

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
HELPING DISADVANTAGED MEN
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PARTICIPANTS:

Welcome:

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Opening Remarks:

TIM SMEEDING
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A View from Congress:

THE HONORABLE GEOFF DAVIS (R-KY.)
Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives

Program Evaluation Presentations:

Moderator:

RON HASKINS
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Panelists:

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JAMES J. KEMPLE
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HASKINS: (in progress) -- and a prolific writer about policy and related topics will give us an overview of the volume. Then we're fortunate to have the chairman of the Human Resources Subcommittee, the Ways and Means Committee, Geoff Davis of the 4th District in Kentucky. Chairman Davis has jurisdiction over the subcommittee with the broadest jurisdiction over programs related to poverty, like TANF, EITC, at least as advisory capacity to the main committee, child support enforcement, and many other programs. So it's really, in some ways, the most critical committee in Congress for people who are concerned about poverty and related issues.

After some discussion with Chairman Davis and the audience, we'll feature a panel of researchers who've conducted remarkable studies, often random assignment studies of programs designed to help disadvantaged young men. All of the programs produce evidence of making a significant difference in these young men's lives. And the audience will also have an opportunity to question the panel.

So, Tim?

MR. SMEEDING: Good morning, everybody. It's my pleasure to be here and I've got eight or nine minutes I'm told to summarize this volume, so I'm going to do the best I can. I'm me and this is Brookings, okay. The volume has this name that's co-edited with my colleagues, Irv Garfinkel and Ron Mincy. The cover's there, and I'll tell you at the very end what's in it. But here's what's important. Why -- Ron said start out with why you did this.

In the fall 2008, I became the director of the Institute for Research on Poverty, which is now going to go for another five years, at least. And somebody called me from an ACF program called ISIS -- Innovative Strategy for Increasing Self-Sufficiency -- and they said, what's the most important thing out there with poverty?

And I sat and I thought and I thought, and I said that's low-income men.

Well, it turns out a lot of people said that. And it was an important theme then, and in my first thematic seminar series, my very first seminar of fall 2008, some guy named Ron Mincy told me that -- he said, you ought to get this guy, Jim Kemple, who's here, up because this program, Career Academies, not only increases earnings, it has the biggest marriage effects of any program that we've tried. Why? Because the guys have stable incomes and can be earners.

Then the recession came along and it magnified absolutely everything else that we were looking at. A chronic situation was made much worse because of the cycle. And I'm very happy that now the book is out, my friend and director of children at the Center for Children and Families under Governor Walker in Wisconsin, Eloise Anderson, told her whole staff to buy it, and we had a three-hour seminar. She tells me she's going to try and get a waiver for TANF so that she can deal not only with the mothers and the kids, but with the men, who are behind the tail end of all the high-cost programs that she's looking at.

Any time she finds real trouble with mothers and kids and child welfare and protective services, there are men involved, and the idea is how to treat them as a whole, using things like nurse visiting and so forth. So for me that's a payoff. That's really important. Someone in my own state's paying attention. And as you know, our state isn't particularly kind to -- in terms of income, support for low-income women, but it is kind in terms of trying to help people with child care and to go to work and to help guys find jobs.

So the background is -- and the people who are hurt the most have never been to any recent -- literally any presentation where no one has said the following: young, under age 30, undereducated men, secondary schooled only including GED or less, they have the highest unemployment rates right across the board and you combine them together and they're incredibly high. This is the lost generation. It isn't my college

graduated son, who's about to graduate and may move in with me for a year or two, but he'll get a job when the economy picks up. These are the people who are going to have a really hard time anywhere. And I want to say what does this state acknowledge about them, and what are the policy options for improving their well being?

So I got three quick pieces, openers: young men as fathers and their family and economic situations; the perfect storm that faces them -- the bad economy, unstable families, rising incarceration rates, and not a lot of policy support; and then, where are we and where are we going to go? And I'll leave that to my colleagues.

All right. So you start with some basic questions, and this is what motivated me about the whole thing. How many men are fathers by age 30, if you've got a high school degree or less, by age 30? Seventy percent, okay. Less than half of them are living with their kids. That's an added issue. How much do they earn? In 2002, when life was good and the economy was "fine," 62 percent of them earn less than \$20,000.

Now, it seems to me to be marriageable, you at least -- I've used this in a couple of articles, define "marriageable" as somebody who can earn a poverty line income, the old poverty line income, and support himself, a partner, and a new baby. And that's around 20,000 bucks, okay. And the family situations are poor. We're not just talking about men; we're talking about their families. If guys get jobs and can pay their child support, that releases -- that reduces the public burden in other ways, too.

So who are having kids? This is just the way -- this is how I teach my students, and this is just a great background. What we ought to tell our kids is finish your school, get a decent job or a career, find a partner, make a plan, and have a baby. And this is what college graduates do. But if you first have a baby, then you've got to worry about school, job, career, partner, and you never had a plan, okay, or no plan at all. And most young disadvantaged men and women and their children are in the second

situation.

So this is a table that, I think you can see from out there, it turns out that -- this is completed fertility of a whole cohort, and it turns out that if you're a high school -- a woman who's a high school dropout, there's a 78 percent chance that you'll have a first birth by age 25, 86 percent chance you will have kids, period. You'll have 2.6 kids. This is what's pulling up our fertility rate at the very bottom. The first birth, the median age, the middle age of the first birth, is age 19, okay. And then you have another kid and a half after that. Men are a little bit older. And this is 16 percent of all children, the high school graduates, some more numbers, 32 percent of all children.

Now, look at the bottom. College graduates, percent with first birth by age 25, 20 percent, really all. Percent with first birth by age 40, 74. Twenty-six percent won't even have kids. Number of kids, 1.6; not quite 2, or somewhere between 1 -- it's a bunch of 1s and a bunch of 2s, okay. Median age of first birth, 28, after you've done all of the right things, okay.

But that's only a quarter of our children. So in the end, over the lifetime, 48 percent of all low-income kids are growing up in this situation. As we know, poverty is high and rising for these kids by anybody's definition -- we did that show a few week ago here -- and it's not good for adults or for kids or for the upper mobility.

Now the solution is jobs and work for parents. I think income support programs are great. I think the earned income tax credit and food stamps are holding the line. But that's not the bottom line. The bottom line is a stable employment for at least one, and preferably two parents in the family, at a reasonable enough wage to keep their families from being poor. That's where we want to go, I think.

Now, here's -- young fathers as breadwinner, partner, and parent, that's the combination. And this -- we stitched this together. You can find pieces of this here and there, but the idea of the volume was -- at the least the introduction -- was to stitch

this all-together, okay. So marriage makes a very low and falling for the youngest adults: under 50 percent over all and only 30 percent for non-whites under age 30, okay. Labor market, joblessness, and low wages structurally and cyclically really hurt this population. They're not finding work; they're at the end of every job queue. When you have an excessive number of people applying for jobs, employers line them up according to whatever characteristics they see. But if you have a poor work record, you barely got out of high school; you're at the end of the line.

Complication 2 is something called multi-partner fertility. This means that if you have an unmarried mother and father who have a biological child, and they're in this group under 30, nothing more than high school, there's a 65 percent chance one or the other has another kid with another partner. And those are the numbers from the Fragile Families Survey. The numbers are higher from the actual child support records in Wisconsin, where we know every birth and we know everyone. We can write papers like "I Ain't Paying for His Kid," which means you can survey, you know, two adults, neither of whom are living with their kid.

Incarceration, okay, about 12 million people in this country either prison, parole, probation, or have been released, they've done their time. They have an incredibly hard time finding jobs and finding work, and if they don't find jobs or work, they are going back where they started. And there's a lot of kids who have parents who are in jail, too, okay. And then there's a poor income support system and, in some senses, an unforgiving child support system for men.

Okay, so here we go. You have to understand the intricacies, okay, how things fit together, and we should talk more about -- and we will -- about their policies. Policies should emphasize bulk prevention and dealing with the consequences of bad decisions, both, okay. It should provide more incentives and rewards for good behaviors: paying your child support, showing up with your probation or your parole officer, holding

on to your job, showing up every morning, and all of that stuff. And we should always try and maintain and strengthen relationships between fathers, mothers, and their children. So this is a tough batch of things, but this is what we're trying to do.

So the *Annals* volumes describe the state of affairs common across various lines, and if some policy actions help families, and there were some comments on policy realities and discussions. So the volume has in the front end Andy Sum, who knows more about the poor economic situation of young men than anybody. Then we describe who low-income men are and what they do as fathers, as partners, and as fathers in terms from a kid's point of view, okay.

Then we had some comment on culture in context, on race, and family structure and family change from three incredibly well known people. Then we did a bunch of policy papers. My colleagues Maria Cancian and Dan Meyer wrote about child supports, and say no more about it than anybody else in the country. Carolyn Heinrich and Harry Holzer, who last week won an award here from Hamilton for the best what to do about work for low-skill men paper that they've had all year, okay, and they want to figure out how to link men to stable jobs. Steve Raphael talked about incarceration and prisoner re-entry policy, how do we keep kids out of jail. Jenny Knox and Phil Collin and Carol Collin talked about policies that strengthen fatherhood and encourage healthy family relationships, something we also think is really important. And then Ron Mincy talked about income support policies for low-income men and noncustodial fathers. And that was the package, and that's all I'm going to say.

Am I on time?

SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. SMEEDING: I can't believe it. I'll take an extra 20 seconds. No. The short story's in "Focus," that's our three or four times a year newsletter, and the longer story's in the book, and I encourage you to read them. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: The paper that you mentioned by Harry Holzer, by the way, is available out -- they have a stack of them out there. So, usually at Brookings, as many of you probably know, we specialize in short introductions, but I think it's appropriate to say just a few words about Chairman Davis. He prepared for Congress and the partisan warfare in the best possible way: by becoming an Army ranger, one of the toughest fighting units in the world. He was also an assault helicopter flight commander for the storied 82nd Airborne Division, and he's won several awards related to his military service.

He also ran the Army's aviation operations for peace enforcement between Israel and Egypt, which I take to be direct preparation for chairing the Human Resources Subcommittee. (Laughter) He's distinguished himself in work on social issues that this audience would appreciate. He's been honored for his work in Kentucky on fighting domestic violence, and has sponsored legislation to improve care for homeless children and families.

He's also very active in trying to improve the benefits for military veterans, especially those wounded in action.

