Lessons for Social Scientists and Politicians: An Analysis of Welfare Reform

Jasmin Sethi
Lessons for Social Scientists and Politicians:

An Analysis of Welfare Reform

Abstract

Despite soaring unemployment and the worst economic crisis in decades, 18 states cut their welfare rolls last year, and nationally the number of people receiving cash assistance remained at or near the lowest in more than 40 years. Escalating unemployment coupled with the impending expiration of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in 2010, will bring renewed attention to welfare reform. This Article examines the effects of President Clinton’s Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 and in particular, evaluates how social science interacted with politics to culminate in the enactment of the PRWORA. It explicates several social science theories regarding the effects of welfare on individual behavior and explores whether and how the predictions of these theories have born out since the enactment of PRWORA. I argue that the expressive message demanded by politicians and the American public in the 1990s – that all of those individuals who wish to work can obtain a job – predetermined which social science research findings were relied upon during the enactment of TANF. The expressive message of the booming 1990s is no longer salient in the current climate of recession and increasing job loss. The current recession, therefore, creates opportunities for social scientists and policy makers to advance a welfare reform agenda more closely aligned with the research and recommendations of social scientists.

Jasmin Sethi

Jasmin Sethi practices in the areas of general litigation and antitrust at Mayer Brown LLP in Washington, DC. Prior to joining the firm, she clerked for the Honorable Jerome A. Holmes on the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. She received her JD from Harvard Law School and her PhD in Economics from Harvard University. Many thanks to the John M. Olin Center for Law, Economics, and Business for assistance with funding; to Philip B. Heymann of Harvard Law School and Peter B. Edelman of Georgetown Law Center for their helpful comments; and to all those who have provided research assistance for this paper.
Table of Contents

I. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 2

II. Background ........................................................................................................................................ 5

III. The Relevance of Social Science ................................................................................................. 9

IV. Welfare Recipients and the Culture of Poverty ........................................................................ 11
    A. William Julius Wilson and Theories about Poverty .............................................................. 12
    B. Charles Murray and the Myth of the Welfare Queen .......................................................... 14

V. Theories and Evidence about Employability: the Rational Actor and Expectancy Models .......................................................... 17
    A. The Welfare Recipient as a Rational Actor ........................................................................... 18
    B. Expectations and the Behavior of Welfare Recipients ....................................................... 20

VI. Can Welfare Recipients Work? ........................................................................................................ 22
    A. The Limitations of Welfare Recipients ............................................................................... 22
    B. The Impact of Welfare Reform on Those with Significant Limitations ................................ 24

VII. Politics and Morality ......................................................................................................................... 27

VIII. Did PRWORA Have Positive Economic Effects? .................................................................... 30

IX. Conclusions and Recommendations ............................................................................................ 33
I. Introduction

In the current economic climate of job loss and increasing poverty, little attention has been paid to the looming reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) in 2010. Yet, the provision of welfare benefits has become more vital during difficult economic times. Twenty-three of the thirty largest states have seen increases in the welfare rolls in the last year; at the same time, many states have seen declines, most likely because people are not able to obtain benefits or are not even attempting to do so. While the expansion of food stamps, with more than eight million more Americans receiving food stamps in March 2009 than in September 2007, indicates the presence of increased need for government support during the recession, the TANF program seems to have succeeded in repelling applicants through the stringent requirements many states impose.

Welfare payments are not even sufficient to keep people out of poverty. Current TANF benefits, combined with Food Stamps, still amount to less than the poverty level in every state; in fact, the median TANF benefit for a family of three is approximately one-third of the poverty level. In addition, as the percentage and number of poor people has increased in recent years, the number of people receiving TANF has decreased. Between 2000 and 2003, the number of poor children rose by eleven percent, and during this same period, the number of people receiving TANF fell by nine percent. The current downturn has been the stress test of the 1996 welfare reform and has demonstrated that the program fails to support those in need.

The 1996 welfare reform bill was motivated by the belief, bolstered by the writings of some social scientists, that government assistance encourages a debilitating “culture of poverty,” marked by laziness, promiscuity and addiction, and curable only by
a swift cessation of benefits.\textsuperscript{10} The expressive message impacting the political reform in 1996 was twofold. First, President Clinton fostered the belief that those who worked should not be poor.\textsuperscript{11} Second, politicians and the American public believed that those who “could” work, \textit{should}. Like other reformist legislation throughout history, the politics and policy of welfare reform was impacted by social science. The prevalence of the expressive message, however, that individuals should be expected to work, ultimately determined which social science would be deemed to have relevance and which would not. Those social science theories that supported contrary theories were reviewed, but ultimately ignored in the passage of the 1996 reform.

This Article argues that many of the social science theories that were ignored proved to have predictive value. It also contends that social scientists and interested policy makers have a unique opportunity to implement policy more in line with social science research in the current economic climate, which makes government assistance palatable to a significant portion of the population. The expressive message of the booming 1990s is no longer salient; one that is more consistent with the social science research—not everyone can obtain and retain a job without a public sector guarantee—is. With unemployment rates in the double digits and climbing, Americans can no longer believe that anyone who wants to work can get a job. A five-year lifetime limit for TANF without any public sector guaranteed job equates to a recipe for increasing destitution. While the booming 1990s concealed this harsh reality, the current economic recession has made welfare reform more urgent and its political success more feasible.

This paper examines how social science research, both theory and evidence, was cited, ignored, and manipulated in the debate over welfare reform. Academic research
before and after the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity
Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) strongly suggested that a significant subpopulation of
welfare recipients would have considerable difficulty in obtaining and retaining
employment in the private sector and would have worse outcomes as a result of time
limits. By including guaranteed public sector jobs in the original plan, the Clinton
administration addressed the possibility that for a subpopulation of welfare recipients, the
amount of resources that would be required to place them into private sector jobs was
considerable. The plan embraced both the ideal that in a rich society, such as that of the
United States, no one should be left without basic support, and the reality that in order to
promote work, the government would sometimes have to provide it. Nevertheless, a
confluence of political pressures, public perceptions about morality, and the popular
understanding of social science ultimately produced a conservative welfare reform bill.

