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ABSTRACT

The influences of structural economic factors, social ecology, and culture in producing young absent fathers in the inner city and in defining relationships with their children are examined. Ethnographic data on three low income urban neighborhoods in Brooklyn (New York) are reported and compared with respect to the careers of young males, patterns of sexual activity and contraception, and responses to early pregnancy. The three neighborhoods varied in ethnic composition. One was predominantly White, and while not wealthy, had larger median income levels than the predominantly Black and Hispanic neighborhoods investigated. Data are reported for 48 young men. Comparisons of these young men demonstrate the interrelated influences of structural economic factors, culture, and social ecology in shaping the processes of family and household formation. The high rates of female-headed and aid-receiving households in the minority neighborhoods were related to the lack of wage-paying jobs for men and to social ecological factors. In all three communities, a young man was expected to at least try to support his children. Social policy that hopes to improve persistent poverty must move beyond the assumption that uncontrolled sexuality and an undeveloped work ethic are the root of the problem. Policies and programs must recognize the powerful structural economic factors that concentrate poverty and dependency in the inner cities; also, males must be defined as important parts of the solution and not merely as sources of the problem. Some innovative efforts in this direction have recently been undertaken and these efforts must be recognized as part of a comprehensive and intensive program of services. A list of nine references is appended. (SLD)

"Absent Fathers in the Inner City"

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Absent Fathers in the Inner City

by Mercer L. Sullivan

Abstract: The influences of structural economic factors, social ecology, and culture in producing young absent fathers in the inner city and in defining their relationships to their children are examined. Ethnographic data on three low-income urban neighborhoods are reported and compared with respect to the careers of young males, patterns of sexual activity and contraception, and responses to early pregnancy.

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The longstanding and increasing relationship between officially female-headed households and poverty has prompted much recent speculation that absent fathers are a major cause of concentrated and persistent poverty in the inner cities. Child support enforcement is now widely touted as a major solution to the emerging formation of a so-called "underclass." As part of this strategy for reducing poverty, many proponents of reform do recognize the need for addressing the employment, education and training difficulties of young men. Yet, current welfare reform proposals are more emphatic about the need to collect child support payments from young men than they are about the need to im-

prove their economic opportunities. Meanwhile, knowledge of the economic circumstances of young, unmarried, officially "absent" fathers and of their relationships to the households in which their children live is sadly lacking. Official statistics do not convey an accurate picture of the extent to which officially absent fathers are really absent from the households and lives of their children or of the extent to which these men are actually able to support families.

Explanations of the relationship between family form and poverty have long been controversial in social science and in discussions of public policy. Although the association between poverty and female-headship of households has been apparent for some time, the direction of causal relationships between the two has been hotly debated. Since poverty and female-headed households both occur at high rates among members of cultural minority groups in the United States, there has also been much controversy about the role that culture plays in the processes that produce both female-headed households and poverty. The "culture of poverty" theories of the late 1960's drew harsh criticism because they seemed to imply that cultural values concerning the control of sexual activity and the value of marriage were the causes rather than the results of poverty.

These theories provoked such heated reactions that research on family patterns among the poor was virtually suspended during the 1970's. During that decade, however, the rates of female-headed households increased across society and soared among minority residents of inner-city areas. The associations among female-headship of households, welfare dependency, and concentrated and persistent poverty became stronger than ever, eventually prompt-

ing social scientists and leaders of minority groups to pay renewed attention to family patterns among the poor. Fortunately, much of recent research on these questions has maintained a steady focus on structural causes of both poverty and family disruption. Recent work by W.J. Wilson[1] has solidified this focus on structural economic factors while linking these economic changes to powerful demographic shifts that have concentrated poor blacks in certain central city areas while upwardly mobile blacks have left these areas.

Unfortunately, the role of culture in these social changes remains as neglected as it has been since the days when overly vague notions of the "culture of poverty" brought disrepute to the culture concept as a tool for understanding the effects of the concentration of poverty among cultural minorities. This neglect of culture is unfortunate because it leaves us in the dark as to how people deal collectively with economic disadvantage, prejudice, and the dilemmas of procreating and raising families under such conditions. Lacking such an understanding, we are left with two sorts of explanatory framework, structural and individual, both of which beg crucial questions of how people in real communities devise collective responses to their problems. Too extreme an emphasis on individual causation ignores growing evidence of the proliferation of low-wage jobs and increasing joblessness in inner-city labor markets. Too much emphasis on structural causation ignores evidence that postponing childbearing leads to greater occupational success even within inner-city populations.