So Chairman Davis, thank you very much for coming.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: I just wish I had the knees back then -- or from back then, but thank you very much for what you do. And I'd like to begin to approach this as let's put aside our worldview labels of each other for a moment. In the extremists of Capitol Hill, sometimes we run into the caricatures, and please switch of cable news. I wouldn't recommend you watch Fox, MSNBC, CNN, or any other flavor, because basically, those are people who are paid to stimulate and channel anger to sell a copy, as opposed to providing valid forums for ideas. Coming back into the real world though, for me, one of the reasons I joined the army -- well actually there were two

reasons, and wanting to be a ranger was something I had wanted for a very long time.

First was, the Army was the first real family I ever had. I always wanted to be part of something bigger than myself. And the other reason that I chose the particular course I did, to be quite honest, and as I was approaching 50, and my mom had just passed away, and was really processing a lot of the things that by God's grace I'd been given the opportunity to do in my life, I chose that goal among others because I didn't want to get hurt again.

Growing up in an abusive environment, to be able to protect those who could not be protected, specifically my mom, in an abusive relationship. I met my dad when I was 24. I'd been in the Army for seven years at the time. Certainly, a lot of change had taken place in my life, and now I've been married for almost 29 years to my wife, Pat.

And we've raised six children and come from, you know, it's a very different world that they're growing up in, with a school teacher who's heavily involved working in the same population, a nurse who's heavily involved volunteering in a very similar population, and an aerospace engineer who I'm hoping to have support me in my old age, among others. And then, we still have a dancing daughter at home and -- I like to call them my little barbarians -- but my two sons, all of whom have made me appreciate the value and the necessity of having a father.

When I had left the service after 11 years on active duty, because we started having kids and I wanted to be present, unlike the situation that I had been in, and although I enjoyed the adrenaline rush, some things needed to change.

The one thing that I would tell you, when I spoke at -- I was asked in 1998, I'd been in the professional world for a number of years at this point, to come back and give an ethics lecture at Fort Knox to all the cadre, the senior leadership, and the basic training brigades or the training brigades, senior drill instructors, company

commanders, first sergeants. Now if you don't have a connection to the military you might think, oh my goodness, R. Lee Ermey, you know.

You know how you make me feel, do you remember the Geico commercial? The bigger question here is, these professionals are designed to model and also socialize, provide a secondary socialization, and train people into a norm to work together on a common set of character values, bottom line. And I asked a question to a room about this size with the senior drill instructors, I said, what's the number one indicator that you have a potential training failure?

And without a doubt, a very, very large senior drill instructor brought back tormenting memories of January 22, 1976, when I met my first one in the -- laying on the ground -- as I lay on the ground he said this. He said, sir, I ask if they've got a dad resident in the home, and if there's not a father in that home, they've got a 50 percent chance of failing right off the top.

Now that's a pretty stunning issue, because just to have the ability to volunteer and get through the selection process, to be through the reception station and out there tells you we've got a huge, huge problem in this country. You know, fathers are portrayed as harmless buffoons to villains and worse, but that's generally the portrayal in national media. And I think it does a disservice in re-enforcing this kind of independent mind set. And this is not a sexist statement, me saying that. It takes a mom and it takes a dad to ultimately impart character and values.

Several things I think that I'm going to highlight on, and then I want to -- before wrapping up. First of all, the question of money comes up. I do not believe that money itself is the answer. In adding more money into processes that are broken, in effect, visualize pumping blood into somebody who's got an artery that's spurting out all over the ground on the side of the road, it's best to deal with that root cause first, and we can get a whole lot more results out the back end by addressing these broken processes,

and I'll talk about that in a minute.

The other thing that I think is important is emphasis on the dignity of work. That is something that needs national leadership. I think the president has really tried on this in certain areas, and other areas -- you know, we're in different places on policy. Some of our leadership has tried, but ultimately, these things change at the front lines.

I'm a firm believer that a bureaucrat in Washington, or an elected official in Washington will not have the impact that a front line relationship will. Because in my life, and every person I know who has seen that curse of the past broken, of what was handed to them, it was they took the risk to trust somebody to build a relationship that ultimately led to them being connected to other relationships.

In a circle of accountability -- accountability with employment, accountability, hopefully, to a community of faith, and an accountability, hopefully, in something that would approach a genuine family structure. But the dignity of work is important because value is received by value added. The mentality that can grow up very easily -- and we're having a conversation about this as a country right now, and this is not a partisan kind of conversation, because I have friends on all political stripes who are very, very concerned about this, is that if we lose that connection, be it in how we handle affordable housing issues, how we handle employment issues, how we want to direct somebody onto a path.

The importance of understanding that they receive value for some value, even if it's symbolic, value given is a huge transactional change to the way communities will function. That was what the Army did for me. From being kind of the hustler who could get by, not being a criminal or anything like that. I was scared to death of my mom killing me to get involved with drugs, but I was in the Army two weeks after high school because there was no place for me to go.

And suddenly, this structure, a building block process, that's why I'm a fan of the Challenge Programs, the career academies, things like this that teach that fundamental value and connect you with something that gives you a sense of worth, that you can see the fruit of your labor in a tangible way, unlike my day job right now up on Capitol Hill.

The other thing that's important in this is our setting appropriate presuppositions. I have dealt literally, with thousands of young people over the last 30 years as a volunteer in one form or another. And invariably, the one thing that we run up to is, what are their expectations that they impose on themselves, the presuppositions, assumptions about reality that are false, that guide them into dysfunctional or destructive decisions?

And I'm not speaking of the person who says, oh, I just want to, you know, go and take drugs or experiment with the peer pressure. I'm speaking of a deeper thing. I was at least told by my mom, you can be this if you want to. You can get out of this circumstance. Nobody else thought I could and I'm grateful to that. I wish she could've lived to see this. Because the only subcommittee I wanted to chair when I ran for congress in 2002 was this one, and to be on it is humbling, to say the least.

But to translate vision into reality is going to require this building block process to change the worldview; the way people see the world. The mistake we make in Washington as a policy standpoint is, it's either got to be liberal or it's got to be conservative. And I think fundamentally it has to be based upon character, neither of the two others.

We focus on honorable behavior, on truthfulness, on timeliness, on persistence in work, on learning how to deal with failure. I give hundreds of talks, and I learned this as a ranger student in the Army. Teaching people to do the task at hand, then to do the next thing, to make the person they serve successful -- not a cool thing if

you watch the Disney Channel even, which is supposed to be wholesome entertainment. And then, finally, learning how to deal with failure, which comes to every one of us. Every one of us in this room has a story of failure that they have dealt with in some way.

Some more painful than others, whether it's relationally, or personally, or academically, or employment-wise, but to keep learning how to get up and to keep going, and how to learn from that, and to adapt, and most of all, in humility deal with our flaws and make conscious choices to change is critically important. The environment is an issue. I worked in the first boot camp program in Kentucky and it was remarkable what we could see happen over the space of 3 months.

And then due to a bureaucratic glitch, they were put back into the mainstream prison population for 60 days to be assigned their status, and guess what, their recidivism rate was no different. Well, that's changed since then. But we see programs like Challenge are great, but we've got to have something to connect these young people with after that.

And I'm not saying it's -- okay, we need to have government grants, to say, okay, we're going to pay for you to go and do this job. I think that something subtler needs to happen; a goal that incurs risk. A great Christian missionary named Hudson Taylor said, without risk there's no faith. And I'm not getting into a religious proselytization here, but I think if you think about what you did to get where you are today, you took at least in your mind, or some of those around you thought you were taking a big risk. You had to have faith that you could take that leap.

I remember the first time I went out of an airplane. I want to be really connected to God, several times over before I realized the equipment actually worked. But the point is that learning to take these steps, to go to that next thing, we change through those processes. Not only are we encouraged and lifted up, we also realize our mortality and our frailty, and most importantly, our dependence on other people. That no

person is an island, that we're interconnected, and that we affect each other.

Incarceration and unemployment, I'm going to leave this to the experts. I can tell you as a person in the trenches, when we have 90 percent of everybody in prison being there for substance abuse related issues, directly or indirectly, we have problem with how we approach drugs.

I'll be the first to say this as a very conservative Republican. We go about it all wrong in the right and the left. I believe in firm enforcement in criminal statutes, but I want to tell you something. Putting an 18-year-old kid into the system because he's had a one time non-violent encounter with drugs is the wrong answer. I really think we need to look at some alternatives to treat certain aspects of this as medical problems, so we can get them to work. The final thing -- thank you, that's my five-minute bell -- the next thing I'm going to say is, it's important for dealing with literacy issues, but again, literacy programs by themselves are irrelevant unless you're connected to a goal.

You know why I applied myself to study math all of a sudden, I had a born again experience on academics. Somewhere along the way I figured out I wanted to go to West Point, which is not a very easy institution to get into or stay. And the remarkable thing was having the goal defined the effort, and it comes all the way back to this vision and steps to reality I mentioned earlier.

We need to integrate three different things: data, relationships, and responsibility. And then I'll leave you with a personal story. First of all, the answer is we're not going to get more money. But I will tell you this, as somebody who helped turn around companies that were in trouble, I saw this first in the Army when we had to do more with less, and we're doing a whole lot more with a whole lot less today.

Regardless of the politics around the situations, if you want to really improve a situation, minimize complexity and you will maximize effectiveness. It's very

simple. Think about if you're a NASCAR fan, think about the pits, where you can change everything on that car in seven or eight seconds, versus four hours or a day in your local garage. It's all about minimizing complexity of the process. That brings us to data integration. You know, I love the idea of going after child support that we talked to here earlier. When I took over the subcommittee, I found that you can't get what we would call in industry, a cost roll-up at the federal government on what a person is receiving in programs.

And I think for those of you who are professionals out on the front lines, wouldn't it be helpful if a young, single mom, like the family I grew up in, walks in with this gangly, out of control, ADD kid who's being bad all of the time and needing to be spanked -- and that is in the Kentucky Constitution if you're against spanking. We do it in our Commonwealth.

There's a difference between that and abuse, I want to say. But here's my point though. In that circumstance, wouldn't it be nice to be able to say, hey, we can roll the data up on the programs and say not only is there a -- with these programs, maybe a problem with substance abuse, but we know that there's a deadbeat dad living two states away, and we can go get the money.

Or make sure that we can integrate them into a job so they earn the money to pay their responsibility. And maybe a miracle will happen too, along the way, and we can get that relationship or that family restored in some kind of a workable structure. Relationships are going to be the key on the front lines. I've never seen one change, as I mentioned before, without somebody being connected to a human being that can point them into a different direction and share the truth with them, that they might know the opportunity and the freedom that lies out there.

