

*The Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study changed its name to The Future of Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS). Due to the issue date of this document, FFCWS will be referenced by its former name. Any further reference to FFCWS should kindly observe this name change.*

**THE “M” WORD: THE RISE AND  
FALL OF INTERRACIAL  
COALITIONS ON FATHERS AND  
WELFARE REFORM**

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# The **M** Word: The Rise and Fall of Interracial Coalitions On Fathers And Welfare Reform

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## I: INTRODUCTION

Buoyed by the success of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), whose time limits and work requirements played a large role in the reduction of the welfare rolls, conservative advocates of welfare reform are now moving to ensure that our welfare system reflects traditional family values as well. Responding to this sentiment, the Bush Administration is encouraging states to use TANF to support marriage promotion efforts and the Administration's 2002 budget includes \$100 million in support of demonstration projects to promote marriage (source). By contrast, the \$60 million President Bush had committed to support efforts to promote responsible fatherhood, not restricted to marriage, has been pared back to \$20 million, along with cutbacks in other domestic initiatives that are needed to pay for the "war against terrorism."

By tipping the scales in favor of marriage, the Administration has exposed the fault line in an interracial coalition of leaders in the field of responsible fatherhood. Rep. Clay Shaw first re-introduced the issue of the role of fathers in welfare in the 1998 welfare reform hearings<sup>1</sup> with the Father's Counts Act of 1998, which emphasized marriage. Most women's groups and traditional welfare reform advocates were sharply opposed to the whole idea. However, a small but vocal group of leaders who had been working to increase the positive involvement of fathers in the lives of children lent their support to this bill. Until the end of the Clinton Administration this coalition had been jointly seeking a balance between marriage promotion and other strategies to assist and encourage fathers to play a more active role in reducing child and family poverty that

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<sup>1</sup> 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressional Record; H1219 I H1221, Search for Values; March 17, 1998.

would be acceptable to women's groups, traditional welfare advocates, and a broad spectrum of stakeholders in welfare reform.

The coalition was drawn from national and local non-profit organizations that worked directly or indirectly on the cause of increasing the role of fathers in the lives of children and families. Most white members of this coalition argued that marriage was the most effective and enduring way to ensure the long-term involvement of fathers in the lives of children and families. Most black members of this coalition argued that even if parenting couples were no longer romantically involved, to say nothing of marriage, workforce development, team-parenting, and other services targeting low-income fathers and families could increase the long-term involvement of fathers in the lives of children and thereby reduce child poverty and improve child-well-being.(Mincy and Pouncy, 1999). By suppressing these differences, this coalition helped to produce a balanced approach that had enough bi-partisan support in the House of Representatives to pass the Fatherhood Counts Act of 2000, but not enough support in the Senate to pass the Child Support Distribution Act of 2000.

While racial differences with respect to traditional family values are a ready explanation for alternative approaches to responsible fatherhood, demographic realities of white and black families also play an important role. On the one hand, nearly 70 percent of black births are to unwed mothers, 53 percent of black children live in mother-only families and about 39 percent of these families are poor (Ventura, et. al. 1995, U.S. Census Bureau, 2001, 1999). On the other hand, the gap in the birth rates of unmarried black and white has narrowed in recent years, even though much of this increase in white unmarried births is occurring among cohabiting women (Ventura et al. 1995, Bumpass

and Lu, 2000). White (and Hispanic) women with premarital conceptions are more likely than black women with premarital conceptions to be cohabiting with the fathers of their children and to marry the fathers of their children before the child is born. However, the fraction of women who marry their cohabiting partners has been falling (Manning and Smock, 1995 and Upchurch, et. al. 2001, Bumpass and Lu, 2000). Thus, the experience of poverty and fatherlessness among black children could be a harbinger of things to come for white children.

Cloaked in arguments about traditional family values, whites have sought to prevent this outcome by using their superior political and financial resources to promote marriage as the dominant strategy for responsible fatherhood. This strategy poses a significant challenge for black families, because the percentage of black women of childbearing age (say, 15-44 years old) who are never married (41 percent) is just about twice as high as the percentage of white women in this age group who are never married (22 percent).

Against this backdrop, the Administration's budget, which earmarks five times the amount of funding for marriage promotion as for other approaches to responsible fatherhood, appears to be a racially insensitive and uncompromising attempt on the part of whites to impose the needs of their children and families on all children and families. Before dismissing such a provocative claim, we must ask: Do policy variables have the same effect on father-child contact among blacks and nonblacks?

The purpose of this paper is to answer this question. Using data from the Fragile Families and Child Well-Being 12-Month Follow-up Survey, we examine the effect of traditional policy variables (the generosity of cash benefits, child support collections,

education and training programs) by estimating a generalized logit model, developed in previous work, of unwed mothers' chosen arrangements for facilitating father-child contact. Several previous studies have examined racial differences in marriage, cohabitation, and childbearing in these union types (Manning and Smock, 1995, Manning and Landale, 1996, Blackburn, 2000, Upchurch et. al. 2001, Lichter and Graefe, 2001, Bennett et. al., 1995). Our approach permits a more comprehensive assessment of the union formation/father child contact options available to mothers and policymakers, arranged in a hierarchy that includes no father-child contact, some father-child contact, living with the mother and child, and marriage (Mincy and Dupree, 2001 and Mincy and Huang, 2001).

Like other studies, our previous work has found that extending models to include factors that are highly correlated with race, such as previous fertility, has little effect on racial differentials in the odds of marriage. This leads to the unsatisfactory conclusion that race, an important predictor of family structure, is a proxy for a variety of ill-defined influences subsumed in the term "culture." This paper makes a further attempt to "explain away" the role of race by including mothers' family background characteristics and religious affiliation, which are highly correlated with race and which have been extensively used as controls in previous research on family formation. The persistence of a race effect in a model estimated over a multi-racial sample, suggests that several covariates are associated with the father-child contact among blacks in a different way than they are associated with similar outcomes for nonblacks, and therefore, the model should be estimated over separate sub samples. This strategy provides a well-specified test of our central question: Do policy variables affect the father-child contact among

blacks and non-blacks differently? It also helps us to speculate on the way non-traditional tools, which marriage promotion demonstrations could uncover, might affect father-child contact among blacks and nonblacks.

We organize the paper as follows. Section II briefly reviews the literature on racial differentials in family formation processes, focusing on the determinants of such decisions by unwed mothers. This literature will provide insights about father-child contact decisions as well. This section speculates on the mechanisms through which race may be affecting father-child contact decisions and how family background characteristics and religious affiliation may help to identify these mechanisms. Section III describes our data and estimation procedures. Section IV provides empirical results. Section V provides a discussion and policy conclusions.

## II: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXAMING FATHER-CHILD CONTACT

### The Effect of Policy Variables on Father-Child Contact

Several recent studies provide a theoretical framework for analyzing how policy variables could affect the father-child contact decisions of unwed mothers. Blackburn (2000), for example, has considered the effect of welfare benefits, mother's earnings and potential husband's earnings on whether or not unwed mothers marry. His model shows that "... marriage probabilities will be higher (other things equal) when the expected earnings of the husband is higher and when the share of married income received by the wife is higher." He also shows that increases in welfare benefits should cause marriage probabilities to increase or remain unchanged. The former is likely to occur when the welfare benefit is initially greater than the woman's earnings; the latter is more likely



when the welfare benefit is initially less than her earnings.

Finally, Blackburn finds that a woman's expected earnings has an ambiguous effect on marriage probabilities. For women with initially high earnings, increases in earnings might reduce the probability of marriage, because part of those extra earnings would be shared with the husband if she were married. On the other hand, increases in her earnings could also increase her share of income in the married state, or allow her to attract a husband with a higher earnings level. Thus, for women with initially low earnings, increases in earnings could increase the probability of marriage.