The neglect of culture stems both from a lack of ethnographic research which alone can portray culture and also from theoretical confusion concerning the ways in which individual action, culture, and social structure are inter-

related. The comparative ethnographic research on young fathers in three inner-city neighborhoods reported here attempts to resolve some of these issues, first by providing data on cultural processes and, second, by relating these cultural processes both upwards to the structural constraints of the political economy and downwards to the choices and strategies of particular individuals which vary even within these neighborhoods.

A key to the theoretical approach employed here is the concept of social ecology, the idea that each neighborhood we studied is distinctive not just because of primordial cultural values that may have been retained from a distant past but, perhaps more importantly, because each neighborhood occupies a distinctive ecological niche in relation to the regional economy, the educational system, and other institutions of the larger society. Though even the early "culture of poverty" theorists maintained that culture is adaptive to structure,[2] their tendency to portray pathology and not adaptation led to the unfortunate current tendency either to dismiss culture or to reify it as a set of mysterious and immutable values. By focusing on social ecology, the present comparison of the adaptive strategies of young people in three different inner-city communities attempts to portray cultural process in a more complex way, as the collective adaptations of different groups of people with different group histories to similar yet distinctive difficulties in obtaining a living income, procreating, and supporting and raising children.

Three neighborhoods and a research project. The three neighborhoods we have studied are in Brooklyn, N.Y. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the very detailed and personal data we have gathered, we refer to these places pseudonymously as Hamilton Park, Projectville, and La Barriada. The

three neighborhoods are all relatively low-income, yet they differ in class and in culture. Hamilton Park is a predominantly white, Catholic area many of whose adult residents are third and fourth generation descendents of immigrants from Italy and Poland. Though census figures show this neighborhood to have some of the lowest income levels among predominantly white, non-Hispanic neighborhoods in New York City, median income levels are still significantly higher than those in the two minority neighborhoods. Less than twelve percent of families are below the poverty level and less than ten percent of households receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Projectville is a predominantly black neighborhood whose adult residents are first or second generation immigrants from the Southern United States. La Barriada is a predominantly Hispanic area in which all of the families we have contacted are headed by first or second generation immigrants from Puerto Rico. Family poverty levels and household AFDC enrollment levels are around fifty percent in both these areas.

We began research in these areas in 1979 in a study of the relationships among schooling, employment, and crime in the careers of young males. In that study, we described distinctive career patterns in each neighborhood and related these patterns to the distinctive social ecology of each neighborhood.[3] In 1984, we began to look at young men who become fathers at an early age and how their responses with respect to marriage, child support, and household and family formation relate to the career patterns we had already been studying.[4] At that time, we re-contacted some of the young males who had become fathers during our study a few years earlier and also were introduced by them to younger males in their neighborhoods whose sexual partners had become preg-

nant. Some of the similarities and differences within and between these neighborhood-based groups of young men in how they become fathers and what they do about these critical life-cycle transitions are reported and compared here.[5]

In order to assess the influences of both culture and economic opportunity on the ways in which young men become fathers and how they react, the three neighborhoods are compared below in terms of (a) the careers of young males, (b) patterns of teenage sexual activity, and (c) responses to pregnancy, including whether or not abortions are sought, marriages and coresidence are entered into, and how the children of young mothers are supported. The data are reported for 16 young males from Projectville, 17 from La Barriada, and 15 from Hamilton Park. These are not random samples but were recruited by ethnographic snowballing techniques. In addition, there is considerable variation within each sample. Each includes about a third who are non-fathers and each includes fathers who have been more and less effective in providing support for their children. Nonetheless, variation within each neighborhood sample falls within a distinctive range that reflects both the values and resources available within that community.

All of those referred to as "fathers" fathered children by teenage mothers. Many of the fathers, however, were one to two years older and not themselves teenagers at the time they became fathers.

The careers of young males. The higher employment rates and median family incomes of Hamilton Park residents are associated with more employment for young males and better wages when they are employed. Although work can also be scarce for them, they enjoy much better access to jobs, both while they are

still of school age and subsequently, than their minority counterparts. The jobs that they do find are located almost entirely through neighborhood and family-based personal networks. While they are still of school age, this work is almost entirely off-the-books, yet it usually pays better than minimum wage. As they get older, some find their way into relatively well-paying and secure unionized blue-collar jobs. Education plays very little role in their access to work. Most have attended a public vocational high school, but only about a third of them have obtained any sort of diploma.