I know in my own mom's tortured life, it was always her own expectations about herself -- and I'm not getting into some kind of Tony Perkins, let's go walk on hot

coals kind of thing and, you know, have a harmonic convergence in ourselves. I'm speaking of the very simple -- you can get beyond this circumstance. We do not have to be bound by the past, tied into these things. We can let go of that, but it takes a helping hand coming alongside to do that.

And finally, is teaching the concept of personal responsibility. My story was this. For all the things I'd done in my life, I had an epiphany moment. I may go 30 seconds over, but I'm just going to steal the time since I've got the gavel right now. I had a great privilege in 1997, to lead the Plebe Retreat at the military academy at West Point.

It's the largest retreat in the history of the Academy. I think in reality young people kind of knew something was about to happen with this country. It turned out it was the class of 2001. But in that time, it was catharsis for me in many ways to be back at a place where, in a sense I was born, where I became a man, where I learned about responsibility, and dependency, and service, and values that I didn't know a whole lot about growing up; that it was important to invest in the lives of other people, and to pass on to them what was passed on to you.

And for all the things that I had gone through, for the hurts, the wounds, the physical and emotional scars as a child -- I know what it's like to hide in the closet, to leave in the middle of the night, to get into the fight between a drunken, adulterous, violent, step-father beating up your mother when you're six or seven years old and take the hits. I understand that.

It's only by the grace of God that I'm standing here today. But this is the thing I'll leave you with: the hope of your work and your investment, which is largely a thankless job for those who really do it, because it's a 20, or 30, or more year journey. My wife said, you know -- and the key to a successful marriage are the two words, yes dear -- she said will you go out and sweep the snow off the door to the back deck. We didn't want it to melt and leak underneath. And knowing the world that I want, and how I

grew up -- and I hated Christmas, that was the time when bad things happened, violence, and fights, and wounds, and all kinds of other things that took place -- is I went outside and I started to sweep the snow off, I looked through the window, I dropped the broom, I don't remember how long I stood there, but I suddenly began to weep. I'm standing in this metaphorical picture, in the dark, in this swirling storm, on the outside looking in, and I could feel the warmth and the light coming out of there.

I could smell cookies baking, coming out through the crack in our improperly insulated back door at that time, but as I looked in, this is what I saw. In the kitchen I saw my wife with my then oldest daughter who's now a schoolteacher, baking cookies with this oversized apron on her.

I looked into the great room, and there's my daughter Sarah, who's a nurse now, playing Barbie dolls with my daughter Hannah, who's an aerospace engineer student, and they're playing and baby Miriam who is our dancing queen in the family, was asleep in this bouncy seat. There was a fire in the background, the Christmas tree with presents under it, the music -- the Christmas hymns that were playing.

And as I looked at that, I suddenly realized, and it was a great release that came, and here was the picture: that though I could never understand the sense of security, and hope, and vision that those children felt transparently at that moment, that the curse that I always feared was going to catch up with me, was broken. That came as I realized as I approached the middle point of my life, because of a few select people that God in His grace, brought alongside of me to make that investment, to open my eyes to new possibilities, sometimes when I didn't want to hear it. And that's ultimately what we're trying to do, I think. And I want to commend you for your work. I thank you for taking the time to come and deal with this.

As far as I'm concerned, and I've seen a lot of things through these eyes in the last 53 years, we can talk about all the things that are being debated in the

presidential debates right now, which are eminently forgettable for the most part, but I'll say this to you: those issues are largely irrelevant compared to the long-term impact to this nation and this republic for what you're going to talk about here this morning, and in this session, and in your column. Thank you and God bless you.

MR. HASKINS: Okay. First, tell us about the agenda for the Subcommittee, the next session of Congress?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: Well, some things in the agenda for the Subcommittee next semester --- next session ---

MR. HASKINS: That's a good Freudian slip right there.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: This is high school cafeteria with old people, the world -- we'll put it in that context. Some of it is going to be driven by what we're dealing with in the next several weeks. Certainly we are going to take a look at temporary assistance to needy families, reauthorization a serious way. We're going to have hearings on that. We want to talk about underlying programmatic issues.

We're going to continue to push our Standard Data Act. The title or the language which has been signed into law in a very narrow scope in the child welfare reauthorization done on September -- enacted on September 30th, when the President signed it, but to address these issues of information integration. There will be a number of other topics that certainly we're open to any ideas that might interest you all, as well.

MR. HASKINS: Well, since you're open to these ideas, let me try this on you. So we're about to hear a panel with several very, very high quality research studies that show that you can have major impacts on these young guys who a lot of people think are hopeless, but you can help them get jobs, you can -- even ones who have already been incarcerated, you can make some progress on helping them get jobs and settle their life and reduce recidivism and so forth. But all of these programs need money.

Now, I heard you say money is not everything, and I heard you say that

we're going to have to do more with less. So when people come before the Subcommittee and say, oh, we need this new program, that new program, that new program, which is standard for Washington, they always want new programs, what are you going to tell them?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: That less equals more, and here's how. I was stunned -- each year I've been in Washington, I've found that there is untold opportunity often missed. And again, I go back to my other life back dealing with this in a cause control basis and businesses and organizations to keep them competitive. The era rate -- I don't even call it waste or fraud any longer. The improper payments out of the Department of Health and Human Services is ten and a half percent, \$105 billion that's known of.

I would hesitate, in fact, I know I'm not wrong, if I looked at this and if we had a way to do integrated ring the business processes that are used in the private sector for speed of integration, of information and improvement of quality, there's another \$100 million -- billion on the table to be saved on an annual basis, those two numbers.

We make any dent in that, we do two things. We reduce the deficit, we reduce the debt, and then is money available for worthy programs? And that's really going to be the question getting past this argument of we shouldn't have a safety net or we need even more of a safety net. The key is, I'm a product of that. I think a safety net is a very appropriate and responsible thing to do, but let's step back and look at the broken processes, and that's where we get the money in the long run, is by real reforms that will substantially reinforce the priorities that we talked about earlier.

MR. HASKINS: One thing that we've been extremely concerned about here at Brookings is the budget deficit. Alice Rivlin is here and several other people who have a long history of budget involvement, and for six or seven years now we've been focused pretty steadily on the deficit and what the nation needs to do about that. Do you

think their prospects in Congress is actually going to be aggressive and do something serious about the deficit over the next 12 months or so?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: We're looking at the potential of all politics all the time between now and the election. I think it's sad. We really had hope in the mid summer that we would be able to get something done. The challenge, unfortunately, is the politics of this, and a very, very senior member of the Democratic caucus in the House whose name would be known to all of you, shared with me in a somewhat ironic discussion that we had in the late spring of 2010, and we have a great relationship, and this member said, in leadership still, said I really hope that -- I think you guys are going to win the majority next year, and I hope when you do, you do these things, and he enumerated some things in Medicare, Social Security, different entitlement programs that will change the algorithms to help us deal with these challenges and driving costs.

And then in 2012 and 2014, we're going to run against you, condemn you for doing these things, and then not change anything. And I know that there's some, you know, cynicism undertone in that, but that unfortunately is driving part of the challenge.

I think the problem at its root is obvious. We can't spend our way out of it, we can't take a huge amount of money out of the system that is redundant and wasteful, and that's going to be the real challenge. I would say on balance, the best way to do any serious reform is together in divided government, where both parties are linking arms and jumping off the cliff together. Social Security reform in 1983, tax reform in 1986, welfare reform in 1996, and the balanced budget in 1998 with President Clinton were all examples of that. And, you know, one would hope that we might be able to reach that at some point. The jury is out for the short term.

MR. HASKINS: Well, the jury so far has come back on several occasions and the news has not been good.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: Other than that how was the play, Mrs. Lincoln?

MR. HASKINS: Yeah, exactly, yes. So, audience, time to ask questions. I want to remind you --

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: I'd like your questions pre-screened through my legislative director in the back of the room there.

MR. HASKINS: Ask questions; don't make long statements. When you hit 30 seconds, I'm going to throw something at you, so go ahead. Yes, right here, second row. Wait, the microphone will be here in a -- please stand up and introduce yourself and ask your question.

MS. ORCHOWSKI: Peggy Orchowski, I'm a congressional correspondent with a Hispanic outlook on higher education. And I really congratulate you for including factors of immigrant workers, including illegal immigrant workers. So here's another politically incorrect area, that is that Hispanics have very strong family values, I think it's one thing that distinguishes them from many of the black families, unfortunately. Have you done data on Hispanic unemployment rates opposed to the African American?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: In the illegal community, since it's illegal, we don't have access to that data. One would have to infer that. I would say anecdotally, from my own personal observations, at a demographic level, yes, there are differences, but it's not because of one ethnicity or another. There are fundamental character or process issues.

I go back to Daniel Patrick Moynihan's famous paper in 1965 that foresaw many of the things that were going to unfold by removing some of the foundation stones of the family.

Having a daughter who runs an ESL program and works extensively in the Latino community, and my wife and I to a lesser degree have been involved there

through the years, yes, I agree with you on the core values issue. However, there is a subset in that population which is unfortunately growing that's reflecting exactly the same types of challenges that need to be dealt with, and it comes back to this basic integration into a core community. And I think the more that community is isolated, the more you have the likelihood of these other problems developing.

MR. HASKINS: Next question, on the aisle behind you. Someone's coming, okay.

SPEAKER: I don't really have a question, I just need to make a comment to a comment that was made earlier about the black family. Going back to slavery, obviously, when the black family was torn apart for decades, and then with the formation of ghettos and modern times and incarceration, that has been targeted towards the African American community, which ultimately breaks up the family household, which you have a lot of single mothers heading households because men are incarcerated.

So I don't think because of these factors one can say that black people don't have strong family values. Our families have been attacked for centuries and so we're trying to do what we can with the policies that are in place, with the little education that might be afforded us, and the jobs, and other issues. So I just needed to say something in response to that, because I don't want anyone in this room to leave with the impression that black families don't value that entity or less so than Hispanic families. So thank you.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: I appreciate that point very much. I think the -- regardless -- if you come down to it, I was trying to have a foreign policy discussion with somebody who had too much time on their hands, and too much money, frankly, recently, and trying to explain a situation that was going on in the Middle East, it's very controversial. And I'm a little contrary on it, but I finally had to say to this person, the issue is reality of policy is not what you read in the paper, see in the news, it's when your

door is kicked in and a soldier is coming in and taking your 12 year old child without habeas corpus, or a bomb goes off next to you and kills somebody, that's a reality policy. It's very individual and granular. And I think to the gentleman's point where I would agree, we don't want to get into any type of generalizations. The danger is when individuals, regardless of their background, get into a culture of hopelessness.