While this search theoretic approach is helpful, our question involves unwed mothers, who have already searched and identified a suitable partner, and had a child with that partner. Now the question is: What arrangements will she make to facilitate father-child contact? Studies of the transition of cohabiters or unwed mothers to marriage are particularly relevant here (Manning and Smock, 1995, Licther and Graefe, 2001., and Landale and Forste, 1991; Landale and Fennelly, 1992).

We assume four father-child contact arrangements are possible: no contact, allowing the father to visit the child, allowing him to live with her (while remaining unmarried) and her child, and marriage. Moreover, given that most unwed mothers in our sample want the fathers of their children to be involved with their children (Garfinkel, et. al. 1999), we assume that these arrangements are hierarchical. Marriage permits the richest form of father-child contact, which she prefers most, and no involvement permits the least. We also assume that as long as they remain unmarried, mothers can adopt “under the table” arrangements to share their incomes with the fathers of their children, including welfare benefits (Mincy and Pouncy, 1999). If they marry, sources of income

shared become apparent, and welfare benefits are available only if their joint incomes are below the means test. Moreover, marriage involves the greatest sharing of resources, which she resists most, and no father-child contact involves the least.

Under these assumptions, only father's earnings have unambiguous effects on father-child contact. Increases in the father's income increase the parenting couples' joint income. Besides the benefits the mother expects to derive from having the biological father involved in the life of the child, she is able to share his higher earnings. At some point his higher earnings will push them over the means test for welfare benefits, and at this point she marries.

Other policy-relevant variables have ambiguous effects on father-child contact. First, increases in income that she can enjoy without him (from welfare benefits, her own earnings child support payments) have ambiguous effects. On the one hand, higher welfare benefits push unwed mothers up along the father-child contact hierarchy, from no involvement to cohabitation, because the parenting couples' joint income is higher. We call this the income effect. On the other hand, because she is sharing *her* higher income with the father of her child, she may decide to raise her child with less father involvement. Following Becker (1981) we call this the independence effect. The ambiguity associated with increases in the mother's earnings arises in a similar way. The more likely that the effective is a states child support enforcement system, the more the father is to marry the mother, because if he remains an unmarried father, he is less likely in such a state to avoid child support payments.

Thus, the observed effect of child support enforcement depends upon which is the dominant response, that of the mother or father. However, there is an additional

source of ambiguity when thinking about fragile families. Most mothers in fragile families are on good-to-romantic terms with the fathers of their children. These mothers may view child support enforcement as intrusive and stressful, and seek to avoid it by failing to cooperate or by marrying the fathers of their children.

Besides factors that directly affect mother's and father's income, human capital variables, such as age and educational attainment are likely to affect father-child contact. The mother is more likely to choose arrangements higher in the hierarchy of father-child contact, when the father of their child has more educational attainment. Increases in educational attainment would increase the father's income as well as his capacity to positively contribute to child well-being. On the other hand, increases in the mother's educational attainment, like increases in her income, have ambiguous effects on father-child contact.

The age of the mother and the father are also likely to affect the father-child contact arrangements the mother chooses. Since arrangements higher in the hierarchy of father child contact involve more risks to the mother, beginning with the pooling of income, the older and more mature the father is, the more likely she is to choose more intense forms of father-child contact. Older fathers are also more likely to have higher earnings capacity, and their maturity is likely to increase the capacity to positively contribute to child well-being.

Older mothers are also more likely to choose more intense forms of father-child contact for several reasons. First, they are more likely, than younger mothers, to have a greater appreciation for the need to secure their child's financial and emotional well-being, and therefore, are likely to be more concerned about securing financial and other

contributions from the fathers of their children. Also, older unwed mothers, have a shorter time horizon over which to search for a new partner, who might be a surrogate father for her child. As a consequence, older mothers will be more likely than younger mothers to seek more stable and intense forms of father-child contact with the biological fathers of their children.

### The Effects of Other Control Variables

Besides factors that affect mothers' and fathers' income (directly or indirectly), a growing literature has documented several other important factors that affect family formation, which are also likely to affect father-child contact. Research on the transitions of unwed mothers to cohabitation or marriage point to significant race and ethnic differences (Landale and Forste, 1991; Landale and Fennelly, 1992; Manning 1993; Manning and Smock, 1995; Manning and Landale, 1996, and Smock and Manning, 1997). These race and ethnic differences are also likely to influence whether mothers choose to arrange for the father to visit their child or no father-child contact at all.

Generally, this research shows that unwed childbearing is much more common among cohabiting Puerto Rican women than among black or non-Hispanic white women and that an unwed first birth hastens the transition to marriage among non-Hispanic white cohabiting women, has no effect on the transition to marriage among black cohabiting women, and reduces the prospects of marriage among Puerto Rican cohabiting women.

Unfortunately, FFCWS does not have enough Hispanic respondents to support estimates of separate models for the major Hispanic groups. As a consequence, our research will be unable to identify ethnic variations within this important population. The research indicates that the union formation behavior of Hispanics is generally between

the behavior of non-Hispanic whites and blacks. That is, Hispanics have higher rates of cohabitation and marriage than blacks and lower rates of cohabitation and marriage than non-Hispanic whites. Since about half of FFCWS respondents are black and we are focusing on racial differences, we create two sub samples (black and nonblack), and explore differences between non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics, by including a Hispanic dummy variable in the non-black model. We expect that black and Hispanics mothers will choose less intense arrangements for father-child contact than non-Hispanic white (hereafter, white) mothers.

A few recent studies show that previous fertility also affects family formation, and we suspect that the effects on father-child contact are similar. Bennett, et. al. (1995) focus on the marital prospects of mothers who do not marry the fathers of their first children. They show that an unwed birth with a previous partner lowers a woman's future marriage prospects, because a new partner is reluctant to take responsibility for non-biological children and child rearing activities restrict the mother's opportunities to search (or to search for better prospects) in the marriage market. More recently, Lither and Graefe (2001) have updated these results, and extended them to the cohabitation prospects of unwed mothers. They find that nonmarital births are associated with significant reductions in the likelihood of being married, positively associated with the likelihood of cohabitation, but negatively associated with the likelihood that cohabiting unions transition into marriages. Upchurch, Lillard, and Panis (2001) also show that women with nonmarital pregnancies have increased risk of marrying the fathers of their children and reduced risks of subsequent marriage to other partners.

In previous research, we have extended these results to the question of father-child contact. We find that increases in the total number of children an unwed mother has with the father of her newborn, increase the odds in favor of more intense forms of father-child contact all along hierarchy, while multiple partner fertility of fathers reduces the odds of father-child contact all along hierarchy. Multiple partner fertility of a mother also reduces the odds in favor of living with or marrying the father of her child (Mincy and Huang, 2001). Thus we expect, the number of previous children with the father of her newborn to move mothers to choose more intense forms of father-child contact, the multiple partner fertility of fathers to move mothers to less intense forms, and the multiple partner fertility of mothers to do the same.

Finally, in an effort to account for racial differentials in father-child contact, we include family background characteristics and religious affiliation. These factors are highly correlated with race, have been shown to influence union formation, and we also expect them to influence father-child contact. Licther, Graefe, and Brown (2001) show that mothers from low-risk backgrounds have lower rates of unwed births and higher odds of marriage, in the event of an unwed birth.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, we suspect that mothers with some religious affiliation will face more (subjective and objective) pressure to legitimate unwed births through marriage. As a consequence, we expect that religious affiliation increases the odds of marriage over lower forms of father-child contacts, but it should not affect the odds of father-child contact below marriage.