By examining the research on the effects of PRWORA, I am able to provide
crude examples of both the concerns and the predictions of social scientists that
proved to be correct and those that did not. While social scientists were pleasantly
surprised by the initial positive effects on employment and poverty of the welfare bill,
many of their concerns about the need to tailor the program to individual needs and the
inability of individuals to obtain and retain long-term jobs in the private sector have
proven apposite. An examination of how social science was used and misused in the
political debate over the PRWORA may provide some insight as to how social science
can become more influential in future reauthorizations of the bill. The next
reauthorization of the TANF program is near; the program will expire in fiscal year 2010.
Increased joblessness and the greater awareness of a need for a social safety net, even
within the middle class, offers a tremendous opportunity to reform the bill in a way as to address its failings. Specifically, the social science that was ignored in 1996, along with supporting research afterwards, can be used to support a program that provides jobs to those who cannot find them within the allotted period of time.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II presents the basic provisions of PRWORA. Section III describes several social science theories about the effects of welfare on work behavior and explains why social science research was relevant to the policy debate. Sections IV and V explore more deeply how three of the most relevant social science theories were used in the political debate: how they were supported or refuted by the evidence about welfare recipients before the bill was passed and what the findings about the effects of PRWORA indicate about the relevance of these theories. Section VI explores whether the underlying assumption of the various social science theories—that welfare recipients could work given the appropriate incentives and resources—are supported by the evidence then and now. Section VII describes the various political pressures that culminated in the enactment of the PRWORA bill of 1996 despite opposition from senior policy advisors to the President. Section VIII summarizes the effects of PRWORA on the employment and earnings of TANF leavers. Section IX summarizes and concludes with recommendations for social scientists to pursue in future reauthorizations of PRWORA and welfare reform initiatives.

II. Background

When Bill Clinton signed PRWORA on August 22, 1996, he said:

Today we are ending welfare as we know it, but I hope this day will be remembered not for what it ended, but for what it began: a new day that offers hope, honors responsibility, rewards work and changes the
terms of the debate so that no one in America ever feels again the need to criticize people who are poor or on welfare.\textsuperscript{13}

During Clinton’s time in office, the welfare rolls reduced from 14.2 million to 5 million, in great part because the legal obligation to serve all of those who were eligible was repealed in the new program, TANF. The PRWORA, the law reforming the old Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program into Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), was hailed as a bipartisan victory. Yet, several political appointees in the Clinton administration felt disillusioned after Clinton signed the bill, with some going so far as to resign in protest.\textsuperscript{14}

Clinton advocated for welfare reform during the campaign, and several members of his administration had visions of what a liberal welfare reform bill would include. Although the plan that these Clinton advisors had in mind did include time limits, it also included substantial supports such as job training and childcare. Clinton's comprehensive plan to address poverty included full national health insurance, training, education, and child care support to help welfare mothers enter the labor market; increases in the minimum wage and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to ensure that no one getting a job would fall below the poverty line; time limits on welfare; and an ambitious employment program of public service jobs for welfare recipients who could not obtain jobs in the private sector.\textsuperscript{15}

The bill that Clinton actually signed, however, capitalized on his campaign promise of time limits and did not prioritize many of his other asserted preferences. In fact, it embodied the conservative ideal of abandoning sustained support of the poor in exchange for promoting economic self-sufficiency and personal responsibility more than it addressed liberal ideals of compassion and social equality.\textsuperscript{16} This characterization is
particularly true of the PRWORA provision that reduced states' grants by five percent when they failed to enforce five-year lifetime limits on benefits, regardless of an individual’s employment status.\textsuperscript{17}

The goals of the welfare program as articulated by the 104th Congress were very different from the goals of the program when it was first established as part of the New Deal. In the 1930s, welfare was intended to help widows and their children, and work was neither expected of nor socially desirable for these women since most women did not work.\textsuperscript{18} In contrast, the two-part goal of the 1996 reform was to support children while increasing the self-sufficiency of parents.\textsuperscript{19}

The conversion of AFDC into TANF embodied five key changes to the program. First, states were given primary responsibility for designing the program and determining the rules under which families could receive assistance. This flexibility has resulted in an “increasingly diverse set of state programs since 1996.”\textsuperscript{20} While individual state experimentation with policies can be extremely beneficial for national learning, diversity in the welfare program has led to large disparities between states. The effects of such diversity can be seen most readily in the arena of time limits for assistance. Forty-two states and the District of Columbia have termination time limits.\textsuperscript{21} Twenty-six states have sixty-month time limits, seventeen have time limits shorter than sixty months, and two states—Michigan and Vermont—have no time limits at all.\textsuperscript{22} Six states have time limits which eliminate aid to parents after a specific period but continue aid to children.\textsuperscript{23} In addition, states vary in their work support policies. For instance, Wisconsin’s W-2 program provides TANF recipients with work experience and simulates the income and other services they would receive if they were working.\textsuperscript{24} Michigan provides extensive
support services and credits time spent in education and training towards work time.\textsuperscript{25} Many other states are not as involved in preparing TANF recipients for work. For instance, although Texas’s policy regarding time limits is somewhat lenient, the state allocates more resources towards preventing fraud than preparing TANF recipients for the workforce.\textsuperscript{26}

The second significant change that occurred as part of the 1996 welfare reform was that welfare was no longer an individual entitlement, permitting states to deny benefits to qualifying individuals.\textsuperscript{27} Third, the “AFDC funding mechanism of open-ended federal matching payments for state welfare expenditures was replaced by a block grant to each state,”\textsuperscript{28} thereby reducing the funds available to states as well as giving states more flexibility over how to utilize the funds. Unlike the funding arrangement under AFDC, “in which federal funding moved up or down with state funding . . . the TANF block grant was fixed and the contribution for each state was determined by the federal AFDC matching grant contribution in the years prior to PRWORA.”\textsuperscript{29} States were required, however, to “maintain at least seventy-five percent of their previous state spending levels on AFDC in order to receive the full block grant.”\textsuperscript{30} Fourth, “states were required to place an annually accelerating percentage of their caseload in work activities for a specific number of hours . . . [or to] reduce their caseload below its 1995 level.”\textsuperscript{31} Fifth, states were “not allowed to use federal TANF dollars to pay the benefits of families who have been on welfare for more than five years,”\textsuperscript{32} thereby strongly incentivizing states to impose mandatory time limits.

The impact of converting welfare from an entitlement to a benefit to be administered at the will of a state cannot be overestimated. As Hagen observed, “[u]nder
AFDC, if mothers and their children met the income requirements set by a state and the categorical requirements established in the federal law, they were guaranteed cash assistance. By contrast, the key provisions of PRWORA were the implementation of time limits and the flexibility that states were given. States would have their funding cut if they did not force people to work after two years on the welfare rolls and if they did not institute lifetime limits of five years. A state's failure to comply with both the two year and five year requirements would result in a five percent reduction of its block grants.

The law did, however, allow for a hardship exception. States had the option to exempt up to twenty percent of their caseloads because “of hardship or if the family include[d] an individual who ha[d] been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty.”

PRWORA also provided assistance in the form of increased childcare to welfare recipients. At the same time, however, it increased work requirements for food stamp eligibility and reduced aid to legal immigrants. In particular, legal immigrants, with some exceptions, could not receive cash assistance during the five years after their arrival. After this period, states could choose whether or not they would provide cash assistance. All of these provisions served to seal the status of welfare as a benefit to be received by those who worked or at least demonstrated a strong interest in working, not what it had been - a safety net for those in need.

III. The Relevance of Social Science

“All of us have learned through experience . . . that there is no guarantee that social science will affect the debate or the decisions made by Congress and the president.” The debate over welfare reform was influenced by various social science theories about how the behavior of individuals was affected by the availability of
welfare. These theories permeated the welfare debate through the influence of academics who worked in government positions, the influence of ideological think tanks that advanced the theories that suited their political positions, and the general popularization of some of these theories. The most applicable social science theories utilized in the discourse can be categorized into three types: the "culture of poverty" hypotheses, the rational actor theories, and the expectancy models.