And I think there are many factors that have militated to cause this to swirl around, you know, in certain minority populations, but that's not indicative of this issue, of the desire for right or desire to cling to some kind of hope.

MR. HASKINS: Yes, right -- the gentleman next to --

SPEAKER: Many, many years ago when we worked on welfare reform in the Carter Administration, there were two halves to it. One was, you had to work, but the other half was, the government had to make sure there was a job available to you. We seem to have bought only the first half and not the second half. In the reauthorization of TANF, will you do anything to bring about the second half?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: We're considering a wide variety of issues. For example, even before tanif -- the one thing that tanif does well is, it puts the money into the states for local programs. The one that created jobs out of the stimulus that I'm aware of that had a consistent record for that, at least in the Commonwealth of Kentucky were the wage subsidy programs, working with the local unemployment one stops. Overwhelming majority of the people that went into those programs are still employed today, completely free of the system.

And I think it's a question of creating -- the government doesn't create jobs, but the best we can do is create a climate to enhance hiring. If the economy comes back, those jobs will be there, and we want to make sure that our policies in the wrong run do not create a temptation for a person not to go to work.

MR. HASKINS: One more question. Bob Lehrman.

MR. LEHRMAN: I'm wondering if you could get the republican caucus and maybe others behind an approach that emphasizes the dignity of work, learning and failure, linking with relationships, and that has worked very well in other countries, and that is expanding apprenticeship training.

It is low cost from the government point of view, although there is some investment in marketing and technical assistance. But it's a way of greatly expanding roots to quality careers. And we're putting all of our eggs, almost all of our eggs in the college basket as opposed to trying to do something that works extremely well. Germany's youth unemployment is ten percent, ours is more than double that. Switzerland is very, very effective in its ability to keep high shares of manufacturing. All of these things point to an expanded role for apprenticeship, and yet we don't really talk about it, and I'm wondering whether you, given all of your points which I think fit very well in the apprenticeship approach, you might want to take a leadership role in that area.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: We've been wrestling with that very issue for several years now. Back in Kentucky, there's some very cool things happening with the local community and technical collages partnership with high schools. And, in fact, I believe the gentleman coming up for career academy is going to talk about this specifically at a macro level, and any policy ideas that you have to tweak the system to enhance that, we're all ears.

But what I've seen on a smaller scale level back home has been remarkable, because we have to deal with some schools and seat funding issues at the state and federal level to kind of tear the walls of the schools down. If the objective is educating the kid, it's not having the person in the classroom. But I can't think of anything better than -- which I've already seen a few cases of, a young person graduating from high school with an associates in manufacturing technology in their diploma tube at a \$20 an hour or more job waiting for them when they're 18 -- 19 years

old. That can open lots of possibilities in any number of directions. That's a great point.

SPEAKER: Can I add to that? I think the one really important thing that Bob laid into the Congressman, employers are in the game. You're an apprentice to something. There is some job for you at the end. That's what gives you hope and pushes you to come through, you know. There is a job, you've looked at the workplace, you understand what's going on there, and if you do X, Y and Z, just like you said, you get a job. So you have to have employers in the game. They're the people who give you apprenticeships, as Bob was saying.

MR. HASKINS: One more question. Who's the lady in the back?

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: There's a lady in the back. I'll grab you personally in a second. There's a lady in the back got a --

MR. HASKINS: Go ahead. Too late. Quick.

MS. SORENSON: My name is Elaine Sorenson and I work at the Urban Institute. There's a work requirement that's been in place for non-custodial parents since the prora in 1996. That's really gotten little attention over the last 15 years. And part of your tanif reauthorization hearings, I hope that you'll ask people about it. There's a requirement in taniff to report on the number of non--custodial parents who are participating in work programs, and that data has never been released, it's not public, even though it's in the statute that says we will see how many non--custodial parents are participating in these work programs. So just ask about that. And I would hope that you bring that up and ask where is that work requirement and why isn't it being implemented as Congress had asked 15 years ago, and that's what we'll be talking about afterwards is, that population has really been overlooked by many of these work programs, and they need to be integrated into them, and it's something that Congress wanted back in '96 and just hasn't gotten the attention that we hope that it will get in the future.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: Do you have a business card?

SPEAKER: Yes.

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: Give me one on the way out and I'll make sure we get back in touch.

MR. HASKINS: All right. So please join me in thanking the chairman for coming.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: And without a break, we're going to bring up the next panel, so panel, come on up.

(Pause)

MR. HASKINS: All right. Thank the audience for staying. We hope to keep you here about another 40 minutes or so. So we have a fascinating panel. I'm very pleased with this panel because if there's anything about divine that might have been a little light was optimism that we actually know a lot of stuff and we can do things that are effective. So that's how we selected this panel. Everybody on the panel is going to report something at least partially uplifting, to quote the chairman.

So the panel is composed of Irv Garfinkel, who's the Ginsburg Professor of Contemporary Urban Problems at Columbia. And he's especially noted for his work on the Fragile Families study earlier, and I'm talking about previous centuries. He was one of the first scholars to study child support enforcement. And I still read those old papers.

Jim Kemple, who's the executive director of the Research Alliance for New York Schools and Professor of Education, NYU, he was a long term senior researcher at MDRC and the chief architect of the Career Academy study that improved — that had such impressive results and that he's going to talk about today.

Then Larry Mead, who's a professor of politics and public policy at NYU. Larry is perhaps the best-known conservative scholar who played a key role in preparing intellectual ground for the sweeping 1996 welfare reform legislation.

Megan Millenky, who's a research associate at MDRC and a leading researcher in the remarkable study of the National Guard Youth Challenge Evaluation, which she's going to talk about today. She's also been involved in several important studies in prison release programs. And to the extent that Youth Challenge doesn't work, keeps studying the prison release programs.

And finally Ron Mincy, who's the Russell professor of social policy and social practice at Columbia. He's one of the most noted researchers in the nation for his writing about disadvantaged males. And I happen to know, based on my personal experience, that Ron has a lot of personal involvement with groups around the country that try to help low income fathers. He actually practices what he preaches. So Irv.

MR. GARFINKEL: Well, thank you, it's a pleasure to be here. I'm not sure what I'm going to say will be that uplifting. I'm not going to talk about successful programs, actually I'm going to venture into an area where I have little expertise, so I can't recommend specific programs.

What I am going to say is that we're arresting far too many young men. And we're violating the practice that we should do no harm. And this is an area where we can save money. I know you're for strengthening enforcement, as I am, in child support, but locking people up is not a good thing to do. And so I have a couple slides that show what's happened to incarceration in the U.S. over time, to compare the U.S. to other rich nations, and then I want to talk about, very briefly, some research that I've done on the effects of incarceration, and putting all of that together, I think the case that we need to find something else. I think when we look back historically 100 years from now; people will look at what's happened.

Take a look at the first slide, which shows the increase in incarceration rates over time in the United States since 1925. We're way, way above our own historical average. If you take a look at the second slide, comparing us to other rich

nations and middle-income nations, we're ahead of Russia in terms of incarceration rates. Russia is the only country that is anywhere near us. South Africa, about half the rate of the U.S.

Now to say a little something about what I've learned from the Fragile Families study about the effects of incarceration. First, it reduces men's' earnings ability. The advantage of the Fragile Families data is that we can connect the arrested men to their families. They contribute less to their families, 25 percent less. If you're incarcerated, you're going to contribute 25 percent less to your family. Most of that comes about because the father will not live with the children as a consequence of incarceration.

The family left behind more likely to experience economic hardship, not only because there's less child support coming in or less sharing of income because the father is there, but also because expenses increase. And here's the most dramatic thing and the one that caught my attention the most, the effects on the children. So just think about -- step back and think theoretically what is the effect of arresting a man, a father, on the kids? It could be positive. If the guy is a really bad guy, taking him out of the home might be doing both the mother and the child a favor. The child could be better off.

The guy's not a bad guy, or even if he is a bad guy, there's a potential negative effect just simply because the father is not around, the father can contribute economically, so on and so forth.

Theoretically, we don't know the net effect. The net effect that we find is strong negative effects on the kids from incarceration of the fathers. To me, that suggests, and consistent with the time trends, we are arresting way too many fathers.

And this is very race related. Nearly seven percent of black children have a father who has been incarcerated. For Hispanic children, it's about two and a half percent. For white children, it's a half a percent. Even a half a percent is pretty big.

Seven and a half percent is humungous.

I don't know, I don't have, as I say, I'm not an expert on criminal justice policy. What I do know is, I've done cost benefit analysis, not yet of the criminal justice system, not yet of incarceration, but the negative effects on children should weigh heavily in terms of the costs of this policy. I think we need to reduce incarceration. We've got Grover Norquist on the right, not long ago appearing with the President of the NAACP, both saying this scourge needs to be eliminated, I agree with that.

MR. HASKINS: Jim Kemple.

MR. KEMPLE: Thank you. Thanks for the opportunity to present this work that I did when I was at MDRC for nearly 20 years. This is going to talk a bit about an intervention that occurs during the high schools years and focuses primarily, I guess, at the prevention end of the spectrum rather than intervening after major problems have begun to occur for young men.

This is a high school based program that combines academic and career education. These career academies now have about a 40-year track record of being implemented in most urban school districts across the United States. The expansion of the programs has been planned and supported by organizations around the country that have developed a lot of expertise in both the operation of the programs and their long term support.

By last count, there were probably on the order of about 5,000 career academies around the country, although I think there's some real questions in my mind now about whether these programs really are programs that could produce the kinds of results that I'll talk about in a minute because of some of the watering down of a few of the components, and I'd be happy to take questions on that if that comes up.

These are also programs at are fairly extensive research base, so that not only the randomized control trial that I'll talk about here, but another 30 years or so of

research studying these programs over the long term.

These are programs that have — they're organized as smaller schools within schools or small learning communities. They combine a college preparatory curriculum with career focused — a coherent sequence of career focused courses for young people. And most importantly, and what we think is the real source of the positive impact of these programs, they provide students with a wide range of career development opportunities both in the classroom and through work based learning, along the lines of internships, and even quasi apprenticeships, as Bob talked about a minute ago.

The results that we see, this is a study that occurred identifying young people in their eighth grade year, following them through high school, and then for a full year eight years after they were scheduled to graduate from high school. And what we found I think is unusual in the world of looking at youth labor market development kinds of interventions. We saw quite substantial effects particularly for young men on a range of employment and earnings and labor market outcomes. We saw an increase, for example, of an average about over \$300 per month in earnings, which over a full eight years, you know, this is averaged over eight years, and the impacts actually grew somewhat over time, that's a 17 percent impact on earnings.