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<sup>2</sup> Mothers whose mothers have more education and mothers whose families of origin were two-parent families are low risk.

### **III: THE DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The Fragile Families and Child Well-being Survey (FFCWS) is a national study designed to provide longitudinal data on the conditions and capabilities of new unmarried parents and the consequences for child well-being. The survey includes information about fathers, the nature of the relationships between unmarried mothers and fathers, and the extent to which fathers are involved with children. The study follows a birth cohort of about 3700 children born to unmarried parents and 20 U.S. cities, selected based on variations in their labor market conditions, generosity of welfare benefits and strictness of child support enforcement. This variation will allow for comparisons of family formation, father involvement, and child well-being outcomes in a variety of policy and employment conditions. The full sample is representative of all nonmarital births to parents residing in cities with populations over 200,000. To permit comparisons across critical domains, a total of 1,100 married parents were interviewed in all 20 cities, in the full baseline survey. New mothers were interviewed in hospitals or birthing clinics within 48 hours after giving birth, and fathers were interviewed either in the hospital, birthing clinic, or elsewhere as soon as possible following the birth of their child. Follow-up interviews are scheduled when the child is 12, 30, and 48 months old.

Response rates for both mothers and fathers in the baseline FFCWS are encouraging: fully 85 percent of eligible mothers and 76 percent of eligible fathers participated in the study. However, response rates were higher for fathers who maintained some positive relationship with the mothers. Additionally, the interviewer asked the mother to provide some basic demographic information for use in situations in

which the father was not interviewed. This will allow larger samples to be used in the analysis, with control variables to account for missing data on some fathers.

We use data from a special interim file of the 12 month follow-up FFCWS. This file includes complete samples for Oakland CA and Austin TX and partial samples for the remaining 18 cities. Missing data reflect fathers who could not be reached during the initial follow-up interview cycle. We are undertaking additional efforts to contact these fathers in order to increase the response rate of biological fathers in the survey. While data reported for all fathers by mothers indicate that these fathers match fathers for whom we have data on employment, education, demographic, and other characteristics, the former are less likely than the latter to have maintained close relationships with the mother over the first 12 months of the child's life. Even at this early stage, response rates to the follow-up survey are encouraging, as the interim file includes about 64 percent of the mothers and fathers who responded to the baseline survey.

### Methodology

Following our previous work, we model the latent process:

$$Y_i^* = x_i\beta^* + \varepsilon_i,$$

where  $Y_i^*$  represents the exact point along the father-contact hierarchy chosen by mothers,  $x_i$  is a vector of right hand side variables, and  $\varepsilon_i$  represent the error term, which we assume follows a cumulative distribution function.

Since we cannot observe  $Y_i^*$ , we model the process by which mother choose a father-contact arrangement using four discrete, ranked ranges:

$$Y_i = 1 \text{ if } Y_i^* < \theta_1$$

$$Y_i = 2 \text{ if } \theta_1 < Y_i^* < \theta_2$$



$Y_i = 3$  if  $\theta_2 < Y_i^* < \theta_3$

$Y_i = 4$  if  $Y_i^* > \theta_3$ ,

where each  $\theta$  represents a cut-point along the latent scale that divides the couples decisions into four categories: (1) no contact, (2) some contact, (3) living with the mother and child and (4) marriage. We measure these cut points using respondents answers to questions about their relationships with the fathers of their children, which we group into the following four categories:

1. father absence (not in relationship).
2. involved (romantically involved some visiting, romantically involved and not visiting, separated, divorced, and friends), and
3. cohabiting (romantically involved and cohabiting)
4. married<sup>3</sup>

*--Table 1 here--*

Table 1 shows the distribution of unwed mothers' and unwed fathers' plans for father-contact at the birth of their child, along with the actual father-child contact arrangements reported by these mothers after 12 month<sup>4</sup>. White members of the coalition on fatherhood and welfare reform and others marriage proponents quickly embraced results like those in the first panel, which shows that nearly half of unmarried mothers wanted to marry the father of their child at birth (Garfinkel et. al.(1999, Horn

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<sup>3</sup> The phrases in parenthesis correspond to the choices available to respondents.

<sup>4</sup> Our estimates of unwed mothers' father-child contact choices are based upon Mincy and Dupree, 2001. Their classification scheme was based on an unwed mother's responses to a series of questions about: her chances of marrying the father of her child; the couples' current living arrangements (cohabiting or not cohabiting); whether or not she was romantically involved with the father of her child, planned to marry him, or live with him; and whether or not she wanted him to be involved in the life of the child. We use a similar here strategy to classify fathers' father-child contact choices. Moreover, table 1 includes only unwed mothers, while the remainder of the tables include mothers who were married and unmarried by the 12-month follow-up survey.

and Sawhill, 2001 and Fagan, 2001)<sup>5</sup>. However, even these father-child contact plans reveal racial differences. Nearly 60 percent of nonblack unmarried mothers wanted to marry the fathers of their children at birth, while only 42 percent of black unwed mothers wanted to do so. Additionally, 27 percent of the pooled sample of unwed mothers wanted to live with the father of their children, but these results also varied by race. Thus, 22 percent of nonblack unwed mothers wanted to live with the father of their children at birth, while 31 percent of black unwed mothers wanted to do so.

Black members of the coalition have mixed feelings about these results. On the one hand, they embraced the data, which countered prevailing negative stereotypes about unwed parents, especially fathers, even those who are black (Johnson, 1998, 2000; Jones 1998). Few (five percent) of unwed mothers wanted no father-child contact at birth, and this result varied little by race. Similarly, almost no fathers (black or nonblack) reported that they intended no contact with the child (table 1, panel 2). These results supported the argument that an array of services, not restricted to marriage promotion, intended to positively involve fathers in the lives of children would reinforce family formation that was already underway among young unwed parents and that such services would be relevant for all racial groups.

On the one hand, black coalition members are concerned that FFCWS data overstate the marital intentions of the fathers they serve in low-income, especially black,

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<sup>5</sup> For example, Garfinkle et. al. (1999) reported that 54 percent of mothers reported that their chances of marrying the fathers of their children were pretty good to excellent, based upon baseline data from the first two cities, Oakland and Austin. In our data, which includes 16 of the 20 cities, because data on the proportion of the caseload and two-parent families was not available for cities (see below), 55 percent of the mothers report that their chances of marrying the fathers of their children were pretty good to almost certain.

communities<sup>6</sup>. They are surprised that at birth, 64 percent of the unwed fathers in the pooled sample wanted to marry the mothers of their children (table 1, panel 2). Even though the percent of black unmarried fathers who wanted to marry the mothers of their children at birth (57 percent) was lower than the percentage of nonblack unwed fathers who wanted to do so (73 percent), the former still seems high when compared to the fathers served by community-based programs<sup>7</sup>. Even the percentage of fathers who wanted to live with the mother and child seem high to community based practitioners. Fully a quarter of the unwed fathers wanted to do so, with black fathers nearly twice as likely (30 percent) to report this intention as nonblack fathers (18 percent). It will be important to reconcile these divergent views. For now, however, we must remember that

