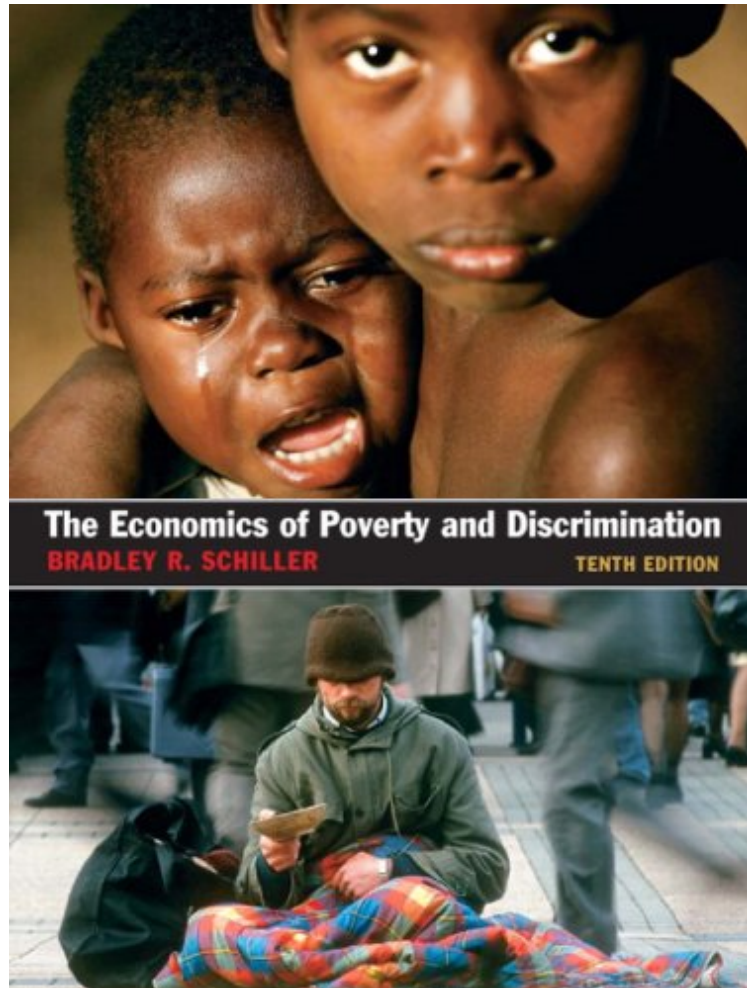


The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination

Bradley R Schiller

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#355857 in Books Schiller, Bradley R. 2007-07-21 Ingredients: Example Ingredients Original language: English PDF # 1 9.20 x .90 x 7.00l, 1.10 #File Name: 0131889699352 pages | File size: 79.Mb

Bradley R Schiller : The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerVery happy and saved money!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy No Just NoGreat short read that uses scientific data to disprove popular belief about the poor.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Poignant look at the economics of povertyBy Phil GinsburgI thoroughly enjoyed the book. I felt the authors bring up salient issues about the world's economic realities and offers some concrete suggestions on beginning to tackle issues of extreme poverty. I did not necessarily agree with each and every method proposed, however the book was well written and thought provoking and inspired a spirited discussion amongst peers!

For the past twenty years this book has been distinguished by its relevant coverage, tight organization, multidisciplinary perspective, and timeliness. The tenth edition preserves these qualities while incorporating new reference material. A three-part organization covers the dimensions of poverty and inequality, causes of poverty, and policy options. For social workers, welfare professionals, and job counselors.