That impact is equivalent for the young men to the difference in earnings between young people who have a high school diploma and young people who have two years worth of post secondary education.

Now, I don't want to presume or even suggest that career academies should substitute for post secondary education, but that will give you some sense of the magnitude of these effects at earnings.

The earnings effects grew from both longer spells of employment, longer hours worked during the week, and on higher wages. All three components of earnings

seem to have -- we've had some positive effects on.

We didn't see any positive effects on higher education, but we didn't see any decline in that. There's an assumption with these career related programs, and particularly the pejorative of sense of vocational education that forces young people into a zero sum choice of either going to college or getting a job. We saw all of these positive effects in the context of these young people going out. Half of the young men had earned some sort of post secondary credential, either a license, a two-year diploma, or in a few cases, even four-year bachelor's degrees.

These earnings effects also translated into some surprising, at least in my view, and quite large effects on family formation and custodial parenting. We saw a one-third increase in marriage. The young people who had gone and been exposed to career academies, 36 percent, eight years after scheduled graduation from high school, were married and living with a partner, compared to 27 percent of our control group, that nine percentage point difference is the one-third increase.

We saw a 47 percent increase in custodial parenting. Thirty-seven percent of the young men who had access to one of these career academies got custodial parent compared to 25 percent in our control group. And we saw a 30 percent increase in living independently with a spouse and a child, okay, almost a one-third impact there with 30 percent of the young people who had been -- young men who had been exposed to these career academies, living independently with a spouse and child compared to 23 percent of our control group.

I think the major implications of those, I think most of my thunder had been stolen in part by Bob Lehrman, is that I think if we do have some increased investments in career related experiences during the high school years, we have some at least existence proof of having some significant effects in the labor market, particularly for young men. I think this also demonstrates the feasibility of aspiring to and actually

accomplishing these schools to work goals without compromising, without taking away from the opportunities that young people have for going for post secondary education. This is not a zero sum choice.

And in a world where the mantra more and more is college for all, what we saw in our career academy sample, particularly for the young men, is that fully two-thirds of the young people who were involved in post secondary education -- for two-thirds of the time that these young people were involved in post secondary education, they were working at the same time.

My sense is that these were strategic choices that young people were making where their post secondary credential was adding to their labor market value, not just a credentialing process that was, you know, something that they got along the way.

And then finally I think this provides empirical support for a potential link between impacts, making a difference for young people in the labor market, and impacts on their marriage, family formation and independent living in an experimental framework. I think we have lots of good co relational evidence of this. I think this is suggesting we now have some causal links between this, we have an intervention that increases earnings and employment, and then subsequently that's translating into some positive effects on family formation. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: Very nice. Thank you, Jim. Larry Mead.

MR. MEAD: Thanks, Ron. As Ron mentioned, I was the Darth Vader of welfare reform. I tell my students that. I actually put the slide up on the screen. I'm a relative newcomer to the men's' area. But I notice in this area, as in welfare, research is primarily descriptive, it describes the problems, and is often very pessimistic about anything we can do.

I think we need to be more concrete about how we bring about change.

And in that connection, I recommend the brief that Ron and I wrote on child support work programs, which is in your packets. And I also have a book called *Expanding Work Programs for Poor Men*, which you can get from AEI, and there's some leaflets outside about how to do that, and you get a discount, so I urge you to acquire *Expanding Work Programs for Poor Men*.

And the message is that, yes, indeed, we need to do more for these guys, we need to help them earn more, get more, more opportunities, but we overemphasize that. We tend to think that that's the solution. I think we need to combine that with more serious obligations to work, as we did in welfare reform. We need to combine health and hassle; we need to combine opportunity with strong work programs.

The best way to do that I think is to build up work programs as part of the child support system and the criminal justice system. In these systems, we already have men, I estimate about 1.2 million, who are supposed to work, who are obligated to work, in fact, but they're not doing so regularly. These are men who owe child support and are paying it to poor women, or on the other hand, they're men on parole who are supposed to work as a condition of parole and typically not doing it.

Now, we want to have them work more in order to pay child support and so on, but we should also see their obligation to work as an opportunity, a way to get some leverage over their lifestyle, get them to work more regularly. They have other problems, but work is at the core, and it's the thing that we can do the most about.

We also have some evaluations of work programs connected to child support and criminal justice, which indicate some promise. These are programs which, if well implemented, can actually raise men's' work levels. Today I'm just going to be talking about the child support programs. What these work programs do is help child support judges enforce a child support order. When men don't pay their judgment and they come into court saying they don't have a job, the judge has no way to verify that, but

he can refer them to a work program where, if they're actually working surreptitiously, it will conflict with their job and force them to pay up. And if they're really not working, then the program can help them get a job.

So the work program begins as an enforcement device for the judge, but it's also a way that we can use — it's a way we can actually raise work levels for men owing child support.

The best example of this program is something called the Non-Custodial Parent Choices Program in Texas. Texas has a program called Choices for Welfare Mothers, and now they have NCP choices, and it's funded actually by the taniff system. It's rather much what apparently Eloise Anderson is trying to do in Wisconsin.

In the Texas program, the child support administrators recommend the judges that men who aren't paying repeatedly should be referred to NCP choices, and once they go there, they're served by a staff from the Texas Work Force Commission, and those people place them in jobs, and then they follow up for six months after placement to try to keep them on the job. They also report back if the men fail to show, so there's an enforcement connection. By 2005, since 2005, NCP choices has been implemented in most of the state of Texas, which, as you know, is an enormous place, so this is a major administrative achievement. Also, the program is favorably evaluated in a study by the University of Texas showing impacts on both child support and employment. This study was based on propensity score matching, so it's not as air tight as an experimental trial, but it's still quite serious.

Now, the other thing to emphasize about NCP choices, however, is that it's an institutional achievement, it's not a matter of just passing a law or changing the incentives, the way I think economists didn't think of this, rather, it had to be instituted politically and administratively over time.

In fact, the state didn't get there overnight. They had some previous

work programs that didn't succeed. One of the reasons was that the judges didn't want to enforce their orders. They didn't think of that as part of their responsibility. And then the Texas Work Force Commission was used to providing training on a voluntary basis to various men who walked in off the street, and it didn't think of its job as enforcing work on a group that's obligated to work.

But they sorted out these problems. The administrators persuaded the judges that they had to devote time to enforcing their orders or they were going to be ineffective. So the judges got on board. And the Work Force Agency came to accept that part of their job was actually to enforce work, not only to provide opportunities and training. And as a result, they eventually created NCP choices, and this program has had a real effect on the problem. Now, the implications for national policy, it seems to me, are that it's time for a cautious expansion of these programs. They're not yet as strong as the welfare work programs were in the welfare case, we have to be a little more cautious, but we should make it possible for states that are ready like Texas to move towards serious work enforcement of the child support system.

Washington needs to provide somewhat more funding for this. I estimate it would cost something like two or three billion a year to serve the non-paying fathers who might be helped by this program.

Right now those programs don't qualify for matching under 4D of the child support law, but it's possible that they might be qualified for some greater funding, and that's something that we need to look at closely.

If that were done, then states like Texas that are ready to move ahead could do so and there would be some real gains. We also need more evaluations of programs like this. We have only one experimental trial in the child support work area; we need to have another, several more to figure out certain design issues that are unresolved. I personally think that programs like this have to guarantee work for fathers

because there's a sufficient question whether jobs are available on the scale needed. We need to provide some form of guaranteed work, however, how to do that is unclear. There are several ways to do it. We need to have an evaluation bearing on that question. That's just one of several design issues.

And we need also to think of the federal government as supporting the states as they carry out the statecraft of the kind we saw in Texas. As in welfare, states have to built their own programs. They have to get their own people on board. There has to be political support, administrative commitment. You have to build the structure over time, such that the nature of the child support system has changed. It isn't just collecting money for families, though that's important, and that money can help to fund the program. There is money out there that we can use for this, as Chairman Davis said.

But we also have to make sure that those institutions go down to the ground that we really change the child support system so it accepts as goal paying money for families, but also getting the funds to work more. Employment has to become a goal of the child support system, as it traditionally hasn't been. They have to take this on board, as the welfare system did in the '90's. That's why welfare reform succeeded. Welfare became a work program. Equally, child support must become a work program. And it's when we build an institution at the local level that actually does that, that's when you'll start to see rising work levels for this group of fathers.

And then there's a comparable development that has to occur on the child support side which I'm not talking about now, but that's also discussed in my book. So the answers here are institutional. Yes, we have to pass laws and change the centers and provide money, but in the end, the administrators and the politicians have to build a new structure, and it's within that structure that the men will be helped and hassled to work, and that's where we start to see progress.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: Thank you. Megan.

MS. MILLENKY: So, as Ron said, I'm going to talk about the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. And so the prevention program, they didn't have the opportunity to get career academies. It's a residential program for high school dropouts, ages 16 to 18. And while the program isn't restricted to young men, it predominantly serves young men, so it seems like a good fit for today's discussion.

So I'm going to talk about a randomized control child that we've done at MDRC around the program. And I think it's a program that's not very well known outside of certain circles, so I'm going to spend a little time talking about the program. It started in the early '90's and draws from a positive youth development model that really wants to go beyond just providing education and training and giving disconnected youth opportunities to learn from more positive interactions and activities about how to develop in a transition to adulthood.

So the program is run through the National Guard. And there's at least one program in about half the states in the country. As I said, it's a residential program and it's what's called a quasi-military environment. They are often on military bases. The staff is often National Guard members or other people with past military experience. And the youth involved are called cadets, they're on a very structured schedule, they're divided into platoons and squads, so it's a very military feel.

But I should say that it's a voluntary program and there's no expectation that someone that's involved in the program are going to enlist in the military following it. So the program itself, as it shows in the handout there, is divided into three phases. The first is called a pre-challenge phase. It is residential. The youth show up and really spend those first two weeks, as some programs call it kind of like a boot camp, learning the expectations of challenge, getting to know their fellow participants, who are still called candidates at this point, and really getting to get into a lot of physical fitness, which gives

us that boot camp feel I think.

And then once they complete that, for those that do complete that, they go into the more formal challenge and they start to be called cadets. And there's those eight core components they hand out there that they -- really focuses their days, academic, physical fitness, hygiene, career building, job scales and some others, there's some details there.

