows, there will be a continuing demand for workers with less than a college education.<sup>25</sup> There is evidence, most recently from MDRC (formerly the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation) showing that career-type academies (and some versions of what used to be called “voc ed”) can raise school attendance and graduation rates, raise later earnings, and, in some cases, even increase college attendance.<sup>26</sup>

## Reducing Unwanted Pregnancies

Michael Novak was, I think, the first to say that the family was the original Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.<sup>27</sup> Now that there is a separate Department of Education, the line does not work so well—but the underlying point is still as true as ever. I think all of us, even the skeptics, are eager to see the results of various evaluations of family strengthening activities such as those supported by the George W. Bush administration.<sup>28</sup> But I would also like us to address more fundamental family formation issues. In many circumstances, especially for African Americans, the weakened family starts with unwed teen parenthood. There is, once again, an entire literature on this subject.<sup>29</sup> Here I will emphasize one point that is often lost in the rhetoric surrounding the issue and in program planning.

Many of the pregnancies that we bemoan are “unwanted.” But my research convinces me that, although many disadvantaged women are poor contraceptors and face a host of forces that make it even more difficult to avoid pregnancy, many work hard to maintain control of their own fertility.

To demonstrate my point, consider abortion rates. Table 3 is based on abortion data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). The survey missed about 50 percent of all abortions, but most researchers think the patterns it reveals are essentially accurate.<sup>30</sup> Table 3 tallies the total number of reported abortions to women based on whether they also reported a teenage pregnancy. Among women interviewed between ages 40–44, 70 percent of all abortions were to women who had been pregnant as teenagers (resulting in either a birth, abortion, or miscarriage).<sup>31</sup>

Much could have been done to help these women have better control over their own bodies, starting with the provision of more reliable contraceptives. (Condoms and even the pill have high failure rates for low-income women.<sup>32</sup>) The practices of family planning clinics also need examination. Too many seem to provide little or no follow-up to women who have had pregnancy tests (and even abortions). Surely that would be a time to ask about whether the woman needed additional help with birth control.<sup>33</sup> Such an effort would also involve protecting young girls from early sexual abuse and exploitation.

According to Edward O. Laumann and colleagues, in 1992, “[a] much larger percentage of black women report not wanting their first experience of vaginal intercourse to happen when it did than did women of other racial and ethnic groups, 41 percent compared to an average of 29 percent.”<sup>34</sup>

### Undoing Hidden Racial Discrimination

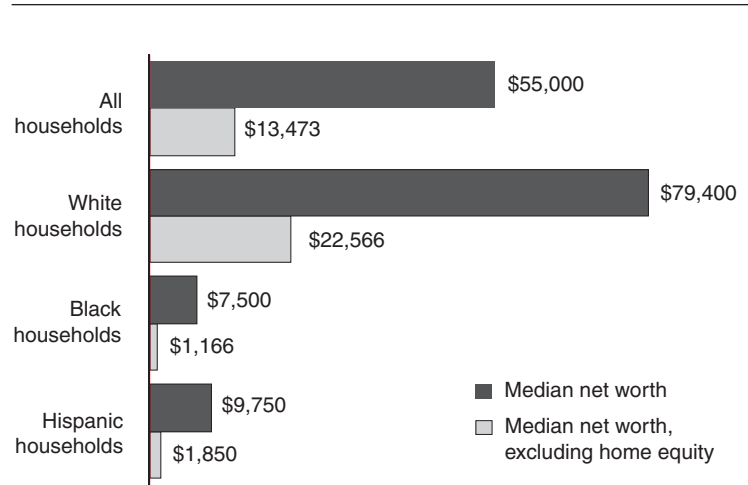
The goal of erasing racial bias and discrimination is, I fear, a very long-term goal, one which goes far beyond the confines of this paper. What we should address immediately are those government policies—three of which I describe below—that discriminate against African Americans, I hope, inadvertently.

**Federal College Aid.** Put simply, current aid formulas are tilted in favor of the white middle class. The aid formula disregards all family assets when parental income is less than \$49,999 and, regardless of family income, ignores the home equity (however great) in the family’s principal residence. As Figure 4 dramatically shows, disregarding assets and home equity obscures important wealth differences between whites and blacks.<sup>35</sup> This might not be a problem if there were enough funds and more to go around, but there are not. Hence, the effect of these rules is to decrease the amount of aid available for the truly needy.

**Child Support.** Current child support policies, designed to counter endemic nonsupport by middle-class fathers, create often-substantial disincentives for low-income men to be in the formal economy—and criminalize many of them for their resulting anger and intransigence.<sup>36</sup> This hits black men most heavily. Surely we can develop a system that makes more practical distinctions based on earnings potential and the social factors surrounding African-American families. A full income pass-through would be an important step.