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6 Personal interview with Joe Jones, Executive Director of The Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development, Baltimore Maryland (December 2, 2001) and Jeffery M. Johnson, Ph.D., President of The National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership, Washington D.C. These interviews took place at the annual technical assistance meeting of a 10 site demonstration project, called Partners for Fragile Families (PFF), which is partially supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. PFF is intended to design and test strategies for collaborations among local child support enforcement agencies, community-based responsible fatherhood programs, and workforce development agencies that help fragile families to establish paternity for their children and work together to reduce child poverty and increase child-well-being. Although the PFF sites recruit African-American fathers and their families, disproportionately, they were selected by a panel, which was multiracial and multiethnic, based upon the experience of the community-based agencies and their ability to strike collaborative relationships with local child support enforcement agencies and workforce development agencies. Meeting participants included staff from workforce development agencies, community-based responsible fatherhood programs, and local child support agencies, who were from also from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. When presented with these (and other) data from FFWCS, the consensus view was that the educational attainment, employment status, paternity establishment rates, and marriage intentions, of FFWCS respondents generally exceeded those of PFF participants. Some analysis, currently underway, indicates that these differences could easily be explained by differences in the recruitment strategies used in FFWCS and in the PFF demonstration. While all FFWCS respondents were contacted in a hospital or birthing clinic, most PFF participants are recruited through human service agencies that serve families (mostly mothers and children) experiencing some kind of hardship or through other clients of the community based programs. Thus, fathers in FFWCS are the fathers of a representative sample of recent births in large cities, while PFF participants are the fathers of children in more disadvantaged families. Moreover, PFF participants must be less than 25 years old, while the average age of fathers in FFWCS is nearly 28 years old.

7 What is even more remarkable is that fully 79 percent of the nonblack fathers reported that their chances of marrying the mothers of their children were pretty good to almost certain at birth, while 65 percent of black fathers did so. Thus, fathers had much higher hopes of marriage than mothers. Similar results have been reported by Waller (2001) from FFCWS and ??? from NSFG data.

fathers who were in poor relationships with the mothers of their children were less likely to respond to the FFWCS. Therefore, these results probably do over estimate the father-child contact plans of the fathers served by community-based programs.

The descriptive data suggest that generalizing from the father-child contact plans of the full sample will lead to erroneous predictions about father-child contact among specific racial groups. The third panel of table 1 shows that, even after 12 months, unwed parents were generally unable to realize the father-child contact plans they had at birth. Although half of the unwed mothers wanted to marry the father of their child at birth, only 10 percent actually did so by the time their child was 12 months old. On further inspection, however, nonblack mothers were more likely than black mothers to realize their marital plans. Thus, 58 percent of nonblack mothers wanted to marry the father of their child at birth and 12 months later, 15 percent of these mothers had done so. By contrast, the percentage of unwed black mothers who had actually married the father of their child (6 percent) at 12 months was much less than the percentage of black mothers that wanted to do so at birth (42 percent). These results may be related to results reported by Brown (Forthcoming), that black and white women (though not mothers) have similar intentions of marrying their partners, however, black women are much less likely to do so. Obviously, fathers, who were more optimistic about marriage than mothers at birth, were even less successful in realizing their marital plans.

In the pooled sample, mothers generally were able to realize their other father-child contact plans for cohabiting with the fathers of their children. Twenty-seven percent of mothers planned to live with the fathers of their children at birth, and 12 months later 36 percent of them did so. Nineteen percent of mothers planned some

father-child contact at birth and 12 months later, 36 percent had such contact. Finally, five percent of mothers planned no father-child contact at birth and 12 months later, 19 percent had no such contact. However, black and nonblack mothers were different in realizing father-child contact plans. Thirty-one percent of black unwed mothers were living with the fathers of their children; this was similar to their plans at birth (31 percent); 44 percent of these mothers arranged for some father-child contact, without living with the fathers of their children at 12 months, while 23 percent of had planned such arrangements at birth; and 19 percent of black mothers had no father-child contact, while only 4 percent had planned that outcome at birth. More nonblack mothers were living with the fathers of their children than had planned to do so at birth and many more had no father-child contact at 12 months than they had planned at birth.

Table 2 summarizes the sample means and proportions of our left hand side variable (this time including mothers who were married at their child's birth) and the right-hand side variables used in this analysis. These right hand side variables fall into one of six general categories:

1. policy related characteristics specific to the state in which the mother resides,
2. employment status,
3. demographic characteristics associated with each individual in the relationship,
4. previous fertility,
5. family background, and
6. religious affiliation.

We define the variables as follows:

### **State Policy Environment**

*Grant Amount:* The state TANF grant amount for a family of three as of 1997.

*Applications Accepted:* Percent of assistance applications accepted in the county in 1998.

*Collections:* Percent of TANF cases with child support collections in 1997.

## **Employment Status**<sup>8</sup>

*Father worked during the week before the child's birth:* Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the father reported working last week. If the father was not interviewed, then the variable is based on the mother's report of his employment status.

*Mother worked during the year before the child's birth:* Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the mother reported working last week.

## **Race/Ethnicity**

*White:* Mother's reported race was non-Hispanic white.

*Black:* Mother's reported race was non-Hispanic black.

*Hispanic:* Mother's reported ethnicity was Hispanic.

*Others:* Mother's reported ethnicity was other than white, black, or Hispanic.

## **Age**

*Age Mother – Mother:* Mother's reported age (or calculated age based on date-of-birth).

*Age Father – Father:* Father's reported age (or calculated age based on date-of-birth). If the father was not interviewed, then the variable is based on the mother's report of the father's age.

## **Education**

*HS Diploma or More – Mother:* The mother reported having at least a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.

*HS Diploma or More – Father:* The father reported having at least a high school diploma or equivalent certificate. If the father was not interviewed, then the variable is based on the mother's report of the father's educational attainment.

## **Fertility**

*Total Children with Father:* The mother reported the number of children she has in common with the father of the focal child.

*Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother:* Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the mother had at least one child with a partner other than the father of the focal child.

*Multiple Partner Fertility - Father:* Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the father of the focal child had at least one child with other women based on mother reported.

## **Family Background**

*Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better:* The mother reported that her mother had at least a high school diploma or equivalent certificate

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<sup>8</sup> We use parents' employment status during the week or year before the birth to avoid simultaneous equation bias involving employment and father-child contact in the same year.

*Two-Parent Family at age 15:* The mother reported that she lived in a two-parent family at age 15.

### **Religious Affiliation**

*No Religious Affiliation:* The mother reported that she has is no religious affiliation.

*Protestant:* the mother reported that her religious affiliation was Protestant.

*Catholic:* The mother reported that her religious affiliation was Catholic

*Other Religion:* The mother reported that her religious affiliation was Jewish, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness, or other religion.

--Table2 here--

The demographic characteristics and capabilities of FFCWS respondents, including the policy environments in which they live, have been discussed elsewhere (Garfinkel, et.al, 1999; McLanahan and Carlson, 2001). However, few studies have disaggregated these data by race, so we make a few observations about differences in the right hand side variables for our black and nonblack sub samples. First, the black sub sample is drawn from metropolitan areas with larger cash grants, higher application acceptance rates, and higher child support collections in TANF cases. The first two results may reflect the concentration of blacks in large, rust belt, states with liberal social welfare systems (Frye, 1995 and Mark et. al. 1990). Second, differences in the proportion of black and nonblack mothers who worked the year before the birth are not statistically significant. However, the proportion of nonblack fathers who worked in the week before the birth is higher than the proportion of black fathers who did so. Nevertheless, 71 percent of the black FFCWS fathers were employed. This figure is comparable to the recent employment-population ratios of white men 20 years old or more and higher than

the employment-population ratios of black men in this age group 1990s (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001)<sup>9</sup>.