And the one that really takes up the most time logistically in the course of the day is the academics. Most of these youth are working towards the GED. Some programs have the opportunity to offer a high school diploma based on their relationships or opportunity for course work at local community colleges.

So to graduate the program, the youth need to show competency in all these components, and then they also have to, in working with the staff, be prepared to have a placement following the 20 week residential phase, and that can be more education, vocational training, military, a job, any of those things.

And then the other piece that the staff works with them throughout this residential phase is figuring out a mentor for them in their communities. When they transition back from the residential program in this highly structured environment, they'll have someone that they have chosen from their community to help them and the mentor receives some training. And this component is something that really differentiates challenge from a lot of other residential programs for high school dropouts. So that covers the basics of it.

MDRC's first report on challenge in 2009 went into a lot of details about the staffing and how it varies and things like that, so if you're interested, that's available on our web site.

So onto the evaluation, we randomly assigned 3,000 youths in ten of the challenge programs around the country in 2005 and 2006. About 2,000, a little over

2,000 were put in our -- randomly assigned to our program group, and about 750 in the control group. And it's imbalanced because we wanted to make sure that Challenge continued to, you know, fill all of their spots, there weren't empty spots open because of the evaluation.

So the second page shows some of the characteristics of the sample. As I said, it is predominantly men, about 90 percent. Few had gone beyond tenth grade in high school. And you can see the rest there. But, you know, what really links all these youths is that they become disengaged from their community, their school, their family or some combination of that, and so they ended up a challenge. So for the youth in our sample, we followed them -- to this point we followed them with a series of three surveys. And I'm going to focus on the last survey that we did, which was about three months after they had been randomly assigned, so the youth were, on average, 17 years old when we -- when they came into the evaluation, now they're about 20.

And the third page there shows just some of the key outcomes that we really focused on. Obviously, education is the most important one. And what it shows is that the people that were involved in Challenge, and as I said, this is people that were assigned to the program group, some of these people never showed up on day one, only about 50 percent graduated throughout the -- finished the program.

There was a very significant difference in the youth in the sample that were in the program group and received either a high school diploma or a GED by three years after. Seventy-two percent of the program group -- so beyond the high school GED, at the time of the survey, more of the program group were either taking college courses, had already received college credit, so were advancing and progressing with their education.

And then for employment, at the time of the survey, they were more like to be working. And then also, you know, it was more than just a snapshot. At that time,

they were more likely to be working looking over the past year. And again, these were only 20 year olds at the time, so, you know, from age 19 to 20, they had been, over the past year, those in the program group who had been involved in Challenge were more likely to have been working and earning 20 percent higher wages, which is significant.

And we looked at a number of other outcomes, as well. We didn't see any differences on criminal justice. About 25 percent of the sample, regardless of their random assignment, had a child by the age of 20.

We wanted to look at some more attitudinal outcomes because of Challenge's idea of really creating whole person change, and, you know, those are hard things to pick up in a, you know, programmatic survey. But we did do some qualitative interviews with a number of youth in our sample that were Challenge graduates, so the ones that were most successful in utilizing Challenge.

And what we found there and what really I think links to what a lot of other people are saying today is that those youth left the program feeling very motivated and feeling like they had change. When they reflect three years later, they said it was an incredibly positive experience.

But they went back from this residential community, excuse me, this residential program into their community and found, you know, it was really hard to maintain that momentum. They couldn't consistently find the money to pay to go to a community college, or, you know, they didn't want to end up back in their old group of friends that were not helping them in the first place, so they were staying at home or only, you know, speaking to their girlfriend, and that they just couldn't find work consistently. And I think I'll just leave it there for now.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: Now, Ron Mincy.

MR. MINCY: So thank you first for the audience for coming, for the Ford

and the OSI for supporting my work on this for the past 25 -- 30 years, and to my colleagues, Serina Climpfen and Monique Kaiser, who's been working with me on a qualitative project on the study of the earned income tax credit in New York, as well as to David Seth, who's at Columbia University, and Elaine Sorenson on whose work I depend greatly, as you will see.

We've sort of described the problem. What our work focuses on is looking at a conditional cash transfer, which is the non-custodial parent earned income tax credit, and how it tries to adapt a model that has been used to promote social behavior and work and reduce welfare roles, and think about what we can learn from the New York experience about how to create an effective federal NCP EITC. The goal, of course, is to increase work and child support payments among low and moderate income non-custodial parents and to offset regression payroll and state income taxes that fall on these non-custodial parents.

If you look in the lower right portion of the handout that I've provided, there's a chart from -- a table from Elaine's paper that basically shows that after you account for payroll taxes, federal taxes and the large earned income tax federally, the ITC that mothers receive, versus a very small childless credit that fathers receive. Basically moms are left -- custodial mothers are left with income about 118 percent of poverty, whereas fathers and non-custodial parents are left with income about 73 percent of the poverty line.

And so essentially our tax and transfer structure in ways that attempt to help low-income families really are not helping many low-income men well. So when we create a non-custodial parent earned income tax credit, some of the challenges of doing so have to do with many of the fathers work in the informal economy, they have low and irregular earnings, and, of course, informal economy earnings won't count with respect to the non-custodial parent earned income tax credit.

Secondly, they have really limited awareness of the childless credit. And in New York, even though the revenue agency and the child support agency and many of the programs that serve the fathers told them of the existence of the NCE EITC. We found in our qualitative work that most of the men were clueless about the credit, and when they tried to apply for it, they got mixed information about how to apply.

And so in addition to having a non-custodial parent earned income tax credit, we really have to gin up the efforts of programs that serve fathers, to make this information -- them aware of the information in the first place, and how to apply in the second place.

The last time, in 2008, President Obama and then Senator Obama proposed a non-custodial parent earned income tax credit that was fashioned after the New York program. And so most good federal policy follows what we learned from the state, and for that reason, we're following the non-custodial parent EITC in New York State, which was passed in 2006.

And we've been looking at -- Elaine has been looking at a lot of quantitative work based upon that, and I've been looking at both quantitative and qualitative work on that.

So the lower right hand chart shows you basically the structure of it. And I want you to focus there where the left hand portion of it really shows what the incentive is. Gordon Berlin describes this as making -- essentially adding income to a low-income worker in order to increase their earnings as their earnings rise. So that's the upward portion. Then there's a flat range, where there's not an incentive to work, but work is supplemented. And then there's the downward sloping phase where, as a person's income rises, the value of the credit gets smaller and smaller and smaller.

What we learned from the New York State experience is that, first of all, there was very little take-up. In 2006, from a paper again that Elaine Sorenson has written, we find that about 11 percent of non-custodial parents in New York State were

eligible for the credit, but only about 13 percent, about 5,000 fathers actually applied for and received the credit. So, again, there's very little uptake of this credit, even though from the state agency and the programs that serve the fathers, they tried to get this information out.

The next two points I want to make throughout the slide basically are two. One, the credits are really inadequate. And so if we're going to try to incent work, as well as require work, then we really have to do a much better job than was done in New York State. And secondly, that the compliance requirements which are politically required are really undermining the work incentive in ways that we can show very clearly.

So in the next slide, David Seeth and I have been working on some numbers where we look at what happens when you have — you take a number of states around the country, you assume that someone has basically minimum wage earnings, you add the child support payments, and then some reasonable expenses, and then federal and state taxes, and what we show is that even in states where there is a non-custodial parent credit, in New York and in Washington, D.C., at the existing value for these credits, these men end up with negative disposable income.

So, again, when we do nothing, they have negative disposable incomes, and the two flagship NCP programs in the states, New York and Washington, D.C., they still end up with negative disposable income. And so basically we have to raise those credits higher. Secondly —

MR. HASKINS: Ron, this is the top of page five, right?

MR. MINCY: This is — sorry, this is problem four in this quadrant here.

MR. HASKINS: Okay.

MR. MINCY: Okay, thank you. So give me my minutes back. In any case, we also then, through our qualitative data, interviewed about 43 non-custodial fathers in New York State who have been served by programs and asked them what they

knew about the credit, what their situation was, and essentially what they tell you is that, in fact, when they're faced with high child support requirements on the one hand and the expenses on the other, they don't pay their child support first. And so the first quote basically is a gentleman who talks about how it's difficult to make ends meet, how he has to make his rent and this, that and the other thing, and he's basically not able to meet all of his expenses given the child support requirements and the earned income tax credit that he does not get.

And the other code, which I won't have time to go into, really focuses on the fact that these men would treat the non-custodial parent credit much like an asset, that is to say they receive it in a lump sum at one point in the year, and a lot of them are going to use to retire debt immediately and retire the arrears especially by paying off large amounts of debt in one lump sum.

So finally, we point to the final thing. So I want you to turn to this chart here that shows the structure of the federal earned income tax credit for a single mom with one child and the structure of the New York State credit.

And the thing that I want to point to is what someone would earn and have from the credit if they had minimum wage earnings. So (inaudible) has this very pithy quote that basically says what the earned income tax credit does for a single mom with one child is turning a \$7.25 job into a \$9.17 job. And so you can take a mom who's earning the minimum wage and boost their earnings substantially. But for a non-custodial parent in New York, you cannot. So what this chart essentially says is that the New York State program is illustrated on the lower bar, and what it shows, that there are no earnings incentives for guys who make the minimum wage earnings or for those who make the poverty level for a single person. That is to say by the time they earn the poverty level for a single person or the minimum wage earnings, they're in the disincentive portion of the EITC.

And so the New York program and the Washington, D.C. program are providing inadequate work incentives, because either if they are poverty level income or they're earning up to minimum wage, they're in the declining portion of the EITC, and we need to get them -- and the upward portion where, for every dollar they work, they actually earn more.

Secondly, the final part of it, the catch 22 illustrates that for a lot of these fathers, there is no work incentive, period, that when you require, as the New York and Washington, D.C. programs do, that a person have the equivalent of paying full child support for a year, basically 95 percent of them are not going to meet that requirement, which means that their earnings incentive is zero.

And only by the time they get to about minimum wage earnings and there is some likelihood that they're going to pay all their child support in full will you get them any supplement, but even then, they're going to be in the declining portion of the EITC. My larger point is that these experiments that we've run at the state level from which the federal government should learn are telling us a couple of things. First, that we either need to increase the credit and we have to find a feasible way to make the compliance requirement more relaxed, and during the question and answer portion, I'll get to how we might do that. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. HASKINS: Very nicely done. Okay. So let's think across the entire panel, reduce incarceration rates, have more second chance programs to help guys who got in trouble do better in the future, have high school experience with work, or since Bob Lehrman is here and he can throw a spit wad at me if I don't say something apprenticeship programs, if we had an EITC that actually worked and didn't, you know, did better than the charts that you've just shown, that guys would actually have a financial incentive to work, and that if we had work requirements in child support and in prison

release programs that were funded and successful, so if we did all those things, my question to the panel is, would it make a difference? Are you confident that it would really boost work rates and increase marriage? And would it have broad effects? Ron Mincy.