Young males from the two minority neighborhoods fare much worse. They suffer more from lack of employment and they earn very low wages when they do work, both as teenagers and as young adults. Yet, the career patterns differ between these two minority neighborhoods in distinctive ways that are related to the social ecology of the neighborhoods. La Barriada's young males leave school the earliest and tend to work in unskilled manual jobs in nearby factories and warehouses when they do work. Projectville's young males stay in school longer than their counterparts in La Barriada or in Hamilton Park. Nearly half of our sample from Projectville had either completed a diploma or were still working towards one. As a result of their prolonged participation in schooling, they tend to enter the labor market somewhat later than the others. They then tend to move into clerical and service sector jobs in downtown business districts. Many of these jobs require a high school diploma. As a result, though they enter the labor market somewhat later than those in La Barriada, they have better prospects for upward mobility. Yet, they still tend to earn less than their less educated counterparts in Hamilton Park.

In our earlier study of crime and employment, we found that, although many young males in each of these neighborhoods are involved in exploratory economic crimes, the lesser access to employment among the minority youths leads to more sustained and prevalent involvement in intensive criminal activities and to periods of probation and incarceration. Census and police statistics generally support our findings concerning the relative involvements of those in the three neighborhoods in schooling, work, and crime.

These career patterns are described as background for understanding the different ranges of responses to early pregnancy within each of the neighborhoods.

Sexual Activity. Before looking at how young males in the three neighborhoods respond to early pregnancy and whether or not they become absent fathers, it is necessary to compare their patterns of early sexual activity and contraceptive use. If we found substantial differences, we might conclude that differences in becoming fathers at an early age were due to later or less frequent sexual activity or, alternatively, to greater use of contraception. In fact, our data show relatively few such differences among the neighborhood groups, although we do find such differences within each group. Almost all those in each group had experienced intercourse by the age of fifteen, and few had used contraception in their first acts of intercourse.

These findings differ somewhat from survey findings which indicate a greater likelihood of early intercourse among blacks than among whites,[6] although Hamilton Park's whites are much poorer than the middle-class whites often sampled in these surveys. In fact, we found in each neighborhood that, from their early teens on, males are almost entirely outside of adult supervi-

sion, except when they are in school, as they frequently are not. They also are encouraged to prove their manhood by sexual adventures and receive little consistent encouragement or instruction in the use of contraceptives.

What our data do suggest, however, are variations within each neighborhood in the use of contraception. We first sought out young fathers in each place and subsequently interviewed four or five friends of the fathers who were not themselves fathers. The non-fathers generally began sexual activity as early and heedlessly as the fathers. Some seemed to have avoided becoming fathers through chance, but others reported developing contraceptive practices that prevented their becoming fathers. These practices included some use of condoms but more often involved careful use of withdrawal or a long-term relationship with a partner who used birth control pills.

Responses to pregnancy. In contrast to this relative lack of difference among the neighborhoods in patterns of early sexual activity and contraception, the ranges of responses to early pregnancy differed among the neighborhoods in quite distinctive ways that can be related to differences in culture, class, and social ecology. After the discovery that the partners of these young males had become pregnant, those involved in each community faced a number of choices. The first choice was whether or not the young female should seek an abortion. If not, then it had to be decided whether the young couple should get married and/or establish co-residence and what extent and manner of support and care the young father should be expected to provide for his child. These choices usually involved not just the conceiving young couple but also their own parents and even extended families. In this way, individual choices became embedded in the context of the wider neighborhood community and its values and resources.

In all these choices, we found distinctive neighborhood patterns, although a range of choices was apparent within each neighborhood group. These patterns are described separately for each neighborhood. We begin with Projectville, which fits many of the stereotypes of "underclass" neighbhorhoods with high rates of out-of-wedlock childbearing to teenage mothe. and related high rates of absent fatherhood. We then compare these patterns with Hamilton Park in order to assess the effects of different levels of economic opportunity. Finally, we examine La Barriada, an area which is similar to Projectville in class but different in culture and social ecology.