The two sub samples are quite similar with respect to age and educational attainment, although a somewhat higher proportion of the black sub sample has a high school diploma or more. This is probably due to the distribution of the nonblack sub sample. Hispanics account for 55 percent of the nonblack sub sample. By including Hispanics along with non-Hispanic whites in the same (nonblack) sub sample, we obtain two sub samples of approximately equal size. This will improve the efficiency of our estimates, without sacrificing our main variables of interest. Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites have similar family formation, especially marital behavior<sup>10</sup>. However, Hispanics generally have lower levels of educational attainment than blacks. This is reflected in the mean values of the educational attainment variables for mothers and, especially, grandmothers.

More than two fifths of the black sub sample (of mothers and fathers) has had a child with someone other than the parent of their newborn, while just about one quarter of the non black sub sample has done so. Multiple partner fertility is expected to reduce father-child contact for several reasons. First, unwed mothers are likely to choose lower levels of father-child contact if financial obligations to other children reduce the share of the father's income available to share with her and her newborn. Also, the mother of a newborn may be less secure about the father's commitment to her and her child if there is

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<sup>9</sup> For example, between 1992 and 1999 the average employment-population of white men who were 20 years or more ranged was 74 percent. The average employment-population ratio of black men in this age group was 65.7.

<sup>10</sup> We would be less confident about this statement if we were able to disaggregate the Hispanic population, however, the result would be very small sub samples of Hispanic ethnic groups.



another child (and mother) who competes for the father's attention and affection. Such a mother is likely to choose an arrangement lower in the hierarchy of father-child contact.

Notably, just over a quarter of the mothers in the black sub sample were in two-parent families at age 15, while over 50 percent of mothers in the nonblack sub sample were in such families. Assuming the distribution of black fathers who were raised in two-parent families is similar, it may be difficult for blacks to pair on the experience of a two-parent family as a youth, because that experience is so rare.

The large proportion of Hispanics in the nonblack sub sample is also likely to affect the religious affiliation of mothers. Thus, 52 percent of mothers in the nonblack sub sample describe their religious affiliation as Catholic, while only 6 percent of the black sub sample does so. To the extent that the Catholic faith adheres to more conservative positions on family issues (e.g. prohibitions against divorce, abortion, and premarital sex), nonblacks would be under greater pressure than blacks to legitimate an unwed birth through marriage.

Following our previous work, our estimation procedure and the levels assigned to each category variable imply that the four father-child outcomes are not equal in their utility; no contact is the worst case scenario whereas marriage is the best possible outcome. We base these rankings on respondents' own preferences, as revealed by their responses to questions about marriage. When asked if being single is more advantageous than being married, two-thirds of the sample disagreed. An almost equal percentage indicated that marriage was better than cohabitation and three-quarters stated that marriage is better for children. Although, blacks were somewhat less likely than

nonblacks to express positive views about marriage, they generally preferred marriage to other family forms, for themselves and for their children.

The model in question attempts to estimate the impact of various factors on the probability that a mother's father-child contact choice falls into one category as opposed to another. For a multinomial dependent variable in which the categories are ranked, the best statistical procedure to use is the ordered logit regression. This procedure estimates the independent variables' effects on a mother's outcome falling above or below a given cut-point<sup>11</sup>. The more commonly used version of the ordered logit assumes that the impact of each variable is the same for all cut-points, something known as the proportional odds assumption. While this method is useful in many situations, it appears unlikely that such an assumption would hold true in this situation. A policy that may encourage a mother to go from living with the father of her child to marriage would not have a similar impact for a mother who does not want father-child contact. Moreover, statistical tests did not support the proportional odds assumption for the pooled samples or either race sub sample (see tables of 3 through 6).

To estimate the hypothesized effects, we use a less restrictive method, known as generalized ordered logit, which produces three sets of coefficients that correspond to each cut-point.

- the first set of coefficients refers to the odds that a mother's father-child contact choice falls into categories 2, 3, or 4 instead of category 1,
- the second set refers to the odds that a mother's father-child contact choice falls into categories 3 or 4 instead of 1 or 2, and
- the third set refers to the odds that a mother's father-child contact choice falls into categories 4 instead of 1, 2, cohabitation or 3.

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<sup>11</sup> Each cut-point is defined by its separation of two contiguous categories. Since this dependent variable has a total of four categories, there are three cut-points.

To avoid this cumbersome language, we have adopted jargon to report previous results, which we repeat here:

- cut-point 1 refers to the odds that the mother outcome is *any father-child contact* as opposed to no such contact,
- cut-point 2 refers to the odds that the mother chooses *living with* the father of the child (in a cohabiting or marital union) as opposed to the other two alternatives, and
- cut-point 3 refers simply to the odds that the mother chooses to *marry* the father of her child instead of any of the three alternatives.

#### IV: RESULTS

This section reports the results of estimating two models on the pooled sample and separate models for the black and the nonblack sub sample. We focus on 4 issues:

1. Do the variables included in our model perform as hypothesized?
2. Where (policy) variables have theoretically ambiguous effects, what do the results say?
3. Does inclusion of family background and religious affiliation variables reduce racial differentials in the odds in favor of marriage, as a father-child contact arrangement?
4. Are the father-child contact arrangements of black and nonblack unwed mothers differentially associated with the variables included in our model.

--Table 3 here--

##### Results for the Pooled Sample

Table 3 presents the results of our estimated model for the pooled sample. As previously stated, when father-child contact options are extended over the full range from no father-child contact to living with the mother and child, welfare benefits have ambiguous effects. The income effect encourages unwed mothers to choose more intensive forms of father-child contact, because welfare benefits enable the parenting couples to achieve higher levels of utility. By contrast, the independence effect

encourages unwed mothers to choose less intensive forms of father-child contact, to avoid having to share her income with the father of her child. The result depends upon which of these two effects dominates.

According to our results, the income effect dominates all along the father-child contact hierarchy. Each additional \$100 of cash benefits increases the odds that the mother chooses any father-child contact by 17 percent and living with the father by 14 percent. However, as predicted, more generous benefits have no independent effect on the odds that mothers marry the fathers of their children, because marriage is more likely to subject the couple to a means test, and thereby, reduces the likelihood that they will be eligible for cash benefits. Second, unlike our expectation, mothers living in states that accept more applications for cash assistance do not have higher odds of choosing more intense forms of father-child contact.

Our results for child support enforcement are consistent with findings of previous research that responses of fathers dominate. Nixon (1995) finds that states with more effective child support enforcement programs have slightly lower divorce rates. Similarly, Case (1998) and Garfinkel, et.al. (2000) find that states with more effective paternity establishment or child support collections have lower rates of unwed births. In the present case, fathers will be highly motivated to marry the mothers of their children, if the mothers live in states that effectively collect child support, because in such a state remaining unmarried is a poor strategy for escaping the financial obligation for children.

According to our results, child support has a large effect on the odds in favor of marriage. If a state increases the percentage of TANF cases on which it collects child support by 10 percent, the odds that the mother marries the father of her child increase by

23 percent. However, increases in child support collections reduce the odds in favor of some father-child contact. These results are consistent with the view that effective child support enforcement may create stress between parents in fragile families. This can reduce father-child contact or induce mothers to avoid the stress by marrying the fathers of their children (Mincy and Pouncy, 1999).

As expected, the father's employment status during the week before the birth has a large and positive effect on father-child contact, all along the hierarchy. The magnitude and statistical significance of this effect increases as a mother chooses more intense forms of father-child contact. Thus, if the father was employed, the odds that the mother chooses any father-child contact rise by 43 percent; the odds that the mother lives with him rise by 60 percent; and the odds that the mother marries him rise in by 118 percent. By contrast, the mother's employment status has a (marginally) statistically significant effect only on the odds that the mother lives with the father of her child.