The culture of poverty hypotheses varied depending on ideological viewpoint, but all involved a relationship between unemployment, poverty, and the values of responsibility and independence. The rational actor theories, on the other hand, hypothesized that the potential welfare recipient would decide whether to apply for welfare based on a variety of individual factors involving work and lifestyle choices. Finally, the expectancy models theorized about the psychological effects of welfare, arguing that it decreased the recipient's confidence and sense of autonomy, thereby creating dependency. On their face, none of these theories favored conservative ideology, but they were presented and advocated in a way as to favor the expressive message articulated by conservatives.

For politicians, what social scientists had to offer was consideration of the characteristics of the individuals on the welfare program and ideas about how to tailor the program to recipients’ needs. In the context of welfare, the characteristics of the individuals were particularly relevant to determining whether work was an achievable goal, what kind and extent of work was reasonable to expect, and what steps would be needed to achieve successful work outcomes. The role of social scientists was like that of any experts in a political debate—to provide credibility to political arguments. The use
of statistics and studies made policy-makers appear well-informed and gave the impression that they had considered the benefits and pitfalls of various alternatives before arriving at their political positions. Even if ideological beliefs came first and the theoretical and the evidentiary bases for those beliefs came second, the public perceived the reverse.

Social science also allowed political opponents to demonstrate their understanding and concern for the same issues. Republicans manifested their support for Clinton's concern about welfare as a way of life by supporting his idea of time limits. The fact that experts within the Clinton administration advocated for time limits made it easier for Republicans to appear to be agreeing with both the social scientists and President Clinton, even if their plan was substantively different from that of Clinton’s. The use of social science promoted an image of deliberative policymaking that drew upon many voices and perspectives. The relative ignorance of the public resulted in an inadequate check on the tendency of politicians to manipulate social science theories and evidence to achieve the ends they desired.

IV. Welfare Recipients and the Culture of Poverty

Culture of poverty hypotheses were the most popular theories in the discourse among the lay public. The way in which these theories were articulated by academics, presented by politicians, and understood by the public varied drastically based on political ideology. The opposing academic theories about the culture of poverty were connected with William Julius Wilson on the liberal side and Charles Murray on the conservative side.44
A. William Julius Wilson and Theories about Poverty

Wilson’s *The Truly Disadvantaged* argued that the decline in the economically integrated neighborhood amongst minority communities caused a rise in poverty and single motherhood. In Wilson’s view, the mechanism for this decline was desegregation. Desegregation led to the exodus of middle class blacks from black neighborhoods to white neighborhoods. At the same time, technological progress and globalization caused a loss of jobs for low skilled black men. These factors resulted in concentrated poverty in black neighborhoods. Wilson argued that the loss of middle class networks and values, along with the general decline in low skilled jobs, perpetuated the poverty in these communities. This process was seen as the cause of single motherhood, crime, and poverty in such neighborhoods.

Wilson presented convincing evidence that the increase in joblessness, mortality rates, and incarceration of black men had been a significant factor in the decline of marital stability and family structure in the black community. The increase in single motherhood, he argued, was the result of the lack of marriageable black men. In turn, the rise in single motherhood caused more children to be raised in poverty. The reasons for the lack of marriage amongst welfare recipients figured prominently in the hearings on PRWORA to Congress. During these hearings, the respected economist Rebecca Blank testified to the increasing inability of low skilled men to support a family. The work of other sociologists demonstrated that single mothers receiving federal assistance had no male partner because the men in their potential marriage pool were simply not “good men.” The men with whom they came into contact and who sought them as romantic partners were likely to be unemployed, involved with illegal activity, and suffering from emotional problems of their own that made them abusive or simply
unmarriageable. Blank also testified to the lack of evidence to support the idea that welfare dependency had caused an increase in single motherhood.\textsuperscript{51} Consistent with the conclusions of these sociologists, she showed that the population that was likely to end up on welfare was not having children at a higher rate, but instead was getting married at a lower rate.

In other testimony, Michael Horowitz, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, asserted that the evidence concerning the purported relationship between welfare and single motherhood was irrelevant. He condemned the welfare program because it facilitated “today’s family pathology and breakdown.”\textsuperscript{52} This remark exemplifies the manner in which social science research, both theories and evidence, were dismissed when they did not conform to the expressive messages about morality and responsibility that many in Congress wished to convey. The reason for this disregard of research regarding what type of reform would alleviate poverty was likely Congressional awareness of the reality that the public would find it far more difficult to evaluate the social science arguments than it would to judge the expressive ones. In planning for reelection campaigns, Congressional members realized that votes would probably be easier to attract based on moral beliefs and expressive values than on expert testimony justifying that one functional approach towards welfare reform was better than another.

Welfare reform did not address many of the causes cited by Wilson as the root of single motherhood and poverty. Both single motherhood and poverty were at least partly the result of high unemployment and other problems prevalent amongst poor men. Poor men, however, were not a popular object of political favor, and did not receive support under TANF. Without improving the economic opportunities for low skilled men, the
policies failed to increase their means of paying child support and providing substantive support to families.

B. Charles Murray and the Myth of the Welfare Queen

While Wilson’s hypothesis focused on the economic factors that led to the culture of poverty, Charles Murray’s work specifically attempted to demonstrate how the welfare state itself trapped people into poverty. In his view, the very program that was set up to alleviate poverty created dependency that fostered single motherhood, unemployment and poverty by creating “incentives to fail.” Murray identified two mechanisms for this trap. The first was that the rules made it “profitable for the poor to behave in the short term in ways that were destructive in the long term.” The second was that the welfare system masked “long-term losses—to subsidize irretrievable mistakes.” Murray argued that the welfare state had resulted in a permanent dependent underclass. By trying to remove the barriers to escape from poverty, the society “inadvertently built a trap.”