In Projectville, we found very ambivalent attitudes and behavior concerning the decision to seek abortions or not. Most of the young males reported extreme disapproval of abortion, often calling it "murder" and saying that they had urged their partners not to abort. Yet, the same individuals would often say that their mothers might support abortions for their sisters. Three of them reported that they had been involved in pregnancies that terminated in abortions. In two of these cases, the decision was made by the female and her family and the males were not involved. In the other case, the abortion was of a second pregnancy. Health statistics, which cover a fairly homogeneous area in this neighborhood, indicate that more than half of all teen pregnancies in Projecville end in abortion.

Attitudes towards marriage as a response to early pregnancy, however, were more uniform. Projectville residents generally did not encourage immediate marriage or co-residence for young parents. Two couples eventually did marry, though not until over a year after the birth, during which time the father's employment status had improved, in one case because the father had

joined the military and completed basic training. Another marriage occurred when a young mother married another male, not the father of her first child The other fathers would be classified officially as "absent." They neither married, nor, in most cases, did they establish co-residence.

Yet, the absence of marriage and co-residence did not mean that they had no further relationships with the mothers and children. Although romantic commitments to the mothers tended to be volatile, most of the fathers reported strong commitments to their children. Their paternity was recognized within the neighborhood. Most eventually also established legal paternity. Further, most provided some measure of care and support, to the extent that they were able. They contributed money, some from employment, usually part-time and/or low-wage, others from criminal activities. Some continued with education and training for a time after the birth, unlike their counterparts in the other neighborhoods. In these cases, the mothers' families saw the young fathers' continued education as being in the best long-term interests of the children. These unmarried young fathers also visited regularly and frequently took the children to their own homes, for week-ends or even longer periods of time. Many reported providing direct child care when they were with their children, to a greater extent than fathers in either of the other two neighborhoods.

The only ones who provided no care or support at all for some period of time were those who became heavily involved in crime or drug use and underwent incarceration, including six of the seventeen at some point. Even these were involved with their children before or after incarceration.

These data were of course collected from a self-selected sample of young fathers who were willing to talk with researchers. All also reported that

they knew of fathers who had "stepped off," as they put it, from their children. They attributed "stepping off" in some of these cases to the young fathers' inability to make contributions. Despite the self-selected nature of our sample, however, participation by young, unmarried fathers in informal systems of care and support for their children does seem to be quite common in this neighborhood. Other studies have shown that poor, black "absent" fathers actually have more contact with and provide more informal support for their children than middle-class, white absent fathers.[7]

In Hamilton Park, we found quite different patterns of abortion, marriage, co-residence, and support. None of the young males we interviewed expressed strong condemnations of abortion and several openly supported abortions in cases where the couple was not ready to get married. One of those who had not become a father as a teenager had avoided doing so by encouraging an abortion. Another non-father said he would "slip her the two hundred dollars" if his partner got pregnant. Even one of the young fathers and his partner had aborted a first pregnancy and then married after a second pregnancy and before the birth.

Marriage was also more common in this group. Over half the fathers in this group married after conception and before the birth. One married before conception, he being the only one whose child was planned. Marriage also entailed setting up co-residence in apartments of their own. This pattern of family formation has deep roots in working class tradition. Early sexual activity is a recognized form of risk-taking that is often understood to lead to marriage if a pregnancy occurs.

This pattern of family formation is also strongly linked to the traditional working-class career patterns that are still maintained in this neigh-

borhood, despite the recent pressures of economic change that threaten this way of life. Decent jobs are available, through neighborhood and family contacts, which do not depend on educational credentials and which allow young males to establish independent households and support their families. Those who get married found both work and housing through these local channels. These early unions were often troubled and household arrangements did shift over time. Significantly, the only case of court-ordered child support we have encountered in any of the three neighborhoods is among this group of relatively economically advantaged youths.

The relatively well-paying, blue-collar jobs that have sustained this neighborhood are disappearing from this regional economy, however, and the effects of this economic erosion are evident throughout the neighborhood. Many young people leave the area for the suburbs or Western states. Others become heavily involved in drugs and hang out on the streets, working irregularly. The differences in career and family formation patterns among the neighborhoods are not absolute but matters of degree. Two of the non-marrying fathers in Hamilton Park, for example, resembled some of their peers in Projectville, working part-time and making regular contributions and visits but not marrying. The other non-marrying fathers were all heavy drug-users who made poor marriage prospects. One of them did not learn that he had become a father until two years later. Their children and the mothers of their children were among the AFDC recipients who, though less heavily concentrated than in the minority neighborhoods, still account for about ten percent of the households in Hamilton Park.