While the odds that the mother arranges some father-child contact are unaffected by the father's educational attainment, the odds that the mother lives with or marries the fathers of her child are higher for fathers with more schooling. Thus, fathers with a high school diploma or more have odds of living with the mother and child that are 21 percent higher than fathers who are high school dropouts. Similarly, fathers with a high school diploma or more have odds of marrying the mother that are 60 percent higher than fathers who are high school dropouts. Mother's education has similar effects on father-child contact, thus the income effect dominates here as well.

Previous fertility has the expected effects on father child contact, all along the hierarchy. The effects involving fathers are particularly large. Thus, if a mother has an additional child with the father, it increases the odds of:

- any father-child contact by 51 percent,
- living with the father by 29 percent, and
- marrying the father by 40 percent.

However, if fathers have previous children with other partners, this reduces the:

- odds of any father-child contact by 67 percent,
- odds of living with the father by 49 percent, and
- odds of marriage by 50 percent.

On the other hand, if mothers have previous children with other partners, this reduces:

- the odds of any father-child contact by 20 percent,
- odds of living with the father by 24 percent, and
- odds of marriage by 57 percent.

Thus, family strengthening efforts targeting unwed couples with higher order births (in common) appear to be particularly promising, because a process of family formation appears to be underway. If either parent, but particularly the father, has multiple partner fertility, efforts to increase father-child contact will face significant obstacles. This, should link primary prevention, responsible fatherhood, and marriage promotion efforts.

Our results for the effects of age on father-child contact arrangements are mixed. Older mothers have higher odds of choosing more intense father-child contact arrangements, but age has no effect on the odds that mothers choose some father-child contact. Thus, a one-year increase in the mother's age increases the odds in favor of living with the father of the child by 3 percent and the odds of marriage by 9 percent. However, the father's age does not affect the odds in favor of some father-child contact (at conventional significant levels), has only a marginally significant impact on the odds

that the father lives with the mother of the child, and has no significant impact on the odds in favor of marriage.

Despite controls in these several domains, race and ethnic differentials in more intense forms of father-child contact arrangements are large. The odds that black unwed mothers choose to live with the fathers of their children are 65 percent lower than the odds that white unwed mothers choose to do so. Their odds of marrying the fathers of their children are fully 77 percent lower than the odds that white unwed mothers do so. On the other hand, Hispanic unwed mothers and white unwed mothers make similar father-child contact choices, at least until marriage. The odds that Hispanics unwed mothers marry the fathers of their children are 35 percent lower than the odds that white unwed mothers do so.

The results in table 4 show that family background characteristics and religious affiliation play some role in father-child contact. Nevertheless, racial differentials persist. Mothers who grew up in two parent households have odds of marrying the fathers of their children 27 percent higher than other mothers. Those with religious affiliation in Protestant or Catholic churches have odds of marrying the fathers of their children approximately 60 percent higher than mothers with no religious affiliation. On the other hand, those with affiliations in the Other Religion category have odds of marrying the fathers of their children that are 159 percent higher than mothers with no religious affiliation. This is generally consistent with our hypothesis that mothers with religious affiliations that are more conservative on family issues face more pressure to legitimate

unwed births through marriage<sup>12</sup>. Note that religious affiliation has no effect on the odds in favor of less intense forms of father-child contact at conventional significance levels.

While inclusion of family background and religious affiliation has no substantial effect on racial differentials in father-child contact, child support no longer has a large or significant effect on the odds in favor of marriage. The interrelationships among these variables (ethnicity, child support, and religious affiliation) as well as the persistence of racial differentials, suggest that policy and other variables differentially affect the father-child contact decisions of different race and ethnic groups. To clarify these differences we proceed to estimate the model over separate (black and nonblack) sub samples.

#### Results for Separate Racial Sub Samples

Tables 5 and 6 report our results for the black and nonblack sub samples. These results indicate that the variables included in our model affect father-child contact choices of unwed black and nonblack mothers quite differently.<sup>13</sup> The largest differences involve child support enforcement, employment status, family background characteristics, and religious affiliation. First, while more effective child support enforcement has a marginally significant, but large, effect on the odds of marriage in the nonblack sub sample, it has no effect on the odds of marriage in the black sub sample. However, child support enforcement significantly reduces the odds of any father-child contact in the

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12 We argued that because Catholics are more conservative on family issues, mothers with a Catholic affiliation would be more likely to legitimate unwed births. Our results do not support this hypothesis. However, this too may be the result of the large number of Hispanics in the nonblack sub sample and inclusion of Catholic dummy durable in this model. In a separate equation, (not shown) that excludes the Hispanic dummy durable, the odds in favor of marriage are higher for Catholic than for Protestant unwed mothers.

13 We estimated a model (not shown here) over the nonblack sub sample that excluded the Hispanic and Other Race dummy variables, so that the result was identical to the model reported in table 6. The null hypothesis that the black and nonblack sub samples had the same coefficients is rejected by a likelihood ratio test, chi-squared (0) equals 503.4,  $p < .001$ . We also estimated a model similar to table 4 with race and



black sub sample. This may occur because black men have lower earnings on average, than nonblack men, even with both groups are employed, so the former have lower capacity to meet their child support obligations.

Interestingly, the father's employment status has a larger effect on father-child contact in the nonblack sub sample than in the black sub sample (at least until marriage) and in the former sub sample, these effects occur all along the hierarchy. Thus, in the nonblack sub sample, employed fathers have odds of any father-child contact that are 164 percent higher than the odds that fathers who are not employed do so. In the black sub sample, however, the father's employment status has no significant effect on the odds in favor of any father-child. Similarly, in the nonblack sub sample, employed fathers have odds of living with their fragile families that are 129 percent higher than the odds that fathers who are not employed do so. In the black sub sample these odds are only 60 percent higher. However, father's employment status has a larger impact on the odds of marriage for black mothers than for nonblack mothers. Thus, in the nonblack sub sample, employed fathers have odds of marrying the mothers of their children that are 166 percent higher than the odds that fathers who are not employed do so. In the nonblack sub sample these odds are 79 percent higher. Put succinctly, black mothers have lower employment thresholds for father-child contact than non-black mothers, except for the most intense arrangement, namely, marriage.

Interestingly, the income effect of mothers' employment status clearly dominates the independence effect for black mothers, while, if anything, the reverse appears to be the case for nonblack mothers. Thus, the odds that employed black mothers lived with the

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ethnic interactions terms to indicate, which variables had differential effects on blacks and whites. The results (not shown here) are consistent with those reported here in the comparison of tables 5 and 6.

fathers of their children were 77 percent higher than the odds that black mothers who were not employed did so. The odds that the former married the fathers of the children were 70 percent higher than the odds that the latter did so. By contrast, employment reduced the odds of father-child contact in the nonblack sub sample, but these results were not significant at conventional levels of significance.

Finally, while nonblack mothers with some religious affiliation had higher odds of marrying the fathers of the children, religious affiliation had almost no impact on the odds of father-child contact in the black sub sample. Only black mothers in the Other Religion category, which we hypothesize is the most conservative on family issues, had higher odds of marrying the fathers of their children than mothers with no religious affiliation.

## **V: POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Bush Administration's outreach to states and its 2002 budget indicate that marriage promotion will be the centerpiece of its efforts to strengthen families, reduce child poverty and improve child well-being. Afraid that these efforts will trap low-income women in unsafe, unhealthy, and economically insecure marriages, women's groups will be vocal and powerful critics, laying the groundwork to unravel these efforts as soon as a change in the political balance of power permits.

