

**SOCIETY**

fects. Roughly 50 percent also favored abortion for "soft" justifications—low income, pregnancy out of wedlock, and a married couple's wish not to have more children.

After 1975, as the Pro-Life movement gathered strength and garnered publicity, support waned for "soft" reasons. For instance, in 1975, 51 percent of respondents had agreed that low income justified abortion, a 6 percent increase over 1972. But this figure dropped to 45 percent in 1978. Support for abortion on demand for married women rose from 38 to 44 percent from 1972 to 1975, but fell back to 39 percent by 1978.

From 1972 to 1978, Jews held the most "liberal" views on abortion, Catholics the most "conservative." Whereas 90 percent of Jews consistently approved abortion under any circumstances, between 13 and 20 percent of Catholics thought abortion was never justified. Protestant attitudes fell in between. Respondents under 30 years old consistently supported abortion on demand between 1972 and 1978.

College-educated persons held more liberal attitudes than individuals with only high-school educations. But, surprisingly, a person's sex was not a reliable predictor. Men proved *slightly* more liberal on abortion every year except 1974, when an average of 64 percent of both men and women approved "hard" and "soft" reasons for abortion.

*Black Revisionism*

"The New Black Intellectuals" by Murray Friedman, in *Commentary* (June 1980), American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

"Racist" and "white apologist" are labels pinned on scholars such as Daniel P. Moynihan and Nathan Glazer, who have questioned government plans designed to uplift poor blacks—even as these efforts have largely failed.

Such attacks have intimidated other white scholars from taking issue with conventional liberal strategies, claims Friedman, a LaSalle College sociologist. But, he reports, a handful of black social scientists are now taking the lead in disputing the view that massive federal programs will eliminate black poverty; these black scholars are also raising doubts about the benefits of forced busing and affirmative action programs. Though they differ on specifics, they share a common refusal to blame black poverty today solely on racism.

University of Chicago sociologist William Julius Wilson, for instance, has argued that the end of state-sanctioned segregation during the 1950s and '60s and the rise of service "industries," such as information processing and government, have diminished race as a barrier to black economic progress. Entry into these expanding industries, he contends, depends on schooling. The black underclass is impoverished less by discrimination than by lack of training.

Thomas Sowell, a widely published economist at UCLA, holds that varying "attitudes of self-reliance" affect the different success rates

---

**SOCIETY**

among ethnic groups. The routes to economic progress—education, work skills, and business experience—are frustratingly long. Many blacks and liberal whites have tried to rush the process, favoring quick fixes such as job quotas and subsidies, which “undermine self-reliance and pride of achievement in the long run,” he writes.

According to economist Walter Williams of Temple University, some government programs have actually aggravated black poverty. The ever-increasing minimum wage, for example, discourages many employers from apprenticing young, unskilled black workers. Harvard Law School professor Derrick A. Bell, Jr., who once argued school desegregation cases in court for the NAACP, now asserts that government’s primary focus, at least in cities, should be on upgrading—not integrating—largely black schools.

These four scholars have been sharply criticized by the black establishment (notably the National Urban League). They respond that today’s black leaders, largely from middle-class backgrounds, have misgauged the real needs of the lower-class black majority.

---

**PRESS & TELEVISION**


---

### *Watching the Primaries*

“The Media at Mid-Year: A Bad Year for McLuhanites” by Michael Robinson, in *Public Opinion* (June–July 1980), Circulation Dept., c/o AEI, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

If you relied solely on CBS-TV for news of the 1980 presidential primaries, chances are that you would have become an expert on the New Hampshire and Iowa contests, been apprised of each week’s winners and losers, and grown to like President Carter, Ronald Reagan, and John B. Anderson. You would, however, have learned very little about the candidates’ competence, consistency, or positions on issues such as defense and the economy, according to a study conducted by Robinson, a George Washington University political scientist.

Between January 1 and June 4 (the day after California, New Jersey, Ohio, and six other states held the final primaries of the season), the weekday CBS network news programs ran 345 stories directly related to the campaign and 385 stories strongly linked to the race or dealing with the candidates in their “official capacities” (most of these concerned President Carter). Primary coverage accounted for fully one-third of the network’s entire weekday news reporting. Two-thirds of the stories dealt mainly with the campaign’s “horse race” aspect—a focus that matched CBS’s earlier coverage of the 1972 and 1976 campaigns.