
crime, indulging in self-gratification at the expense of their children, their families, their neighbors."

"Redistribution," Glazer notes, "suggests handouts to the poor, and indeed some redistributive expenditures consist of cash payments to the poor. But far more go for salaries to those who serve the poor. Redistribution meant a huge increase in the number of city employees and in their influence over city decisions."

Doubling or tripling outlays in these areas seems to yield "no particular improvement," Glazer says. "On the other hand, a sharp reduction in expenditure does not seem to hurt," judging by the experience of Massachusetts today—or even New York in 1975.

Meanwhile, the city government has "stopped trying to do well the kinds of things a city can do." These include "keeping its streets and bridges in repair, building new facilities to accommodate new needs and a shifting population, picking up the garbage, and policing the public environment." Ultimately, it is individual businesses and people that make a world-class city, and a city that does not tend to such things does not attract them. Other cities have made many of New York's mistakes, but its competitors for world-class status manage to get the basics done. New York needs to build mass-transit links to its airports, open new highways, and pick up the trash. New York, Glazer insists, is not a helpless victim of forces beyond its control. It holds its future in its own hands.

The Illegitimacy Error

"Does Welfare Bring More Babies?" by Charles Murray, in *The American Enterprise* (Jan.–Feb. 1994), 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Does welfare encourage single women to have babies? That has been one of the thorniest questions in the nation's welfare debate. Researchers who think that it does can point to the rising percentage of black babies born out of wedlock since the 1960s. But they have had to face up to the conflicting fact that the *birth rate* among single black women dropped significantly during the '60s. If welfare was such a powerful promoter of illegitimacy, why was the percentage of single black women having babies shrinking?

Even conservative Charles Murray, in writing *Losing Ground*, his controversial 1984 book about the impact of the social welfare policies of the '60s, recognized the argument's force. He did not argue (despite the popular perception of *Losing Ground*) that welfare caused more illegitimate births. The evidence, he thought, could not sustain that thesis. But, he now says, "I was wrong."

The "error," says Murray, a Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, was in the choice of a population pool to use as a standard: single black women. The problem is that, thanks to changing social mores and other factors, this group itself underwent a radical change. Between 1965 and 1970, the percentage of black women ages 15–44 who were married plummeted from 64 to 55—"an incredible change in such a basic social behavior during such a short period of time." During the 1970s and '80s, the marriage rate continued to fall, hitting a low of 34 percent in 1989.

The pool of unmarried black women was thus being flooded—and the new additions evidently did not have the same propensity to have babies out of wedlock. Hence, the incidence of illegitimate births per 1,000 single black women fell. But that was a statistical mirage caused by the transformation of the base group. The incidence of illegitimacy among *all* black women—a far more stable base—rose sharply. The number of illegitimate babies born annually in the black population nearly doubled between 1967 and 1990. "It increased most radically," Murray says, "from 1967 to 1971, tracking (with a two-year time lag) the most rapid rise in welfare benefits."

That, he notes, does not "prove" that the welfare benefits promoted illegitimacy. However, he says, the message is plain: "At the same time that powerful social and economic forces were pushing down the incidence of black children born to married couples, the incidence of black children born to unmarried women increased, eventually surpassing the rate for married couples. Something was making that particular behavior swim against a very strong tide, and, to say the least, the growth of welfare is a suspect with the means and the opportunity."

With black illegitimacy now at 68 percent and white illegitimacy—22 percent in 1991—moving

into "the same dangerous range" that prompted alarms to be sounded in the mid-1960s about the breakdown of the black family, Murray believes

that "the institutions necessary to sustain a free society" are threatened. For that reason, he says, "I want to end welfare."

PRESS & MEDIA

Throwing Bombs

"Tarnished Pen" by Paul Sheehan, in *Forbes MediaCritic* (No. 2, 1994), P.O. Box 762, Bedminster, N.J. 07921.

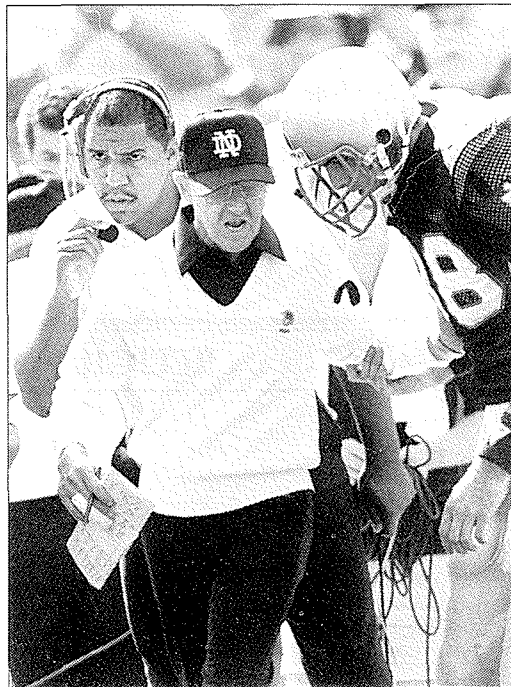
The University of Notre Dame and its football coach, Lou Holtz, took a severe pounding last year in the best-selling *Under the Tarnished Dome: How Notre Dame Betrayed Its Ideals for Football Glory*. The authors, journalists Don Yaeger and Douglas Looney, portrayed Holtz as a repulsive, hypocritical, mentally unstable bully, and his players as an ugly crew of violent, stupid, drug-abusing jocks. Television news shows and big-city newspapers brayed the bad news. Sheehan, chief U.S. correspondent for the Australian Consolidated Press magazine group, contends that they are the ones who ought to worry about being tarnished.

More than 300 students have played for Notre Dame during Holtz's tenure. Yaeger, a former newspaper reporter, and Looney, a *Sports Illustrated* veteran, listed 108 of them as sources, Sheehan observes, but more than half that number appeared only briefly or not at all in the text. "The book turns out to have been built on quotes from two dozen players, most of whom were either thrown out of the university, suspended from the team, dropped out, failed out, transferred, were placed on probation, or never played for Holtz," he says. Opposing views were not offered. The views of the 20 team captains during the Holtz era, for example, were not presented. Rick Mirer, the school's all-time passing leader, told the *Los Angeles Times* that Yaeger and Looney "looked for people who had a reason to be angry about whatever happened in their career there." The book is "a horrible misrepresentation of the university," Mirer said, and "the rap" against Holtz is "just not fair."

Key allegations in the book are at odds with the facts, Sheehan maintains. The authors

claimed, for example, that steroid abuse was encouraged by Holtz and is widespread at Notre Dame. In fact, Sheehan says, Notre Dame has "the most rigorous screening program in the nation," and since 1985, when it began, only five out of more than 400 players have tested positive; since 1990, none have.

Despite such grievous flaws, *Under the Tarnished Dome* was published by Simon & Schuster (after having been turned down by its original publisher, HarperCollins), serialized in such newspapers as the *Detroit News* and the *New York Post*, and its charges uncritically taken up on ABC's "Nightline." In the first month after publication, the *New York Times* "ran no fewer



Did two journalist-authors who refused to play by the rules give Notre Dame and its coach Lou Holtz (shown here in the midst of a game) an undeserved black eye?