In its present form, the marriage promotion agenda will continue to meet with resistance because of the unbalanced approach the Administration has taken. Gone is any discussion of services that might help potential marriage partners who are poor, to overcome barriers to healthy marriage, such as unemployment, underemployment,

substance abuse, domestic violence, and so on. Gone, also, is the balance between marriage promotion efforts and other efforts that assist parents in fragile families who wish to be jointly involved in the lives of their children, even though they choose, for a variety of reasons, not to marry. Both of these, now missing elements, were important in attracting blacks in the field of responsible fatherhood to an interracial coalition that supported marriage promotion and less restrictive approaches to involving fathers in welfare reform. This coalition, worked to support the Fatherhood Counts Act of 1999, which was sufficiently balanced to assuage many of the concerns of women's groups and other critics and was passed by the House of Representatives. With the demise of this interracial coalition, white men heading federal agencies and white women heading advocacy groups are poised for another theatre of their on-going gender war, this time to determine the fate of children and families on welfare, who are disproportionately black.

We hope these combatants will note our results, which show that some anti-poverty policies affect father-child contact in black and nonblack families in the same way, while other policies affect them differently. In particular, higher levels of father's employment, and lower level's of multiple partner fertility increase the odds of father-child contact all along the hierarchy in black and nonblack fragile families. Higher cash benefits also increase the odds that black and nonblack fragile families have some father-child contact and the odds that they live together, but have no effect on the odds that they transition to marriage. By contrast, more effective child support enforcement increases the odds of marriage in nonblack families, but reduces the odds of father-child contact, without affecting the odds of marriage, in black families. Still more interesting is the effect of mother's employment. Black unwed mothers, who worked before their child

was born, are more likely than those who did not work, to arrange some father-child contact. By contrast, work prior to the birth, has no effect on the odds of father-child contact for nonblack mothers.

Unfortunately, these traditional policy instruments have been sidelined in the current debate. Instead, the emphasis on media campaigns and demonstration projects suggests that the Administration is seeking new instruments to promote marriage, including efforts to encourage unwed mothers to embrace more conservative views on family issues. Our results suggest that such efforts might encourage more mothers to legitimate unwed births through marriage. We find that nonblack unwed mothers with some religious affiliation are more likely to marry the fathers of their children than those without a religious affiliation. Even black unwed mothers who affiliate themselves with faith communities that hold the most conservative views on family issues are more likely to marry the fathers of their children than black unwed mothers with no religious affiliation.

However, great caution is required before black communities would embrace such approaches, because they are likely to celebrate the virtues of marriage, while stigmatizing unwed births. It has been difficult for blacks to sustain the latter, because single motherhood has been much more common among black families than nonblack families for more than 100 years (Ruggles, 1994)<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, some black women became single mothers because they failed to observe social and religious prohibitions

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14 According to Kusmer (1976), labor market discrimination limited income inequality among blacks before WWII. In such circumstances, differences in manners, memberships, and skin substituted for differences in wealth. Marriage, too, conveyed status and out-of-wedlock pregnancy was stigmatized; but contradictions abounded. Although illegitimacy was shunned, illegitimacy, too, was flat. An unwed mother might be shunned at the "best" church, but welcomed at family gatherings or the good hairdresser. Since the mid-1950's when true economic diversity emerged among African-Americans, illegitimacy has increasingly become a class phenomenon within the community (Wilson, 198?, Landry, 198?).

against nonmarital sex. Others became single mothers because someone victimized them or their husbands. Still others became single mothers because their husbands migrated to in search of employment, and for unknown reasons, never returned. At certain times in the painful history of race relations in this country, desertion and victimization were as likely causes of single motherhood as moral failure. In any individual case, who could know? Who would ask? In response, the black community developed a tradition of embracing all of its children, even the fair-skinned ones who could not have been born in marital unions. Under these circumstances, stigmatizing unwed birth was impossible.

There is mounting evidence that children are better off if they grow up in healthy, married-couple families. This poses a unique challenge for the black community, because rates of unwed child-bearing and child-rearing among blacks are extraordinarily high. Marriage proponents would be wise to let this evidence prick the conscience of the nation with the question: How did we allow childbirth and child rearing to divorce themselves from marriage? In each racial group, the answer will be different, as will the process for creating or re-creating the most supportive family arrangements for children. As they debate this question, privately, each group will be forced to reflect on its past, its future, and develop a response. Forcing the issue by heavily subsidizing marriage, the response that is easiest for whites to attain, but hardest for blacks, will only provide a common threat against which blacks will rally. This will only delay the kind of private, searching, dialogue the black community needs to reach into its own soul and find what is best for all its children.

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**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Father-Child Contact Plan at Baseline and Outcome at Follow-up**

	All Sample	Black	Non-Black	Chi-Square
<b>Mother's Father-Child Contact Plan at Baseline <sup>[1]</sup></b>				
No Contact	5%	4%	6%	53.8 ***
Some Contact	19%	23%	14%	
Living with Child	27%	31%	22%	
Marriage	49%	42%	58%	
<b>Father's Father-Child Contact Plan at Baseline <sup>[2]</sup></b>				
No Contact	2%	0%	1%	45.6 ***
Some Contact	14%	18%	10%	
Living with Child	21%	25%	16%	
Marriage	64%	57%	73%	
<b>Actual Father-Child Contact Choice at Followup <sup>[1]</sup></b>				
No Contact	19%	19%	19%	104.2 ***
Some Contact	36%	44%	24%	
Living with Child	36%	31%	42%	
Marriage	10%	6%	15%	

Note: Each question with different cases of refused to answer and don't know.  
 \* p <.05; \*\* p <.01; \*\*\* p <.001  
 [1] Sample limit to unmarried mothers at baseline (n=1766, black=1048).  
 [2] Sample limit to unmarried fathers at baseline (n=1371, black=789).

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Main Variables**

	All Sample	Black	Non-Black	F test
<b>Father-Child Contact at Followup (All Sample)</b>				
No Contact	14%	17%	12%	281.8 ***
Some Contact	28%	39%	16%	
Living with Child	26%	26%	26%	
Marriage	32%	18%	46%	
<b>State Policy Environment</b>				
Grant Amount [\$100]	3.17 (1.30)	3.34 (1.04)	2.97 (1.50)	51.2 ***
Applications Accepted	0.68 (0.15)	0.70 (0.14)	0.66 (0.16)	38.0 ***
Child Support Collections	0.30 (0.13)	0.34 (0.11)	0.25 (0.12)	415.1 ***
<b>Employment Status</b>				
Father Worked last week	79%	71%	88%	101.4 ***
Mother Worked last year	64%	63%	65%	1.6
<b>Race</b>				
Non-Hispanic White – Mother	19%	---	38%	
Black – Mother	51%	100%	---	
Hispanic – Mother	27%	---	55%	
Other Race – Mother	4%	---	7%	
<b>Age</b>				
Mother	26.4 (6.2)	25.9 (6.0)	27.0 (6.3)	18.6 ***
Father	27.9 (7.4)	27.4 (7.8)	28.3 (7.0)	8.0 **
<b>Education</b>				
HS Diploma or Better – Mother	66%	68%	64%	4.3 *
HS Diploma or Better – Father	68%	70%	65%	7.7 **
<b>Fertility</b>				
Total Fertility with Father	1.6 (0.9)	1.5 (0.9)	1.6 (1.0)	4.0 *
Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother [1: Yes, 0: No]	36%	46%	26%	111.1 ***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Father [1: Yes, 0: No]	35%	45%	25%	24.3 ***
<b>Family Background</b>				
Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better	69%	80%	58%	141.9 ***
Two-Parent Family at Age 15	40%	27%	53%	114.8 ***
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>				
No Religion	11%	12%	10%	2.6
Protestant	48%	69%	25%	592.9 ***
Catholic	28%	6%	52%	886.9 ***
Other Religion <sup>[1]</sup>	12%	12%	12%	0.0
N	2482	1264	1218	

Note: Each question with different cases of refused to answer and don't know.