Murray’s hypothesis was easily distorted to confirm popular notions of welfare dependency and the culture of poverty. Since the early 1980s, the middle class had in their mind a vivid picture of the welfare queen—the woman who, though capable of working, simply stayed home and collected welfare check after welfare check. People believed that her lifestyle led to contempt of work by her children and thus resulted in the multigenerational welfare family. This image and others like it promoted the middle class disgust for welfare and the strong desire for reform. President Clinton tapped into this dissatisfaction with the system when making his 1992 campaign promise to “end welfare as we know it” and his slogan “two years and out.”
Misconceptions about the welfare population made it difficult for the middle class to identify with the welfare population as a whole. People imagined welfare recipients to be minority ghetto dwellers living in public housing projects. In actuality, 40% of welfare recipients in 1990 were non-Hispanic whites, 17% were Hispanics, and 40% were blacks.\(^60\) While most welfare recipients did live in metropolitan areas, they did not typically live in inner-city ghettos.\(^61\) Only about 25% of welfare recipients received housing benefits, either by living in public housing or by participating in a housing assistance program.\(^62\) What was true and did receive a great amount of political attention was that most welfare recipients were single mothers with children,\(^63\) and 43% of new AFDC recipients were never married.\(^64\)

This disconnect between the middle class way of life and that of welfare recipients made the program politically unpopular. As social scientists have argued, social programs that appeal to a broad constituency are those that “bring people together – as worthy beneficiaries and contributing citizens – across lines of class, race, and region.”\(^65\) One of the failures of the AFDC program was its contribution towards an increase in class division within the United States. TANF’s five-year time limit was an attempt to reduce societal divisions by imposing middle class values of work and personal responsibility on poor communities. The notion of personal responsibility was invoked repeatedly in the Congressional hearings and debates. The concept of personal responsibility was one of the elements of the Republican Party’s “Contract with America.”\(^66\) Welfare reform was viewed as a means of increasing personal responsibility and accountability and thereby altering the culture of the poor.
An example of the type of Congressional rhetoric that originated in the culture of poverty hypotheses was a speech by Senator Bill Frist in which he claimed:

For 30 years, the welfare system has paid for non-work and non-marriage and has achieved massive increases in both. By undermining the work ethic and rewarding illegitimacy, the problems of the poor and the inner city have actually gotten worse, not better, in the subsequent years. Not only are there more people living in poverty today than ever before but, thanks to welfare, whole generations of Americans have lived and died without ever owning a home, holding down a steady job, or knowing the love and support of both a mother and a father.\(^{67}\)

Given this popular perception, one of the most interesting and surprising facts about welfare recipients was that the vast majority stayed on welfare for less than four years.\(^ {68}\) When Ellwood and Bane examined the population of welfare recipients between 1968 and 1988, only 14% of recipients were found to have been on the program for ten years or more.\(^ {69}\) At any one point in time, however, 48% of recipients were expected to be long-term users, that is, on welfare for ten years or more.\(^ {70}\) Thus, most recipients appeared to use welfare to battle temporary hard times and then return to work. A particular group of long-term users, however, did exist. A snapshot of the program revealed this group of long-term users as comprising a significant percentage of recipients at any single point in time.

TANF addressed the needs of those individuals who used welfare to support themselves in times of hardship, and forced the long-term users to make their behavior conform to that of the temporary users. The reason for this policy decision was that the group that used welfare temporarily was politically empathetic. As Senator Daniel Moynihan observed during the debates:

Half the AFDC population who enter the system leave it within 24 months. We do not know who they are. There is no account kept. There are no samples taken. But we have a pretty good idea. These are mature
women whose marriages have come apart, have been dissolved in some way or other. For them, AFDC is a form of income insurance just as unemployment insurance protects those persons working. They need it for a while, then they need it no longer and they leave.71

Combing through the Congressional record yields little substantive discussion of those individuals who remained on welfare for longer periods and the reasons for their lack of work effort. The policy was designed around the more politically attractive group since the middle class could identify with temporary hard times. Reforming welfare to be a program that temporarily supported those who suffered from bad luck manifested a more attractive expressive message than reforming it to increase support for those who did not attempt to work. While the second communicated a message that the government was potentially wasting funds on those who were too lazy to work, the first was more appealing because it conveyed the message that the government was willing to help those who helped themselves.

V. Theories and Evidence about Employability: the Rational Actor and Expectancy Models

The two other social science theories relevant to welfare reform addressed the issue of the employability of welfare recipients. The rational actor and expectancy models hypothesized what types of factors influenced an individual's work opportunities and willingness to work. By applying these theories to the facts known about welfare recipients, policy makers made predictions about the consequences of particular policies. These theories, however, were applied differently depending on the assumptions of policy makers—assumptions that were often grounded in ideology.
A. The Welfare Recipient as a Rational Actor

The rational choice model assumed that individuals will rationally decide whether or not to apply for welfare benefits based on the value of the benefits, the value of their work opportunities, and the value to them of leisure time.\(^72\) If what a person could earn was no higher than what she could obtain from welfare, a rational person would choose not to work and go on welfare, since most people incur some disutility from working. If the benefits from welfare were slightly smaller than what an individual could have earned, then the presence of some disutility from work (or alternatively stated, value for leisure) could have led individuals to still prefer to go on welfare.\(^73\) The cost of paying childcare for young children, or the possible loss of any other benefits such as health benefits, would have made work appear even less attractive.\(^74\)

The reality prior to welfare reform was that for many welfare recipients, work simply did not pay enough to make it worth their while. Over fifty percent of welfare recipients at any one time did not have a high school degree.\(^75\) Given their lack of education and low skills, they were likely to obtain only jobs paying the minimum wage or slightly higher. Working forty hours a week at a wage of $5 dollars an hour, 20% higher than the $4.15 federal minimum wage in 1991, an individual could have earned approximately $10,000 a year.\(^76\) If she had two children and lived in the state of Pennsylvania, she could have obtained AFDC benefits of $5,052 in addition to $2,166 worth of food stamps.\(^77\) Thus, working provided her with $2,732 of extra funds, but she would have lost Medicaid, and would have had to pay some state income taxes as well as childcare.\(^78\) If she were earning exactly the minimum wage, paying just over a hundred
dollars a month for childcare would have eliminated the difference between working and not working in order to obtain AFDC.

The more liberal members of Congress acknowledged this reality. Senator Kennedy noted:

Of the parents who will be affected by the time limit, only one-third have a high school degree. Yet recent studies show that three-quarters of the available jobs in low-income areas require a high school diploma. Sixty percent of those jobs require experience in a particular type of job. And there are already two to three jobseekers for every job vacancy. This bill is not seriously designed to change those realities. There is no way this bill can create jobs for millions of low-income, low-skilled parents who will be looking for work at the same time in the same communities. It will not help schools do a better job of preparing young men and women for an increasingly demanding workplace. In fact, the Republican majority is busy cutting the very education and job training funds necessary to produce a skilled American work force in the years ahead.  

While reducing or eliminating welfare would have incentivized the rational welfare recipient to work, so too, would have increasing the benefits from work. A larger benefit from work, meaning better work opportunities yielding higher than the minimum wage or significantly raising the minimum wage, would also have incentivized work. Consistent with this view is the 1998 findings by Rangarajan, Schochet, and Chu that after PRWORA was passed those women in jobs with higher benefits and wages were more likely to be employed after two years. Furthermore, a study conducted by Meyer and Rosenbaum in 2000 found that most of the increase in employment amongst welfare mothers from 1984 to 1996 can be attributed to the expansion of the EITC. Thus, Clinton's expansion of the EITC and increase of the minimum wage may have done as much or more to increase employment as did time limits.