In La Barriada, young males whose partners became pregnant also faced disappointing economic opportunities. Like their peers in Projectville and

unlike some of their peers in Hamilton Park, they had relatively poor chances of being able to find jobs that would allow them to marry and provide full support for their children. Yet, culture and social ecology led them to a different set of responses to their predicament.

Their attitudes towards abortion were even more negative than those we discovered in Projectville. Yet, some of them also had been involved in abortions. One of the non-fathers reported an abortion. In addition, three of the fathers reported abortions of second pregnancies. They said that they still disapproved of abortions but simply could not afford a second child right away. Health statistics for La Barriada and Hamilton Park are not readily comparable to those for Projectville, but statistics for the city as a whole do show the same patterns that we have found: among pregnant teens, whites have the highest rate of abortions, followed by blacks and then by Hispanics.[8]

Though even less likely than those in Projectville to see abortions as a solution, the young males in La Barriada were far more likely to pursue marriage and co-residence, despite formidable obstacles in the way of their being able to support families. Only five of eleven fathers did not marry legally, but three of these described themselves as being in "common-law" marriages and established co-residence. Common-law partners openly referred to themselves as "husband" and "wife," unlike the unmarried but still involved couples in Projectville.

One father, a highly religious Pentecostal, married as a virgin at eighteen, indicating the relatively young age at which even "normal" marriage and parenting can occur in this group. The others married after conception, ei-

ther before or after the birth. Marriage entailed co-residence, though usually in the household of one of the young couple's parents. Most co-resident couples lived with the father's parents, a distinctive pattern not found in the other neighborhoods and tied to cultural expectations that the father and his family are responsible for the child and mother.

Despite their willingness to marry and establish co-residence, however, these fathers' prospects for finding jobs that paid enough and were steady enough to allow them to support families remained poor. As a result, they entered the labor market somewhat earlier than those in Projectville yet with fewer prospects for advancement. All the young fathers ceased attending school after they became fathers, though some later returned to school or training programs. None of them remained in school continuously, as did some of the Projectville fathers.

Structural circumstances also discouraged marriage for some in La Barriada. The mothers and children in the common-law marriages, for example, all received AFDC. Refraining from marriage concealed their unions from AFDC scrutiny.

Even though the young fathers from La Barriada were more likely to marry, their own family backgrounds suggest that the future of these marriages is highly doubtful. Most of them came from families in which the parents had been married, by ceremony or common-law arrangement, yet almost all their own fathers had left the households when they were young children. The departure of their own fathers was usually related to employment difficulties and led to household AFDC enrollment.

Crime and drugs also were involved in the inability of some of these young fathers to support their families. Two were incarcerated at some point and five others had had some history of heavy drug use.

None of the officially "absent" fathers from La Barriada or Projectville had ever been involved in legal child support proceedings. Local child support agencies assign a low priority to young fathers and especially to young, unemployed fathers. Young fathers who themselves live with families on AFDC are automatically excluded from child support actions.

Conclusion. These comparisons of young males in three neighborhoods demonstrate the inter-related influences of structural economic factors, culture, and social ecology in shaping processes of family and household formation. The high rates of female-headed and AFDC-receiving households in the two minority neighborhoods are clearly related not only to an overall lack in this region of jobs paying wages which would allow men to assume traditional breadwinner roles but also to social ecological factors which link the different neighborhoods to the regional labor market in quite different ways. Though individual responses to early pregnancy differ within each community, the distinctive range of responses in each community depends heavily on the resources that are available within that community.

Culture also plays a role in shaping local responses to teenage pregnancy. When cultural values are seen in relation to social ecology, however, they appear not as unchanging, primordial entities but rather as collective responses of people with distinctive group histories to different and changing structural positions in society. Hamilton Park's residents most closely adhere to a longstanding working-class tradition, in which teenage sexual ac-

tivity is understood to be a risk-taking enterprise that should lead to marriage when pregnancy results. The erosion of well-paying entry-level jobs which have made this way of life possible, however, threatens these understandings as more young men, unable to find such jobs, turn to drugs and away from marriage.