\* p < .05; \*\* p < .01; \*\*\* p < .001

[1] Include Jewish, Muslim, and Jehovah's witness, and other religion.

**Table 3: The Generalized Logit Model of Father-Child Contact  
Without Family Background Variables**

	Any Contact		Live with Child		Marriage	
	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P
Grant Amount [\$100]	1.17	***	1.14	***	1.03	
Applications Accepted	0.79		0.99		0.77	
Child Support Collections	0.36	*	0.96		2.33	+
Father Worked last week	1.43	*	1.60	***	2.18	***
Mother Worked last year	1.06		1.34	*	1.01	
Age – Mother	1.02		1.03	*	1.09	***
Age – Father	1.02		1.02	**	1.01	
HS Diploma or Better – Mother	1.15		1.25	*	1.49	***
HS Diploma or Better – Father	1.15		1.21	**	1.60	***
Black – Mother	1.02		0.35	***	0.23	***
Hispanic – Mother	1.10		0.97		0.65	**
Other Race – Mother	1.07		0.65	*	0.73	+
<b>Total Children with Father</b>	1.51	***	1.29	***	1.40	***
<b>Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother</b>	0.80	**	0.76	***	0.43	***
<b>Multiple Partner Fertility - Father</b>	0.33	***	0.51	***	0.50	***
Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better	----		----		----	
Two-Parent Family at age 15	----		----		----	
Protestant	----		----		----	
Catholic	----		----		----	
Other Religion	----		----		----	
N			2318			
Log Likelihood			-2642.9			
Pseudo R Square			0.14			

+ p < .10, \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

Robust standard errors are used to take into account the fact that women live in same city.

Approximate Likelihood-ratio test of proportionality of odds: chi(30): 215.4 \*\*\*

**Table 4: The Generalized Logit Model of Father-Child Contact Outcomes  
With Family Background Variables**

	Any Contact		Live with Child		Marriage	
	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P
Grant Amount [\$100]	1.22	***	1.14	***	1.01	
Applications Accepted	0.70	*	0.99		0.89	
Child Support Collections	0.23	**	1.04		1.82	
Father Worked last week	1.61	*	1.77	***	2.25	***
Mother Worked last year	1.02		1.35	*	1.09	
Age – Mother	1.02		1.03	**	1.09	***
Age – Father	1.02	+	1.02	*	1.01	
HS Diploma or Better – Mother	1.23		1.32	*	1.44	***
HS Diploma or Better – Father	1.04		1.19	*	1.51	***
Black – Mother	0.95		0.37	***	0.25	***
Hispanic – Mother	0.87		0.81		0.60	**
Other Race – Mother	0.91		0.68	*	0.92	
Total Children with Father	1.46	***	1.31	***	1.39	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother	0.79	*	0.78	*	0.43	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Father	0.33	***	0.52	***	0.50	***
<b>Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better</b>	0.88		0.88		0.91	
<b>Two-Parent Family at age 15</b>	0.95		1.08		1.27	**
<b>Protestant</b>	1.24		1.00		1.58	*
<b>Catholic</b>	1.31		1.29	+	1.60	*
<b>Other Religion</b>	1.50		1.30		2.59	***
N			2146			
Log Likelihood			-2409.0			
Pseudo R Square			0.16			

+ p < .10, \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

Robust standard errors are used to take into account the fact that women live in same city.

Approximate Likelihood-ratio test of proportionality of odds: chi(40): 194.0 \*\*\*

**Table 5: The Generalized Logit Model of Father-Child Contact Outcomes  
NonBlack Sample**

	Any Contact		Live with Child		Marriage	
	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P
Grant Amount [\$100]	1.35	***	1.19	***	0.98	
Applications Accepted	0.27	+	0.70		0.83	
Child Support Collections	0.13		0.72		2.59	+
Father Worked last week	2.64	***	2.29	***	1.79	**
Mother Worked last year	0.74	+	0.97		0.79	+
Age – Mother	1.08	**	1.03	*	1.10	***
Age – Father	0.99		1.05	***	1.02	
HS Diploma or Better – Mother	1.33		1.52	**	1.40	***
HS Diploma or Better – Father	1.19		1.17		1.60	**
Hispanic – Mother	0.91		0.84		0.63	**
Other Race – Mother	0.94		0.67	+	0.92	
Total Children with Father	1.65	*	1.42	***	1.44	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother	0.90		0.74		0.39	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Father	0.24	***	0.41	***	0.40	***
Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better	0.51		0.68	+	0.93	
Two-Parent Family at age 15	1.08		1.20	+	1.37	**
Protestant	1.51	+	1.12		1.80	*
Catholic	0.98		1.12		1.63	+
Other Religion	1.26		1.18		2.51	***
N			1054			
Log Likelihood			-1059.8			
Pseudo R Square			0.17			

+ p < .10, \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

Robust standard errors are used to take into account the fact that women live in same city.

Approximate Likelihood-ratio test of proportionality of odds: chi(38): 103.0 \*\*\*

Likelihood-ratio test difference between racial models: chi2(0): 513.2 \*\*\*

**Table 6: The Generalized Logit Model of Father-Child Contact Outcomes  
Black Sample**

	Any Contact		Live with Child		Marriage	
	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P	Odds Ratio	P
Grant Amount [\$100]	1.19	*	1.10	**	1.04	
Applications Accepted	0.95		1.21		0.88	
Child Support Collections	0.24	**	0.97		0.88	
Father Worked last week	1.31		1.60	*	2.66	***
Mother Worked last year	1.21	+	1.77	***	1.70	**
Age – Mother	0.97	+	1.03	*	1.09	***
Age – Father	1.03	*	1.00		1.00	
HS Diploma or Better – Mother	1.33		1.31		1.62	*
HS Diploma or Better – Father	1.10		1.27	+	1.44	
Total Children with Father	1.45	***	1.27	**	1.42	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Mother	0.79		0.90		0.52	***
Multiple Partner Fertility - Father	0.42	***	0.63	***	0.59	**
Mother's Education - HS Diploma or Better	1.27		1.09		0.89	
Two-Parent Family at age 15	0.91		0.93		1.07	
Protestant	1.19		0.98		1.20	
Catholic	1.70		1.70	+	1.34	
Other Religion	1.60		1.27		1.96	*
N			1092			
Log Likelihood			-1316.4			
Pseudo R Square			0.09			

+ p < .10, \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

Robust standard errors are used to take into account the fact that women live in same city.

Approximate Likelihood-ratio test of proportionality of odds: chi(34): 94.2 \*\*\*

Likelihood-ratio test difference between racial models: chi2(0): 513.2 \*\*\*

Table 6: Simulation of Father-Child Contact Outcome at Followup

	No Contact	Some Contact	Living with Child	Marriage	% Change of Marriage (C-B)/B	% of Diff. Expl. By (C-B)/(A-B)
<b>A. Predicted Non-Black Mothers</b>	7%	16%	30%	48%	---	---
<b>B. Predicted Black Mothers</b>	13%	41%	33%	14%	---	---
<b>C1: + Non-Black Mother's religion</b>	11%	36%	38%	15%	10%	4%
<b>C2: + Non-Black Mother's religion and Father's Employment</b>	11%	34%	38%	17%	26%	10%
<b>C3: + Non-Black Mother's religion, M.F. and Father's Employment</b>	9%	33%	37%	21%	52%	21%