MR. MINCY: So I'd like to take a strike at that. The first thing is that the success that we had in welfare reform is a 40-year success track record. We actually began welfare work in 1967, under the Kennedy administration, and continued to work under trial and error until we finally had an economy that cooperated and we got it right.

So in this way, Larry is really correct, in the sense that we have to take this objective of making -- my phrase is require and enable. Yes, there has to be requirements, but there also have to be enablements, and we have to stick at it over the course of time and then we're going to get it right in the same way we got welfare reform.

MR. HASKINS: Larry.

MR. MEAD: I think this is very important. See, what we see in the New York case, and I'm thinking of Ron's work and also Elaine's work, this is a first cut at a work incentive connected to child support, and there are all these problems that Ron has pointed out. I'm not sure we would have known them if we hadn't tried it.

And also, the biggest problem is the low take-up. So what we need to do is have a sort of new hope like system, where we have case managers who go out and recruit men for a system whereby they will get a subsidy if they pay child support and work 30 hours a week.

Now, I wouldn't assess that on a yearly basis, that's too tough, I'd assess it on a monthly basis. So on a monthly basis, men are enrolled in the program, they have to prove that they worked 30 hours that month and that they paid their child support that month, and if so, they get a subsidy.

MR. MINCY: I'd like to say something about that when you have a

chance.

MR. HASKINS: Wait, hold on. Irv, go ahead.

MR. MEAD: And this is -- the point is, this is --

MR. GARFINKEL: I want to make two points, first that I am sympathetic to the concrete proposal of child support and enforcing work, but I disagree 100 percent with the diagnosis underlying the problem that is being offered. The idea that work and enforcing work is a key problem and is the key to the solution, frankly, is just silly.

We have the greatest inequality since the Great Depression. We are arresting young men to beat the band. And it's a misdiagnosis that we're being offered in terms of the great success of welfare reform. If it hadn't been for the great expansion of the EITC and childcare and other benefits, we would not -- and a great economy in the '90's, we would not have reduced caseloads the way we did, and we certainly wouldn't have reduced poverty.

We have evidence from experiments that simply requiring work does not reduce poverty. And let me say, in terms of mothers working, we are requiring mothers that have one year olds and under one year olds to work. That is plain stupidity.

MR. HASKINS: Tell us how you really feel about this. Ron Mincy.

MR. MINCY: So you will notice that in Larry's comments, despite his long track record, and some of us are familiar with it, that he does talk about guaranteed work programs, in other words, that he's not depending upon the demand side of the economy to cooperate, which is the big missing piece in 2010, all right.

We have an unemployment rate that is just edging down toward 8.6 percent. Still, you know, the unemployment rate is about -- when black men are up there, around a half employment to population ratio. So, therefore, I agree with Irv, we have to sort of require and enable. Figuring out how work -- if we have a work based anti-poverty system, we have to figure out how to work and then we can incent work.

The other challenge I think that Larry points out here is that he would offer a monthly incentive. You work, pay your child support this month, and that means that next month you'd get the payment. That's going to be expensive. Administratively, enforcing a month to month requirement is going to be very, very expensive to work.

The second thing is, it ignores the asset feature of the earned income tax credit, that is to say, one of the reasons why the EITC works as well as it does is that moms get a lump sum of money, and they can use that lump sum of money to do big things. Fathers already lack that asset because they can't share their earnings with -- their expenditures with their kids. They can't share the car; they can't share the house. There's a lot of disincentive in them for spending money in asset like ways. Therefore, I don't think this month-to-month strategy is the way to get there. We really need to have a lump sum delivered one time a year, much like the EITC, so that they can use it for large expenditures. And again, this is the beginning of a long-term agenda.

There are a lot of ideas in play, we've got to get to them, we've got to try them, we've got to tweak them and try to figure out how to get it right.

MR. MEAD: I agree with that, let's try it.

MR. HASKINS: Okay. So my second question was going to be, if you think that there are big impacts here, if we did all these things, did a lot of things at once, all of which have some evidence that the work -- some have quite good evidence, then what's the biggest barrier to not being able to implement it, and I'll tell you the answer, the answer is, are there going to be jobs, and would Congress appropriate the money.

Let's start with appropriate the money. The answer is, no, they won't appropriate new money. So if you're testifying before the Ways and Means Committee, and Chairman Davis liked you and says come testify when we're doing, you know, the tariff hearings that they're planning to do next year, and he says you can recommend anything you want to, but I want you to tell me where you're going to get the money, what are you

going to say?

SPEAKER: I get it from Irv. I mean the rates at which we're incarcerating these people, clearly, reallocating some of that money, because we're talking about the same guys, that's where I would first look to get the money.

MR. HASKINS: Okay. So one issue there -- let me just follow up on this. One issue there is that the state money is mostly -- I mean the prison money is mostly in state budgets. Have you thought about how we can do things at the federal level to try to use the savings that would occur at the state level? I mean that's a cumbersome, difficult kind of thing that needs -- I'm not undermining your idea, I'm just saying this is some concrete issue that you've got to think through.

SPEAKER: I have, but I thought about a different aspect of the federal state, which I hope you'll let me come back to. Get your answer to this other --

MR. HASKINS: No, do it right now, do it.

SPEAKER: Well, so part of the problem with making the earned income tax credit work is that states also create child support guidelines. And so if you relied upon lowering child support guidelines in a variety of states, the same guy in some state would qualify for a federal EITC and in a different state he would not, because states are going to relax their child support and they want autonomy over that. So the way to fix that is to figure out what do states do to relax the child support requirements?

They essentially say: if a guy is poor, we really don't expect him to be able to pay support. That is a politically feasible way to relax the child support constraint, which I told you is important. What we really ought to do is to have a federal, in effect, self-support reserve.

We should say, if a guy earns less than the poverty level, turn to her, look at her numbers, he cannot pay child support, therefore, assume his child support is zero, all right, and therefore, until he makes at least poverty level, drop his child support

order to zero, like we do, in effect, in many states, and then you don't have to check with the state government to see if he paid his child support, give him the NCP EITC, let him get on the road to work and earnings, and so the federal state handshake with respect to that can be informed in that way.

MR. HASKINS: Larry, do you want to –

MR. MEAD: The way to get the money -- I agree, the big money is in incarceration, but it's hard to directly attach the benefits of work programs to that saving. In child support, the saving is smaller, but it is directly attached. What Texas did was expand their program on the back of child support collections. They basically said to the legislature, we can fund NCP choices through tariff and also through the extra payment of child support, and they got the legislature to do it. And furthermore, they did it incrementally, so at each stage you're making money.

Basically they said, we're making money, let's expand, and in that way, they're covering most of the state. So there is money out there that can be reprogrammed toward supporting these programs.

MR. HASKINS: So, again, if you're talking to Chairman Davis, are you going to say, all right, so what you need to do is come up with some cash from -- we already have the mechanism in place, just make it a legal expenditure under 4D?

MR. MEAD: Well, yes, correct. I think the main thing is to qualify employment expenses for regular child support matching under 4D, that's the big step forward. It's not a lot of money, but it would make a big difference in states that are prepared to do this. It's too soon to mandate it nation--ide. We're not going to do the Family Support Act, Personal Responsibility Act, that's -- we're not at that point yet, but we need to work out how the institutions have to be developed, and part of it is using the new hope model, using these administrative systems. You're right, Ron is right, it's expensive, but in the short term, I don't see how we can get these guys on board unless

there's someone reaching out to them and making them an offer, you know, you do this, you work, you pay child support, and we will subsidize your earning. So anyway, okay.

SPEAKER: So the reason I'm sympathetic to Larry's proposal is the guarantee jobs portion of it. I think that is positive. I'm not opposed at all to the -- taking the initiative at the state level for these programs. I just don't think you should overestimate what it's going to do.

And in terms of the big box, I think that is necessary. I think there are lots of programs that are effective that we don't even have. And so if you ask me what I think the solution is, I think it's a political solution. And the 2012 election may go the wrong way, from my perspective, that means we'll have more work to do. Maybe by some miracle the republicans will kill themselves in the election and that would be a blessing, but I wouldn't count on it.

MR. HASKINS: Thank you for that very scholarly comment.

SPEAKER: But I also think probably the political optics here is learn from New York. In New York, the reason why the NCP EITC was sold was that Bob Door was extraordinarily successful in the child support program, all right, that is to say he demonstrated that child support was being very effective. He had the support of the New York State legislature, and therefore, the gamble on the NCP EITC was a gamble on a record that was already done. Therefore, we have to look at the federal child support program.

In other words, part of the road to making this politically powerful is ask the question, well, first of all, we're bankrupting the child support program, which is problematic, so we have to get that to perform better, and then say -- the problem is that now, in 1975, when we created basically the federal child support system, most kids in welfare and child support were kids from married couples. We've completely reversed that.

Now the predominance of children in the child support and welfare system come from non---marital --- it cannot be that the thing that made sense in 1975 makes sense in 2010. So I think part of this is to make -- modernize the child support enforcement system to understand that what it mainly has is dead, broke, dead, and then figure out how to get it to work, and that is part --- that's one-half child support and one-half this set of incentives. And again, I think, Larry, but this --- he uses work and --- require and enable, we do have to require men to work and support their kids and not give them the out that says, you know, not supporting your kids is optional. On the other hand, we have to enable them to do --- and that was the magic of welfare reform.

MR. HASKINS: Audience. Yes, David.

MR. LEVY: An interesting panel.

MR. HASKINS: David, I don't know if you were here in time, but short. I made a plea to the audience to be short in their questions.

MR. LEVY: I will. David Levy, Children's Rights Counsel. We've heard, pardon me, research shows that higher child support incentives payments lead to greater access to your children, and greater access to your children leads to higher child support payments. We've heard a lot about jobs and child support, which is fine, but not much about parenting.

Now, Vicki Turetsky and others got into the President's budget that states shall provide for access or visitation orders and all child support orders, and perhaps we could incentivize that with federal incentive payments. Or are there other ways to encourage the whole parenting side, the emotional child support side that's often ignored? Thank you.