The popular view during welfare reform was that welfare was not an entitlement. The American public generally favored government support linked to work instead of
mere handouts, even when such support may have been more expensive. This preference appeared to have been motivated by a belief in mobility, that the plentiful nature of opportunities in the United States would reward those who worked. “While Americans want to provide a safety net for those who have suffered from hard times, and recognize that children cannot be expected to provide for themselves, they believe strongly that the United States does provide opportunities for its citizens, and that unconditional cash benefits function somewhat as a narcotic, depriving people of their work ethic.”\textsuperscript{83} This optimistic view of the prevalence of opportunity was rooted in the belief that those who work can eventually rise out of poverty and overcome the need for government assistance altogether. The naïveté of this view can only be appreciated through a deeper examination of the limitations and barriers prevalent in the lives of many welfare recipients.

B. Expectations and the Behavior of Welfare Recipients

The expectancy hypothesis focused on the psychological effects of welfare on recipients. The assumption underlying this theory was that the financial support of welfare created a cycle of dependency through its effect on the confidence and sense of control of welfare recipients.\textsuperscript{84} Accordingly, the longer an individual remained on welfare, “the harder it ought to be to get off”\textsuperscript{85} because the recipient was less confident about her ability to support herself without welfare. When a person “cease[d] to believe that [she could] realistically get off of welfare,” she could become “overwhelmed by [her] situation and lose the ability to seek out and use the opportunities available” to her.\textsuperscript{86} Although this lack of confidence could be attributed to economic factors, such as
the more attenuated connections with the job market, the expectancy hypothesis focused on the psychological reasons for this lack of confidence.

The popular rhetoric in the welfare debate invoked some of the ideas of the expectancy hypothesis. Shortening the time span that welfare recipients were permitted to remain in the system was a response to the negative effects predicted by the expectancy hypothesis. Rick Santorum argued as much in the Senate debates:

We say if you are going to end dependency, you cannot continue to keep people on the system and pay them virtually the same they are making now on the system. You have to end dependency by ending dependency. You cannot continue to provide for someone on the system and expect them to leave the system. I do not say that without the understanding that a lot of people leave the system. But a lot of people are trapped in the system because of the nature of the dependency of it in which the benefits continue. So you cannot stand on the floor and say, “we have to end dependency” and say, “we cannot cut them off.” You cannot be for any dependency and not be for some termination of benefits at some point in time when the social contract between the Government and the person the Government is attempting to help at some point ends, and the person has to do it on their own.87

While compelling individuals to enter the job market could have raised the confidence of welfare recipients, an unsuccessful outcome would most likely have had the opposite effect. If the low confidence of welfare recipients resulted from the lack of desirable choices,88 then the sensible policy remedy would have been to improve those choices. Providing access to job networks and providing psychological counseling that would address some of the emotional problems of welfare recipients were also potential remedies. These remedies, however, were never considered in a meaningful way. More importantly, however, the expectancy hypothesis was likely most relevant to those individuals who had become long-term welfare users because of ongoing emotional problems, chemical dependency, or other barriers to work. For these individuals, the
resources required to effectively assist them in obtaining and retaining employment were considerable—perhaps significantly more than what would be required to simply grant them government support with little or no work requirements.

VI. Can Welfare Recipients Work?

All three theories assume that the correct policies and incentives could induce welfare recipients to work. The rational actor model implies that the correct financial incentives are necessary to encourage work. The expectancy model indicates that decreasing dependency and increasing work would create better psychological attitudes towards work. The culture of poverty hypothesis signifies that social policy directly affects unemployment. These theories ignore the question of whether there are some characteristics that simply make at least some welfare recipients, perhaps the long-term users, highly unemployable under a range of policies and incentives.\(^{89}\)

A. The Limitations of Welfare Recipients

Many characteristics make individuals less employable than the average worker, and many of these characteristics were prevalent among AFDC recipients. The profile of a disability study in 1996 found that 27-29% of mothers and children in AFDC families had functional limitations, and a work-related limitation was found in 16.6-20.1% of mothers.\(^{90}\) Overall, more than 60% of the AFDC mothers had been victims of battering by adult partners, and 72% had been physically or sexually abused as children.\(^{91}\) According to Salomon et al., such experiences made these women more prone to severe emotional and mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is “highly associated with increased risk of depression and substance abuse.”\(^{92}\)
Estimates of substance abuse are very difficult to obtain, but according to Olson and Pavetti, there is a wide range of estimates of prevalence—from 6.6 to 37%.93 Similarly, a host of additional barriers to employment were prevalent amongst both the AFDC and TANF populations. Olson and Pavetti’s analyses of the 1992 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) shows that:

Over 30 percent of the AFDC caseload report a serious barrier to employment and two-thirds report either a serious or modest barrier, excluding low basic skills. When one takes into account extremely low or very low skills, the percentage of the caseload with a serious barrier to employment increases to 54 percent and the percentage of the caseload with a moderate or severe barrier increases to 89 percent.94

Another study by Zedlewski demonstrated that in 1997, three quarters of TANF recipients had at least one potential barrier to employment and 44% report two or more obstacles to work.95

There are varying estimates of the prevalence of TANF households caring for a child with disabilities or chronic illness.96 One study found that 20% of welfare recipients in 1998 reported having at least one child with a health problem.97 Moreover, one study of TANF recipients and their children in 1997 found that health problems are persistent, with 12.1% of mothers on welfare having a child with a health problem in at least three out of five years.98 Forty four percent of TANF households from 1997 to 1999 reported at least one impairment.99 The effects of the prevalence of these conditions for the employment of welfare recipients are stark.

A 2001 study of 504 caretakers of children with chronic conditions found that mothers receiving and applying for welfare benefits “face substantial barriers to employment, including high child health care use rates and missed work.”100 When TANF recipients with chronically ill or disabled children do work, they tend to work
fewer hours or leave the paid work force completely. 101 Even though thirty-seven states provide some type of work activity exemption for the care of a disabled or chronically ill person, 102 the financial assistance provided under TANF is still inadequate and does not include all of those confronting health related challenges in the family.

Despite these limitations, at a time when far more women were working, including married women with children, American voters were not inclined to give single mothers on welfare a break. If middle class women with children could work, they believed that poor mothers could and should work. Furthermore, advocates of work believed that it would instill a sense of responsibility in mothers, helping them to serve as better role models for their children. Work was predicted to have positive effects on the children of TANF recipients and could therefore be worth promoting at significant cost. The Congressional hearings often used rhetoric invoking the inherent value of work and responsibility. 103 The assumption throughout the debate was that virtually all of the recipients of welfare could work. Little evidence of any disputation of this assumption in the Congressional record exists, most likely because it would not have been politically salient. Given the range and extent of obstacles to employment, however, a program that did not include guaranteed public sector employment as an option was virtually equivalent to compelling certain families to struggle in poverty indefinitely.

B. The Impact of Welfare Reform on Those with Significant Limitations

More than ten years after PRWORA was passed, we should be in a far better position to determine whether welfare recipients can work than Congress was in 1996. If states had been required to extensively track their welfare recipients after they left the program, social scientists would be able to determine whether increasing the incentives to
work did indeed lead to employment. Moreover, social scientists could have more easily determined for which subpopulations within welfare recipients the incentives established by PRWORA were sufficient and for which subpopulations they were not. Unfortunately, states were not required to maintain such comprehensive records.