**Child Welfare Services and Foster Care Placement.** I believe we have overreacted to the poor child-rearing practices prevalent in some low-income black communities when they are more accurately viewed as the result of social and community factors.<sup>37</sup> By labeling cases of inadequate cognitive and social nurturing “child neglect” and even “child abuse,” and by using a quasi-law-enforcement

FIGURE 4  
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH  
BY RACE AND ETHNICITY (2000)



NOTE: Dollar amounts in 2000 dollars.  
SOURCE: Shawna Orzechowski and Peter Sepielli, “Net Worth and Asset Ownership of Households: 1998 and 2000,” *U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Reports P70-88* (2003), available at [www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/p70s/p70-88.pdf](http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/p70s/p70-88.pdf) (accessed November 30, 2006).

intervention, we have inappropriately disrupted hundreds of thousands of families that would have benefited more from a supportive intervention based, for example, on a nurse home-visitor model.

This essay has been, of necessity, brief. But I hope it has helped frame the many complicated issues we face. We have learned a great deal in the last forty years and have made real progress against poverty. I believe that pursuing the ideas described here would move us toward further gains.

### Notes

1. U.S. Census Bureau, “Historical Poverty Tables,” table 2, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/histpov/hstpov2.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/histpov/hstpov2.html) (accessed July 27, 2006).
2. Author’s calculation from U.S. Census Bureau, “Annual Population Estimates,” [www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php](http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php) (accessed July 27, 2006); and U.S. Census Bureau, “Historical Income Tables—People, Table P-43, Workers (Both Sexes Combined) by Median Earnings and Mean Earnings,” available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/incpertoc.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/incpertoc.html) (accessed July 27, 2006).
3. Author’s calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, “Detailed Income Tabulations from the CPS, 2006 ASEC (2005 Income),” table PINC-03, August 29, 2006, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/dinctabs.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/dinctabs.html) (accessed November 1, 2006).

4. See, for example, Douglas J. Besharov, "The Economic Stagnation of the Black Middle Class (Relative to Whites)" (testimony, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, DC, July 15, 2005), available at [www.aei.org/publication22851/](http://www.aei.org/publication22851/).

5. Author's calculation based on U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty 2005, Poverty Highlights, Detailed Tables," table POV01, August 29, 2006, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty05.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty05.html) (accessed November 1, 2006).

6. Ibid.

7. Author's calculation based on U.S. Census Bureau, "Spells of Poverty for Persons Who Became Poor during the 1996 SIPP Panel, by Selected Characteristics: 1996–1999," table 4, Detailed Tables, Survey of Income and Program Participation, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/sipp96/table04.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/sipp96/table04.html) (accessed November 14, 2006).

8. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Defining Deviancy Down," *American Scholar* (1993): 17–30, quoting Samuel H. Preston, "Children and the Elderly: Divergent Paths for America's Dependents," *Demography* 21, no. 4 (1984): 451; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Beyond Welfare," Statement before the Senate Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy, 100th Cong., 1st sess., January 23, 1987 (mimeo), 5, quoting Samuel H. Preston, "Children and the Elderly: Divergent Paths for America's Dependents."

9. Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: Knopf, 1991).

10. See Fred Powledge, "The Great Migration," *Transition*, no. 55 (1992): 74–76, stating: "During the three decades ending in 1970, five million black Americans moved from the South to the North. It seemed easy and simple; the cost of a one-way train ticket from Clarksdale, Mississippi, to Chicago was \$11.50." See also Stewart E. Tolnay, "Educational Selection in the Migration of Southern Blacks, 1880–1990," *Social Forces* 77, no. 2 (1998): 487–514.

11. Author's calculation based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "Average Monthly Families and Recipients for Calendar Years 1936–2001," May 25, 2002, available at [www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/stats/3697.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/stats/3697.htm) (accessed November 1, 2006).

12. See U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Unemployment Rate—Civilian Labor Force," available at <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?ln> (accessed November 1, 2006).

13. See, generally, R. Shep Melnick, *Between the Lines: Interpreting Welfare Rights* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1994).

14. See, for example, Robert Moffitt, "Incentive Effects of the U.S. Welfare System: A Review," *Journal of Economic Literature* 30, no. 1 (1992): 56, stating: "The literature on the

incentive effects of the U.S. welfare system reviewed in this survey has shown unequivocal evidence of effects on labor supply, participation in the welfare system, and on some aspects of family structure. . . . The econometric studies show that labor supply is reduced by the AFDC and Food Stamp programs, that higher potential benefits induce greater participation in these programs, and that the programs affect family structure though usually weakly."

15. See, generally, Peter Edelman, Harry J. Holzer, and Paul Offner, *Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 2006); and Ronald B. Mincy, ed., *Black Males Left Behind* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 2006).

16. The U.S. Department of Justice, "The Nation's Prison Population Continues Its Slow Growth," news release, October 23, 2005, available at [www.ojp.gov/newsroom/2005/BJS06002.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/newsroom/2005/BJS06002.htm) (accessed October 31, 2006).