SPEAKER: So what our qualitative data shows in New York, just in a different way than Fragile Families, this idea that low income men are not involved with --- it's just a complete myth. When you talk to these men, even though they don't pay their

child support, the guy can tell you, look, when my daughter was four years old -- now that my daughter is 17 years old, I don't go into Victoria's Secret with her anymore. They can intimately tell you how they're spending their money on the children in ways that, from the dialogue, you know that it's genuine.

They can tell you how they bought a computerized system for their kid because he has dyslexia. So these guys aren't -- we don't need any federal policy to get them to spend time with their kids, we just monitor what they're doing.

I think we need to get the money side straight, okay. The parenting side is taken care -- these guys are not disconnected from their kids. By the time these kids are five years old, 50 percent of them still visit their children. So there's a lot of involvement. But the money side, the child support side, that's where we need some work.

MR. HASKINS: Bob Woodson.

MR. WOODSON: Bob Woodson, Center for Neighborhood Enterprise. Listening to all of you, if I'm a low-income person, I'm assuming all I need is the proper cocktail of social interventions and education programs are life will be just fine. The question that I have that poverty also -- the choices that people are making, the changes that they take contributes to their condition, as well. The question that I have is, what are the social interventions that addresses the cultural causes of poverty? And what lessons -- next question, what lessons can we learn about these at risk families prior to the 1960's, in the black community, when 82 percent of men and women were raising children; why the decline today?

In 1954, the incarceration rate of black men was 96,000 people, commensurate with their presence in the population. That has soared to 900,000 today. You can't say that social conditions were worse prior to 1954. So I wish you would address something.

MR. HASKINS: So, first of all the cultural issue. Larry.

MR. MEAD: Bob, you're pointing to, in some ways, the central mystery, and that is that low income society, particular among men, along with blacks, but certainly not confined to them, has tended to fray and come apart in lots of ways since the '60's. I don't think we totally understand why that happened or what the solution is.

That is the long term solution, to sort of put that back together. But we're working on the areas where we do have some leverage. And I think the work area, one of the advantages of it is that this is something we know how to do, we've learned how to do it in connection with welfare reform and other programs. We have some way of raising work levels among these men. And let's go with the thing we can do, not -- we admit, it's not the whole solution. The whole marriage is, in a sense, we don't yet have a strong solution for, but work is a parcel solution, it's an indirect solution that also addresses the family questions.

MR. HASKINS: Well, wait a minute. It's Jim Kemple's status, right; it's not all that indirect. Higher income had a big impact directly on the property -- the guys who do marriage, and that they would live with their kids.

MR. KEMPLE: Absolutely, and the trend over time in men's' wages at the bottom of the distribution, let's not forget that, that's fundamental. So if you can't bring home the bacon, you're not worth much. And no one wants to marry you. And -- but I think the other part of this is --

MR. HASKINS: Wait a minute, Bob, go ahead, Bob. Wait -- wait. Let Bob --

MR. MINCY: But I'm on him.

MR. HASKINS: Yeah, I know, but we read three responses from the panel. Let Bob --

MR. MINCY: In the 19 -- ten years of the Depression in the black

community, the marriage rate was higher -- the marriage formation rate in the ten years of the Depression was higher.

MR. MINCY: That's not true.

MR. HASKINS: The force rate was lower, but the separation rate was higher, so it was higher in the Great Depression.

MR. MINCY: And we were not afraid of our own children up until 1962. We weren't -- you don't have same -- the issues. If social conditions were worse, why didn't we go to hell in a hand basket in the '30's? What --

MR. HASKINS: Ron --

MR. MINCY: -- what we do know is that this separation of marriage and fertility is, first of all, a worldwide phenomenon, all right. It's happening all over the world. Secondly, this is no longer a problem that is confined to Africa Americas. That is to say you have declining rates of marriage, higher rates of cohabitation, more -- higher rates of human parenting amounting the rates of increase are actually happening faster among whites than among blacks.

MR. HASKINS: And it's poor whites.

MR. MINCY: And, therefore, I think again tweaking this thing and let's work the part. And the other thing I, look, the average hourly earnings of men have not grown since I went to college. I don't have a bunch of gray hairs now. So part of the demise of the American family is very much consistent with the decline in earnings especially among men.

So we can't ignore the fact that, again, look, I can -- what is the mantra? I can be poor by myself, and that's what's happening. As men have diminished capacity to earn, their marriage rates are declining, the rates of involvement, and we've got to get to that, we've got to get to work, we have to get to earnings, and some of this other stuff.

MR. HASKINS: All the way in the back, right there.

MR. CALDWELL: Hi, Leon Caldwell, Anne E. Casey Foundation. This is a really rich discussion. I think there's a big piece missing for me, and that is the — and I'm glad to have any generational dialogue, too, by the way.

MR. HASKINS: What, do you think we look old?

MR. CALDWELL: The successful navigation of the world to work, if you want to put it just on work, requires health, both mental and physical. You heard the congressman talk about substance abuse and non-violent and his own trauma. We've yet to talk about going back to some of the social issues, but how do you think health or the lack of health, Chron's disease, obesity, mental health, cultural trauma or collective trauma, how do you think that would impact your analysis?

MR. HASKINS: Ron, wait a minute, let's see if anybody else here —

MR. MINCY: In the first place, one of —

MR. HASKINS: Wait, Ron, let's see if —

MR. MINCY: Oh, I'm sorry, I think —

MS. MILLENKY: I'm trying to get to —

MR. HASKINS: I did, I said, Ron, wait a minute, let's see if anybody else has —

MR. MINCY: This is what I do in my career, I'm sorry.

MR. HASKINS: No, you're just the bravest, that's all, Ron. Anybody else? Okay, Ron Mincy.

MR. MINCY: Part of the problem is that African American men have the highest rates or mortality, very high rates of morbidity, and so the likelihood that they father their children is, in one part, a consequence of the social issues, but it's — the other part is simply health and mortality, okay.

And as a result, we have the highest rates of cancer, highest rates of high blood pressure, and on and on and on and on and on. And so, in part, again, what I

appreciate most about this work and the IRP is that finally the issue of men was taken up by the most important poverty institution in the nation.

And so we can finally begin to ask a set of questions about this, and health is a part of it, but again, if they were employed, and now that we have national health insurance, maybe they might get some health care, you know, so I don't know.

MR. HASKINS: Yes, this young lady right here. You get a --

MS. KATABARUKI: My name is Grace Kataruki, I'm from Venture Philanthropy Partners. I hope this question is not seen as too far a field from the panel. But what caught my attention in the --

MR. HASKINS: Nothing is far a field for this panel.

MS. KATABARUKI: What caught my attention in the Youth Challenge information was that of the population study, 31.3 percent had an individual education plan which is associated with special education. And I really think as we think about incarceration rates and disadvantaged men, that probably young people who are designated as special education are disproportionately represented among these populations, and that education is a part of this conversation wire, are people dropping out of school and becoming a part of this population that's consistently kind of behind and every indicator of --

MR. HASKINS: Okay. Jim Kemple, I'm going to put you on the spot because you know more about education than anybody else on this panel. Special ed does not enjoy a great reputation; is that true?

MR. KEMPLE: Well, also boys are the most likely to be misclassified as special needs and they're least likely to be able to be, you know, exited from a special education or individualized education plan. So I think, first of all, and a lot of it has to do with social emotional behaviors that are not necessarily learning disabilities and are not necessarily those things that do require serious interventions. A lot of those things I think

you can take through -- you can address through classroom-based interventions that apply to all kids. And I think, from an educational perspective, I think it's less about the classification, or the disability problem, which I wouldn't minimize, but I think in terms of the way the education system is I think misdiagnosing kids, especially boys, and then what happens to them in terms of where they are, you know, what's their longer term trajectory.

MR. HASKINS: One more question, Ron Henry.

MR. HENRY: Thank you. Ron Henry with the Men's Health Network. I want to get practical for just a second. I've heard lots of good philosophical stuff, but we need to be down in the trenches, too. Earlier this year the Supreme Court did the Turner v. Rogers's case that dealt with debtor's prison as a problem for unemployed obligors and low-income obligors. It didn't go so far as to create a constitutional right for counsel in those cases, but they did point out a lot of the problems, default judgments, child support guidelines that don't make sense, problems with income, problems with people who are having imputed income.

Let's be practical. For Vicki Turetsky, who was here, I don't know if she's still here, what do you recommend that we do to solve the problem that even the Supreme Court recognizes?

MR. HASKINS: Ron Mincy.

MR. MINCY: Well, I think in the --

MR. HASKINS: Ron, we want to give you a platform, you know.

MR. MINCY: I'm sorry. Listen, this is all I've been doing for the whole time. So I think we followed Vicki Turetsky's nose, because if we did, then the kind of child support intermediation that is available only on a competitive basis under the kind of funding we have for fatherhood programs now would be more generically available.

And through that, every state in the country would have a set of tariff like

resources focused on men, trying to solve a variety of challenges, and they would include the difficulty of modifying child support orders and on and on and on and on.

So again, you know, we have to get focused on -- again, we got to welfare reform because of 40 years of consistent work, and basically what was an entitlement, not competitive funding to get at it, and we won't resolve this problem until we understand that it is at least as significant, we create a structure for funding for these kinds of efforts that can get to everybody. And the final thing I want to say is this, in Fragile Families --

MR. HASKINS: Ron, I have one -- you don't want to say you're going to say a final thing, I guarantee it, you're going to want more.

MR. MINCY: -- this is -- I will not say -- it will be my last word.

(Laughter)

MR. MINCY: In Fragile Families, the proportion of white non-resident fathers who are incarcerated is as high as the proportion of black non-resident fathers who are incarcerated. And I think that's fascinating. And I checked it four times in different ways and it's right.

So this is not a black problem. We are now in the place that less educated men in this country are in trouble, and they are generically in trouble. And so I hope that as this dialogue goes, we will not continue -- I tried to do it in black men left behind, and you guys wouldn't let me do it. This is not a black problem, this is a problem of less educated men in this country generally, and if we don't get to it, there will be men that look like him and him and him, not just men that look like me who are where they are. I'm saying no more.

SPEAKER: But all younger.

MR. HASKINS: All younger. And they'll have the additional disadvantage of looking like two old guys like Irv and Ron rather than like a handsome

young man like that Ron.

(Laughter)

MR. HASKINS: The pretend Ron I call him. Okay. Thank you very much, audience. Join me in thanking the panel. We'll be in this room again on December 16th to talk about Premium Support as a solution to the nation's Medicare problem and the federal deficit.

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