We do, however, have information about the employment histories for some of the welfare leavers after 1996 from individual state and county level sites. “Many studies have shown that a majority of recipients leaving welfare are employed. However, most of these studies found that a subset of former recipients were not working.” A study conducted by Martinson in 2000 found that approximately 20% of TANF leavers were unable to find work in a four-year follow-up of work programs in six sites. The study reported that this group had a disproportionately low level of education and basic skills, longer history of welfare receipt, and personal and familial problems.

Those families who were terminated from welfare with sanctions differed along several dimensions from those who left voluntarily. Families that received sanctions were usually facing personal or family challenges. These families were more likely to have been long-term recipients before becoming subject to limits, had larger families, and were more likely to live in public or subsidized housing. “In Tennessee, 60% of sanctioned families did not have a general equivalency diploma, or a high school diploma compared with 40% of families that left TANF for work. In South Carolina, 36% of high school dropouts were sanctioned compared with 22% of high school graduates.” Other challenges included chemical dependency, physical and mental health problems, and domestic violence, as well as the inability to find child care and transportation.
The barriers to work for certain individuals who relied upon welfare are numerous. In her article, *Improving the Safety Net for Single Mothers Who Face Serious Barriers to Work*, Rebecca Blank defines the term “disconnected mothers” as women who are not in school, report less than $2,000 in earnings, and report less than $1,000 in public assistance. Blank estimates that there are approximately 1.7 million disconnected single mothers nationally. Most of these mothers face multiple barriers to work. The primary six barriers to work discussed by Blank are 1) lower levels of education and higher rates of disabilities, 2) problems with substance abuse, 3) depression, mental illness and physical health problems, 4) younger children, larger families, and the presence of a child or relative that requires care, 5) previous or current experience with domestic violence, and 6) residence in central cities where welfare caseloads have been reduced at a faster rate than other parts of the country.

In addition to the individual and family limitations of welfare recipients, some individuals could not work simply because they did not have access to jobs. In 2005, fifteen percent of rural residents lived in poverty. These individuals were far more reluctant to seek welfare, but had very limited access to jobs in the areas in which they lived. Family networks and other ties may have kept them from moving to where jobs were located, and creating jobs that were more accessible to them could have been more beneficial in the long-run than expecting those individuals to relocate.

Perhaps liberals could not have used the limitations of welfare recipients to argue for preserving the program because of the presence of other federal benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for the disabled. Most of the challenges welfare recipients faced were not recognized as
disabilities. Yet, viewed in the context of social science research quantifying the impact of these limitations on the ability of individuals to work, these limitations may have been just as or even more of a hindrance to work than many recognized disabilities.

VII. Politics and Morality

The issue of welfare policy had historically been viewed through the lens of beliefs about the morality of the poor. Americans had been willing to give more to the deserving poor than to those they deemed the lazy and immoral poor. Conservatives succeeded in portraying welfare recipients as estranged from middle class morality, thus cultivating the belief that this group represented the undeserving poor. The popularity of the Murray version of the culture of poverty hypothesis and the moral disapproval of single motherhood led to a lack of empathy for the plight of welfare recipients and a notion that their poverty and dependence resulted from their own irresponsible choices.

Conservatives used these beliefs to advocate for a form of welfare reform that ended the dependency on government assistance. Liberals wanted to maintain the entitlement status of welfare and bolster it with job training and childcare—an idea also motivated by a belief in upward economic mobility. The dispute between liberals and conservatives was fundamentally a moral one about whether individuals have an entitlement to a subsistence level of support. Historically, liberals had succeeded in maintaining the entitlement status of welfare. In Goldberg v. Kelly, the Supreme Court recognized the entitlement status of welfare by holding that the government had to provide due process in the form of a hearing before discontinuing benefits. Nonetheless, the holding was founded in the statutory eligibility requirements for
welfare, and so the change in the statute discontinuing eligibility after the expiration of the time limit did not violate due process.\textsuperscript{118}

Clinton articulated his view of welfare reform in his speech at the Democratic Convention in 1992. He observed:

\begin{quote}
That's what the New Covenant is all about. An America where we end welfare as we know it. We will say to those on welfare: You will have and you deserve the opportunity through training and education, through childcare and medical coverage, to liberate yourself. But then, when you can, you must work, because welfare should be a second chance, not a way of life. That's what the New Covenant is all about.\textsuperscript{119}
\end{quote}

Clinton was not the first to express an interest in the principle that welfare recipients should be expected to and assisted in the finding of work. In 1986, Reagan announced the formation of a task force to study the nation’s welfare programs.\textsuperscript{120} This task force published a report, entitled \textit{Up from Dependency}, emphasizing the importance of work programs in reforming welfare.\textsuperscript{121} Mario Cuomo, then governor of New York, created a separate task force on poverty and welfare in 1986.\textsuperscript{122} This task force included five members of the later Clinton administration and concluded that “society should require work in exchange for public support but guarantee that support would be available by providing jobs if necessary.”\textsuperscript{123} David Ellwood was part of this task force, and in 1988 released a book, entitled \textit{Poor Support}, with welfare recommendations.\textsuperscript{124} He endorsed the principal view behind the Cuomo report that “those who are on welfare should be required to work, if necessary in a public job.”\textsuperscript{125}

In August 1996, Clinton's policy advisors did not want him to sign PRWORA because they did not believe that the bill fulfilled his promise. It simply enacted the Republican desire to hold Clinton to the bumper sticker line "two years and out."\textsuperscript{126} White House pollsters advised experts planning the Clinton administration welfare
reform plan that “‘two’ was the most memorable word of the 1992 campaign.” Thus, unlike Clinton's policy advisors, his political advisors did think that signing the welfare reform bill would be advantageous to his reelection campaign. Dick Morris, the most influential of these advisors, told Clinton that welfare reform could be part of a new social contract that would induce middle class support for the poor who worked. Morris showed Clinton the results of a survey showing that political support for both increasing spending on inner city schools and incentivizing businesses to hire former welfare recipients was 15 percentage points higher when people were asked about their support assuming that Congress had passed a welfare reform bill requiring work and instituting time limits.

Like any political act, welfare reform was a product of time and circumstance: a confluence of factors created a window of opportunity to make the proposed legislation reality. Because welfare dependency had nearly doubled from 1970 to 1993 and three-fourths of those receiving benefits during that time remained in the system for more than five years, the system was too much of a failure to promote its status as an entitlement. In addition to the values that President Clinton and the Republican Congress used to shape the debate, the inheritance of budget deficits had a significant impact on the content of welfare reform. Welfare reform became part of the solution to the deficits, even though several high-level administration officials advocated injecting more funds into the welfare system.

