
ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

Most efforts to restrain health-care costs have focused on the "supply side" (such as former President Carter's proposal to put a ceiling on medical costs). But health-care demand is finally starting to receive attention. Coalitions of doctors, patients, and insurers organized at Washington's behest beginning in 1977 helped save an estimated \$3.2 billion in 1978-79, mainly by convincing doctors and patients to pass up unnecessary treatment.

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All in the Family

"Household and Kinship: Ryton in the Late 16th and Early 17th Centuries" by Miranda Chaytor, in *History Workshop* (Autumn 1980), P.O. Box 69, Oxford, OX2 7XA, United Kingdom.

Much of the historical evidence for the "naturalness" of the nuclear family comes from the unusually copious census and legal records kept in preindustrial England. Most scholars believe that, while hardship and death broke up many families and forced the formation of "extended" households (including relatives other than the husband, wife, and unmarried children), the extra kinfolk were treated as "second class citizens." Chaytor, a British feminist, argues that family structure was far more complex.

The author studied families in late 16th- and early 17th-century Ryton, a parish southeast of the Scottish border. Though densely settled, Ryton's farm land was poor, and many residents had to scrounge for a living digging coal and cutting timber. Worse, four successive crop failures, cattle sickness, and an outbreak of plague in the 1590s turned Ryton into a "society of widows, orphans, and step-children." Nearly one-fifth of the parish's families were "extended."

Women sought providers, and men needed full-time servants. Together, they formed complex households containing foster children, stepchildren, their own offspring, and, frequently, married sons and daughters. These households regularly drew on the material and human resources of relatives—borrowing money, land, and nieces and nephews for domestic labor. Pressed by high mortality rates and poverty, Chaytor writes, "the distinction between conjugal unit and wider kinship was virtually eroded."

The French household was a case in point. In 1587, widower Robert French, father of three, married Dorothy Foggett. By the time they died, in 1596, they had four children of their own, and Robert's eldest son by his first wife had married and moved into the household with his bride (probably Dorothy's sister). The married son advanced to household head, and his wife raised the surviving orphans. They all shared income with more distant relatives—as records of their debts and credits show.

Ryton's misfortunes produced an unusually high number of extended

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In 16th-century England, poverty and high death rates forced the breakup of many peasant households and the creation of extended families.

households. But the parish does not represent the "exception which proves the rule" of nuclear families. Instead, maintains Chaytor, Ryton demonstrates that family structure is a function not only of biology but of economics as well.

Black Power's Uncertain Victory

"Black Power and White Reactions: The Revitalization of Race-Thinking in the United States" by Lewis M. Killian, in *Annals of the American Academy* (Mar. 1981), American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 3937 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Dashikis are out, Stokely Carmichael lives in self-imposed exile in Africa, and the Black Panthers are moribund. But Killian, a University of Massachusetts sociologist, argues that the demands of Black Power activists in the late 1960s form the basis of affirmative action's pre-eminence on the civil-rights agenda.

From its inception in the early 20th century, the civil-rights movement worked to assimilate blacks into the mainstream of white society. Preaching nonviolence and brotherhood, leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Roy Wilkins, and A. Phillip Randolph pressed for a "color-blind" democracy. But by the late 1960s, Carmichael and other frustrated militants urged black racial solidarity as the road to political power. More important, writes Killian, they spoke of blacks not as a category of individuals but as a separate community with group rights. Some, such as James Forman, called for "reparations" for past injustices under slavery.

These claims were dismissed not only by most whites but also by major civil-rights groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Killian, however, contends that when the broad task of achieving integration fell to the judiciary (in-