17. See, generally, George J. Borjas, Jeffrey Grogger, and Gordon H. Hanson, "Immigration and African American Employment Opportunities: The Response of Wages, Employment, and Incarceration to Labor Supply Shocks" (working paper 12518, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2006), available at [www.nber.org/papers/w12518](http://www.nber.org/papers/w12518) (accessed November 30, 2006); George J. Borjas, "Native Internal Migration and the Labor Market Impact of Immigration," *Journal of Human Resources* 41 (Spring 2006): 221–258; and George J. Borjas, "Increasing the Supply of Labor through Immigration," *Center for Immigration Studies Background* (May 2004), available at [www.cis.org/articles/2004/back504.pdf](http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back504.pdf) (accessed November 30, 2006), estimating that immigration between 1980 and 2000 lowered the wages of high school dropouts by 7.4 percent, of college graduates by 3.6 percent, and of high school graduates and workers with some college by around 2 percent; and estimating that immigration lowered the wages of native-born whites by 3.5 percent, of native-born blacks by 4.5 percent, and of native-born Hispanics by 5 percent.

18. "Precision production, craft, and repair occupations" are shown in figure 3 for 1984 and 1999. For 2004, when a new occupational coding structure was used, precision production, craft, and repair occupations are approximated by the sum of construction and extraction occupations and installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.

19. Peter Edelman, Harry J. Holzer, and Paul Offner, *Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men*.

20. See, for example, Daniel Friedlander and Gary Burtless, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, *Five Years After: The Long-Term Effects of Welfare-to-Work Programs* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications, 1995).

21. See, generally, Douglas J. Besharov, ed., *America's Disconnected Youth: Toward a Preventive Strategy* (Washington, DC:

Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1999), available at [www.aei.org/book9/](http://www.aei.org/book9/).

22. See, for example, *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Head Start Reduces Crime and Improves Achievement* (Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2006), available at [www.fightcrime.org/reports/headstartbrief.pdf](http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/headstartbrief.pdf) (accessed November 30, 2006), stating: "Head Start has narrowed the education achievement gap between low- and upper-income kids, increased high school graduation rates and reduced crime."

23. The National Center for Education Research, "Education Research," Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, available at [www.ed.gov/programs/edresearch/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/edresearch/index.html) (accessed November 21, 2006).

24. Robert I. Lerman, "Improving Links between High Schools and Careers," in *America's Disconnected Youth: Toward a Preventive Strategy*, ed. Douglas J. Besharov, 185–212; and Marie Cohen and Douglas J. Besharov, *The Important Role of Career and Technical Education: Implications for Federal Policy* (College Park, MD: University of Maryland Welfare Reform Academy, 2004), available at [www.aei.org/publication22220/](http://www.aei.org/publication22220/) (accessed November 30, 2006).

25. Daniel E. Hecker, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2010," *Monthly Labor Review* (November 2001): 57–82, available at [www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2001/11/art4full.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2001/11/art4full.pdf) (accessed February 1, 2002); and Marie Cohen and Douglas J. Besharov, *The Important Role of Career and Technical Education: Implications for Federal Policy*.

26. See, generally, James J. Kemple and Judith Scott-Clayton, *Career Academies: Impacts on Labor Market Outcomes and Educational Attainment* (New York: MDRC, 2004); and James J. Kemple and Jason C. Snipes, *Career Academies: Impacts on Students' Engagement and Performance in High School* (New York: MDRC, 2000).

27. Michael Novak, "The Best Anti-Poverty Plan," *Washington Times*, February 5, 1993; Michael Novak, "The American Family, an Embattled Institution," in *The Family: America's Hope*, ed. Harold M. Voth, James Hitchcock, Archbishop Nicholas T. Elko, Mayer Eisenstein, Leopold Tyrmand, Joe J. Christensen, Harold O. J. Brown, and John A. Howard (Rockford, IL: Rockford College Institute, 1979).

28. Compare Andrew J. Cherlin, "Should the Government Promote Marriage?" *Contexts* 2, no. 4 (2003): 22–29, to Andrew J. Cherlin, e-mail message to Yael Levin, November 27, 2006, stating: "I have been saying recently in presentations that I think

the random-assignment evaluations of relationship enhancement programs for low-income couples are worth doing but that I think much of the rest of the money will not be well spent."

29. See, for example, Rebecca A. Maynard, ed., *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1996).

30. Author's calculation based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, "National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle VI (2002)," available at [www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/da/index/techinfo/H15061.HTM](http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/da/index/techinfo/H15061.HTM) (accessed November 27, 2006).

31. Author's calculation from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, *2002 National Survey of Family Growth* (NSFG) (Washington, DC: National Center for Health Statistics, 2006), with public use data files available at [www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm#Data-docpu](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm#Data-docpu) (accessed October 16, 2006).

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33. Douglas J. Besharov, Felicia H. Stewart, Karen H. Gardiner, and Molly L. Parker, ed., *Family Planning Services for Special Populations* (Menlo Park, CA: Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 1998).

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36. Harry J. Holzer, Paul Offner, and Elaine Sorenson, *Defining Employment among Young Black Less-Educated Men: The Role of Incarceration and Child Support* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2004), available at [www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411035\\_declining\\_employment.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411035_declining_employment.pdf) (accessed November 30, 2006); and Peter Edelman, Harry J. Holzer, and Paul Offner, *Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 2006).

37. Douglas J. Besharov, "Child Abuse Realities: Over-Reporting and Poverty," *Virginia Journal of Social Policy and the Law* 8, no. 1 (Fall 2000): 165–203.