As Clinton faced reelection, Dick Morris sought to persuade Clinton that welfare reform was one of the three major policy accomplishments that could secure his historic status as being in the second tier of presidents. While Morris helped Clinton to
appreciate the significance of the occasion, the Republicans realized that welfare reform
could help their political goals as well. With this realization, they altered their bargaining
tactics. The PRWORA of 1996 was the third Congressional welfare reform bill. The
previous two bills were similar in their time limits provisions, but they coupled welfare
reform with other provisions such as changing Medicaid from an entitlement to a block
grant. These provisions were designed to compel Clinton to veto welfare reform, which
would have caused him to break his 1992 campaign promise.\textsuperscript{134}

Once Republicans decided, however, that welfare reform could help their own
reelection ambitions, the disputed provisions about Medicaid were removed. In June
1996, 104 first and second term Republican Congressmen wrote a letter to Speaker of the
House Newt Gingrich asking him to remove the Medicaid provisions from the welfare
reform bill in order to create a bill that Clinton would be willing to sign. They were
willing to allow Clinton to take credit for welfare reform so that they could take credit as
well. Thus, the significant bargain that resulted in the enactment of PRWORA occurred
at the time that it did because of the political needs of both Clinton and junior Republican
congressmen.

\textbf{VIII. Did PRWORA Have Positive Economic Effects?}

The central tenet of welfare reform in 1996 was that work would reform the poor
while reducing costs and poverty.\textsuperscript{135} In general, the studies examining the effects of
PRWORA on TANF leavers do find initial increases in employment and income for a
majority of welfare recipients. As of 1999, “[t]he evidence suggest[ed] that close to two-
thirds of welfare leavers . . . work[ed] at a future point in time.”\textsuperscript{136} “An even higher share
held at least one job since leaving welfare.”\textsuperscript{137} Both welfare reform and expansions of
the EITC were credited for the increase in the labor supply of single mothers, and economists have had difficulty determining how much of the increase can be attributed to each.138

Studies also indicate, however, that many of the gains were only short-term. “[O]ne of the great myths about the low-wage labor market is that it is a stepping stone to better and more stable employment.”139 Studies demonstrate that the earnings gains initially shown by job search-focused programs often fade entirely within five years.140 For instance, in a national study that tracked women for ten years after leaving welfare, researchers found that while earnings increased significantly in the first five years, they then plateaued, averaging about $13,000 in the tenth year after leaving welfare.141 In 2003—seven years after welfare reform—a quarter of American workers were still earning poverty wages.142 “[T]he gains for welfare-to-work recipients are very modest and often fail to account for the costs of working—transportation, reciprocity in child care, missed days, and so forth.”143 Thus, “[e]mployment mobility is . . . a myth.”144

The question then arises as to what types of programs might accomplish the goal of welfare reform – to make the poor self-sufficient. The American public may likely believe that all that is required is an investment in job search and training that will pay off in the long-term. However, “[r]igorous research finds that job search-focused programs have consistently increased employment rates among low-income parents in the near term but that these results are often not sustained over the long term.”145 By contrast, programs focused on education do yield higher returns. A study conducted by the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies (NEWWS) shows that while welfare to work programs primarily focused on education initially produced smaller earnings
gains than programs focused on job search activities, earnings gains in education-focused programs grew to equal or surpass earnings gains in programs focused on job search over the course of two years. Furthermore each year of post-secondary education has been shown to increase wages by about seven percent. Among women who remain with the same employer, the annual wages of those with a college degree increase at a rate of 3.6 percent—slightly over five times—the rate of those without a high school diploma.

The welfare debates, however, did not discuss getting every welfare recipient a college education; such a goal would have been inconsistent with Clinton’s other goal of deficit reduction.

Unfortunately, the employment returns to education has not been seen in programs devoted to basic education, which has not been found to be very effective in increasing employment and earnings. Some commentators have argued that mixed-strategy programs combining both education and job search are the most effective, and some studies have verified this belief. Such approaches require nuance and are not likely to be either easy to implement or inexpensive.

Many states included post-secondary and other forms of education in their definitions of work. However, some states have abandoned programs offering post-secondary education to welfare recipients “for fear of federal financial aid reprisal.” “As a result, the number of welfare recipients enrolled in college plummeted from 172,176 in 1996 to only 58,055 in 1998.” Under the new regulations promulgated under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006, obtaining a bachelor’s or master’s degree are activities specifically excluded from those that constitute work for the purposes of TANF. Thus, the factor that is most likely to predict and facilitate upward mobility —
higher education – is no longer permitted through TANF.

While welfare reform may have been motivated in part by a belief in upward economic mobility, the ingredients required to facilitate that mobility are expensive and nuanced. Consequently, those measures that would increase the mobility of welfare recipients have been thrust aside in favor of cost-saving and expediency. What cannot be studied, but perhaps should be, is whether guaranteed public sector jobs would be cheaper and more effective in reducing poverty than any of the alternatives still available to welfare recipients.

IX. Conclusions and Recommendations

The academic theories and evidence about the characteristics of welfare recipients indicated that public sector jobs or some other form of guaranteed support would be necessary for a significant subpopulation of welfare recipients, and political support for such guaranteed support did exist within the Clinton administration and among other Democrats. Yet, while social science had played a role in the process of information gathering and the building of political support over the two years leading up to the signing of PRWORA, welfare reform was enacted in the form and at the time that it was because of political and circumstantial factors. Clinton’s reelection campaign, the reelection ambitions of numerous junior Republican congressional representatives, and the accumulation of knowledge and political capital culminated in the enactment of the PRWORA of 1996. The academic theories and evidence only influenced the outcome to the extent that they provided support for the political goal of imposing time limits. This goal was politically appealing primarily for its expressive value and its compatibility with
Congress's other goal of balancing the budget, not because of any set of social science theories or evidence that justified it as functionally superior.

The imposition of time limits, inspired by the academically respected work of David Ellwood, was not enacted in the way that he intended. What Ellwood had in mind for welfare reform was a more nuanced program, tailored to individual abilities to meet time limits as well as individual needs for work supports. Policy makers applied only the simplistic idea of time limits from Ellwood’s work. In this way, the policy recommendations that evolved from social science research were reduced to their most implementable principles.

Similarly, Wilson's work, which was comprehensive in its analysis of the mechanisms that caused poverty and welfare dependency, was understood in ways that appealed to middle class morality. His work implied that a substantive change in outcomes required improved social organization in poor neighborhoods and significant investment in poor communities by the federal government. The idea that the separation between middle class and poor communities had consequences for individual choices and behavior resonated with popular middle class perceptions of the alleged culture of poverty that had developed in poor minority communities. Accordingly, the middle class popularly perceived that compelling individuals to work and take responsibility for their actions was the only way to remedy these problems.

