

THE WELFARE STATE'S LEGACY

Leftists everywhere, including academia, tell us that slavery and racism are the causes of the rampant poverty and other problems plaguing the black community today, says Walter Williams. Yet the primary "problem among blacks" is rooted in "a very weak family structure." Is it true that "the weak black family [is] a legacy of slavery? In 1960, just 22 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Fifty years later, more than 70 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Here's my question: Was the increase in single-parent black families after 1960 a legacy of slavery, or might it be a legacy of the welfare state ushered in by the War on Poverty?"

Williams Continues, "At one time, almost all black families were poor, regardless of whether one or both parents were present. Today roughly 30 percent of blacks are poor. However, two-parent black families are rarely poor. Only 8 percent of black married-couple families live in poverty. Among black families in which both the husband and wife work full time, the poverty rate is under 5 percent. Poverty in black families headed by single women is 37 percent. The undeniable truth is that neither slavery nor Jim Crow nor the harshest racism has decimated the black family the way the welfare state has."