Projectville's residents have known the link between lack of jobs and lack of marriage longer and live with much greater concentrations of joblessness and dependency. Yet, they have well-defined attitudes towards how to cope with these problems. They put great faith in education, despite its frequently disappointing pay-offs in the job market, and they have developed complex ways of supporting children in kin-based networks.[9] Young males play important roles in these networks, which are highly flexible and adaptive to shifting circumstances.

La Barriada's residents are the most recent immigrants and cling tenaciously to a traditional culture even as its assumptions about a male's role in the family clash harshly with the realities of the low-wage labor market and the welfare system.

The influences of structural economic factors, culture, and social ecology on the actions of young men demonstrated in this analysis are not intended as disavowals of individual potential nor are they intended as claims for an absolute cultural relativism which would imply that processes of family formation in these neighborhoods, though different from those in the mainstream, are entirely satisfactory for local residents. To the contrary, the relationships among early pregnancy, absent fatherhood, and persistent poverty are quite evident to the residents of these communities. Some individuals in

these communities do manage to escape these and other hazards of life in the inner cities. These struggles are particularly evident among Projectville residents, for example, as seen in their perseverance with education and their ambivalence towards abortion.

In none of these communities is any honor given to fathers who do not at least try to support their children. All the accounts we have heard indicate that failure to support one's children is experienced as a loss of manhood. The standards for judging individual fathers are clear within each neighborhood but differ somewhat among the neighborhoods in terms of relative emphasis on immediate cash contributions, continued education, marriage, and the provision of child care. The higher rate at which young men in the two minority neighborhoods fail to meet such standards is a function neither of the random occurrence of high rates of pathological individuals in these areas nor of the content of ethnic culture but rather of blocked access to decent jobs.

Social policy which hopes to deal effectively with persistent poverty must move beyond assumptions that uncontrolled sexuality and an undeveloped work ethic are at the root of the problem. Policies and programs must recognize not only the powerful structural economic factors which concentrate poverty and dependency in the inner cities but also the unique ways in which individual communities attempt to reconcile their lack of access to jobs and their universal, human desire to reproduce.

At present, young males in these areas are particularly ill-served by the job market, the schools, and the social welfare system. Males must be redefined as important parts of the solution and not merely as the sources of the problem. Some recent innovative efforts have been undertaken. Programs

for the prevention of unwanted early pregnancy have begun to include males in their services. Some discussion has also begun concerning ways to alter the child support enforcement system to provide incentives for young fathers to acknowledge paternity. Such incentives could include connecting them to job training and employment programs, encouraging continued education, recognizing in-kind contributions and not just cash payments, and expanding the amount they could contribute to AFDC households without having their contributions deducted from that household's AFDC budget. In order to be effective, these efforts will need to be part of an overall program of intensive and comprehensive services for inner-city children and adolescents.

Footnotes

[1] W.J. Wilson, The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

[2] Oscar Lewis, La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty - San Juan and New York (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. xliv.

[3] Mercer L. Sullivan, Getting Paid: Economy, Culture, and Youth Crime in the Inner City (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, forthcoming).

[4] Mercer L. Sullivan, Teen Fathers in the Inner City: An Exploratory Ethnographic Study (Vera Institute of Justice, mimeo, Report to the Ford Foundation, 1985).

[5] The research reported here could not have been carried out without the sensitive and dedicated work of three field research assistants: Carl Casvette (Projectville), Richard Curtis (Hamilton Park), and Adalberto Mauras (La

Barriada). Our research on the role of young males in teenage pregnancy and parenting has been supported by the Ford Foundation and the W.T. Grant Foundation.

[6] Freya L. Sonenstein, "Risking Paternity: Sex and Contraception Among Adolescent Males," in Adolescent Fatherhood, ed. Arthur B. Elster and Michael E. Lamb (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 1986), pp. 31-54.

[7] Ron Haskins, Andrew W. Dobelstein, John S. Akin, and J. Brad Schwartz, Estimates of National Child Support Collections Potential and Income Security of Female-Headed Families: Final Report to the Office of Child Support Administration, Social Security Administration (Bush Institute for Child and Family Policy, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, University of North Carolina, 1985).

[8] The Adolescent Pregnancy Interagency Council, A Coordinated Strategy on the Issues of Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting (The Mayor's Office of Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting Services, City of New York: April, 1986), p. 10.

[9] Carol Stack, All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).