The chief constraint on meaningful liberal reform of AFDC—the type advocated by Ellwood and Wilson—was money. According to a senior Clinton advisor, the type of reform that was contemplated during the campaign contained a lot of “fine print” behind the campaign promise of “two years and out,” including job training, childcare, and
guaranteed jobs.\textsuperscript{158} Halfway through his first term, however, Clinton asked his advisors, "How do we explain to the public that we’re adding $2 billion of spending a year in order to limit welfare benefits to two years?"\textsuperscript{159}

The current economic climate, in which the need for government spending is more socially acceptable, presents a unique opportunity to utilize the findings of social science in the reauthorization of TANF in 2010 to create a program that is more effective in alleviating the hardships of unemployment and poverty. By studying the past, social scientists can recognize how their research and recommendations are likely to be hijacked by politicians. Social scientists can and should impact the expressive message that is used in the political debates. For instance, instead of "two years and you're off," why not promote phrases like "the government should give people a hand up in hard times." The reality is that those who genuinely seek to implement meaningful reform, whether they be academics, policy wonks, or politicians, must market the findings of social science more effectively than those who oppose reform. By learning from the past, we can aspire to enact more meaningful, long-term reform during the impending reauthorization of TANF in 2010.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
8 Id.
10 MARY JO BANE & DAVID ELLWOOD, WELFARE REALITIES 68 (Harvard University Press 1994).
14 See, e.g., Peter Edelman, The Worst Thing Bill Clinton has Done, THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, Feb. 1997 43, 43 (stating that Peter Edelman, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, resigned in September 1996 asserting that he had “worked as hard as I could over the past thirty-plus years to reduce poverty and that in my opinion this bill moved in the opposite direction”).
16 See id. at 196-97 (discussing the two distinct views of welfare which emerged from the political clashes of the 1960s).
19 See id.
22 Id.
23 Id.
25 Id. at 54-55.
26 Id. at 54.
28 Id. at 8.

30 Id.


32 Id.

33 Hagen, *supra* note 17, at 295.

34 See id.

35 Id. at 302 (citing 42 U.S.C. § 608 (a)(7)(C)(i)).


37 Id.


40 See id. at 67.

41 See id. at 78-81.

42 See id. at 68-74.

43 See id. at 74-78.

44 See WILIAM JULIUS WILSON, *THE TRULY DISADVANTAGED: THE INNER CITY, THE UNDERCLASS, AND PUBLIC POLICY* viii (University of Chicago Press 1987) (noting that one of the motivations of the book was that Wilson was often mischaracterized as a conservative for his work).

45 See id. at 20-62.

46 Id. at 39.

47 See id. at 20-62.

48 See id. at 82-83.


52 Id. (statement of Michael Horowitz, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute).


54 Id. at 9.

55 Id.

56 Id.


59 ROBERT REICH, *LOCKED IN THE CABINET* 156 (Alfred Knopf 1997).

60 BANE & ELLWOOD, *supra* note 10, at x-xi.

61 See id. at xi.

62 Id. at 136.

63 Id. at x.

64 Id. at 61.


BANE & ELLWOOD, supra note 10, at 30.

Id. at 31, 32.

Id.


See BANE & ELLWOOD, supra note 10, at 68-69.

See id. at 70.

See id.

See id. at 49.

Id. at 70, 72.

Id. at 72.

Id.

Senator Edward Kennedy, speech on the floor of the US Senate during the 104th Congress (September 19, 1995).


Telephone interview with Peter Edelman, Former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, (February 17, 2006).


See BANE & ELLWOOD, supra note 10, at 74-78.

Id. at 78.

Id. at 75.


See BANE & ELLWOOD, supra note 10, at 75.

See JOEL F. HANDEL & YEHESKEL HASENFELD, BLAME WELFARE, IGNORE POVERTY AND INEQUALITY 255 (2007) (reporting that over a quarter of welfare leavers are disabled, sick, or unable to work for a different reason).

See Hagen, supra note 17, at 299.

See id. at 300.

Id.


Olson & Pavetti, supra note 12.

Zedlewski, supra note 12.


See id. (noting studies that have also found that over 11% of former welfare recipients in the mid 90’s were caring for more than one mild or moderately disabled child, a severely disabled child, or more than one special needs child).

Id.


Lauren A. Smith et al., Employment Barriers Among Welfare Recipients and Applicants with Chronically Ill Children, 92 AM. J. PUB. HEALTH 1453, 1453 (2002).

Moisedes, supra note 96, at 32.

Id. at 32-33. See also, Gretchen Rowe with Jeffrey Versteeg, Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2003, URB. INST., 98, Table III.B.I (2005) (States drastically vary in the implementation of this exemption. Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota allow this exemption for only 12 months of a recipient’s lifetime. Florida allows the exemption only if there is no alternative care, while Alaska in the
case of taking care of an incapacitated adult, requires that the adults be related. Wisconsin does not allow for an exemption but may assign care for an ill or incapacitated family member as his or her work participation requirement."


[107] Id. at 259-260 (citing General Accounting Office (GAO), State Sanction Policies and Number of Families Affected, HEHS-00-44, Government Printing Office (2000); Heidi Goldberg & Liz Schott, A Compliance-Oriented Approach to Sanctions in State and County TANF Programs, Washington: Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (2000)).

[108] See id. at 260. See also Laura A Schmidt et al., Changing Patterns of Addiction and Public Aid Receipt: Tracking the Unintended Consequences of Welfare Reform, 31 J. HEALTH POL. POL’Y & L. 945, 961 (2006) (In 2002, twenty two percent of welfare applicants were substance abusers. In addition, sixteen percent of applicants were heavy drug users and twelve percent of applicants were substance dependent).


[110] Id. at 187.

[111] Id. at 183.

[112] Id. at 188.


[114] Id. at 448.


[118] See id.


[121] See id. (referring to Domestic Policy Council, Office of the President, Up from Dependency, 8 vols, Government Printing Office (1986)).


[123] Id.

[124] See id. (referring to DAVID ELLWOOD, POOR SUPPORT (Basic Books, 1988)).

[125] Id.

[126] REICH, supra note 59, at 156.


See Van Wiggeren, supra note 13, at 1335.

See Reich, supra note 59, at 155.

See Morris, supra note 129, at 307.

Telephone interview with Peter Edelman, Former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (Feb. 17, 2006).

Handler & Hasenfeld, supra note 89, at 238.

Blank, supra note 29, at 1139 (internal citations omitted).

Id.

See id. at 1140.

Handler & Hasenfeld, supra note 89, at 239.


Handler & Hasenfeld, supra note 89, at 239.

Id. at 255.

Id. at 251.

Julie Strawn et. al., supra note 140, at 227.

See id.

Law, supra note 141, at 261. See id. (noting that similar findings regarding the relationship between post-secondary education and wages have been found by others).

Id.

Id.

See Julie Strawn, et. al., supra note 140, at 228.

See id.

Id.

Law, supra note 141, at 251.

Id.

Id. at 256 (Vocational educational training now means “organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations requiring training other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree”).

See Bane & Ellwood, supra note 10, at 143-162.

See Wilson, supra note 44, at 163.

Telephone interview with Peter Edelman, Former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (Feb. 17, 2006).

Reich, supra note 59, at 156.