From the Publisher This book was written to provide students with a broad overview of the dimensions of poverty and discrimination, the various explanations for these social ills, and the policy options for addressing them. From the Back Cover Key Benefit: Emphasizing the complex economic, social, and political factors that create poverty and make its eradication so difficult, this book provides a broad overview of poverty and discrimination, explanations for these social ills, and policy options for addressing them. Key Topics: Providing a multidisciplinary approach to poverty, welfare, and discrimination, this book offers up-to-date discussions of major policy initiatives, including welfare reforms, child support, healthcare, and job training. It also includes the latest statistics on poverty, welfare, and labor-market developments. The seventh edition of *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination* has been revised to include a description and analysis of the new welfare system (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) that replaced AFDC; an examination of the causes in recent plunges in the number of welfare cases; and an assessment of the changing relationship between poverty and economic growth. Market: A valuable reference for every politician and advocate involved in the development of policy toward poverty and discrimination as well as every reader concerned with these issues. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Preface Dramatic changes have occurred in the landscape of poverty and discrimination since the last edition of this text was published in 1998. The landmark welfare reforms of 1996 (the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act) became fully effective in 1997. Since then, the individual states have assumed primary responsibility for welfare policy. Those reforms, plus a vibrant economy, set the stage for a precipitous decline in welfare caseloads. From a 1994 peak of 143 million recipients, the national caseload had fallen by over half by mid-2000. One of the urgent tasks of this new edition is to describe and explain these dramatic changes in welfare policy and dependency. The poverty population has not changed as rapidly as the welfare population. On the contrary, the poverty population kept rising for several years even after welfare caseloads started declining. To many observers this dichotomy was a symptom of welfare-policy failure: The social safety net was being withdrawn. Subsequent studies revealed a more complex picture, however. While some former welfare recipients were in greater need, most were either finding jobs or changing living arrangements to attain greater economic security. Moreover, there was increasing evidence that even the poverty rate was finally receding as the national economy continued to expand briskly. The link between the macro economy and poverty apparently still exists. In the arena of discrimination, similarly dramatic changes have occurred. The reversal of affirmative action that was embodied in California's Civil Rights Initiative (1996) has spread to other states and communities. Race-based busing programs are being dismantled; race and gender preferences in education and employment are being revised or discarded. At the same time, public-opinion polls and President Clinton's Race Initiative dialogues confirm that white, black, and Hispanic views of racism and discrimination remain highly divisive. Will class-based preferences bridge these perspectives, as some observers have suggested? Beyond all of these specific policy changes is the continued evolution of the American family. As the 2000 Economic Report of the President emphasized, the American "family" continues to evolve at a disarming pace. Many aspects of poverty, inequality, and discrimination are affected by those changing family dynamics. So, too, must policy be responsive to the rise of single parenthood, working mothers, absent fathers, teen childbirth, and other demographic changes. **MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH** All of these changes more than justify a fresh look at poverty, discrimination, and related topics. That is the purpose of this new edition. Once again, an effort has been made to incorporate the latest research findings from diverse disciplines, including economics, sociology, political science, gerontology, anthropology, law, and public health. Although my own training in economics gives a unique structure and perspective to the text, the discussion ranges far beyond the conventional boundaries of academic disciplines. This is particularly evident in expanded discussions of the urban underclass, the increasing feminization of poverty, the renewed IQ controversy, the behavioral constraints on welfare reform, and public attitudes on poverty, race, and inequality. **INTERNATIONAL CONTRASTS** In this eighth edition more attention is also paid to the international dimensions of poverty and discrimination. In chapter 2, for example, a boxed insert contrasts the World Bank's official poverty threshold (\$1 per day!) and count with the dimensions of U.S. poverty. Many more references to international comparisons are made throughout the text. **WEB ADDRESSES** Another feature of this edition is the inclusion of Web site references. At the end of every chapter, Web addresses are provided that will enable students to access more data or other material. **LOGICAL ORGANIZATION** Despite these many changes, the basic organization of the text remains the same. The logical progression moves from poverty concepts to poverty measures, then into causation, and finally policy options. The central focus of the text continues to be on the phenomenon of poverty, with discrimination examined as a potential contributing cause. The text begins with a conceptual discussion of poverty and inequality, highlighting the differing views of causation. Three distinct causal perspectives are introduced in chapter 1, namely Flawed Character, Restrictive Opportunity, and Big Brother. These competing "explanations" of poverty and inequality are referenced throughout the text in order to accentuate

disparate views of why poverty persists and what role public policy should play. Chapter 2 tries to quantify the dimensions of poverty. The seemingly mundane task of counting the poor has become increasingly controversial, as evidenced by the National Academy of Science's 1995 report and the ensuing debate over poverty standards and census methods. Chapter 2 summarizes the key dimensions of this debate and emphasizes how our perceptions of poverty depend on the yardstick used. Data for 1998 are used to illustrate both the official poverty count and the impact of various adjustments. Chapters 3-10 address the major causes of poverty. Each chapter focuses on a cluster of related causes, drawing on a broad range of research. Points of controversy are emphasized and analyzed in the context of the best available evidence. The intent is not to advocate one point of view but to encourage critical thinking on central issues in the poverty debate. The more prominent policy options for eliminating poverty are examined in the final five chapters. Welfare reform gets a lot of attention, in keeping with the historic 1996 reforms. Chapter 11 reviews the motivations for those reforms and discusses their implementation and impact. Chapter 12 is devoted to social insurance programs. In addition to Social Security and Unemployment Insurance, the chapter includes an extended description of child-support enforcement and assurance. In each case, the theoretical and historical foundations of the policy option are reviewed, with an eye toward assessing its antipoverty potential. The potential of unemployment and training policies to reduce poverty is examined in chapter 13. The debate over whether economic growth creates "good" jobs or "bad" ones is reviewed, as are a host of skill-training programs. The impact of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) on labor supply and income is also assessed in chapter 13. The renewed debate over affirmative action is the central focus of chapter 14. The discussion reviews the history and experience of equal opportunity initiatives in both employment and education. The inherent conflict between affirmative action and reverse discrimination is examined in the context of legal milestones and the California and Texas experiences. The ultimate objective of this book has not changed through eight editions. Its goal is to lay the foundations for a clearer understanding of poverty and discrimination and for a keener perspective on related public policy. Until we know why people are poor, or what kinds of programs are effective in combatting poverty and discrimination, we cannot expect these problems to disappear.

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL Prepared by Steven Rock of Western Illinois University, the Instructor's Manual for this edition offers a brief synopsis of each chapter, a set of true/false and discussion questions, some lecture suggestions, Web-based links for updating text material, additional print references, and homework exercises. The Instructor's Manual is available on request from your Prentice Hall sales representative.

SUPPLEMENTAL READING In prior editions I have never recommended additional readings to supplement the text presentation. However, I have been so impressed with the "Opposing Viewpoints" and "At Issue" series from Greenhaven Press (San Diego, CA) that I think more instructors should be aware of them. The booklet-sized (50-100 page) readings cover a spectrum of topics including affirmative action, racism, welfare reform, homelessness, immigration and many more. The "Opposing Viewpoints" contain very short but sharp contrasts on key policy issues that will spark class debates.

Acknowledgments As with previous editions, I have benefitted from the feedback of students and instructors who have used this text. I am particularly grateful for the detailed reviews provided by M. Neil Browne, Bowling Green State University; Elizabeth T. Powers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Steven M. Rock, Western Illinois University; and Nirvikar Singh, University of California-Santa Cruz. I am also grateful to the many personnel at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the U.S. Social Security Administration who provided the data-much of it unpublished-to update this edition. My research assistants, Henry Hogue and Adam Hoffman, also proved to be adept at ferreting data from sundry sources. Finally, I would like to thank Maureen Wilson, my production editor at Prentice Hall, who has shepherded several editions of this text through the production process. Bradley R. Schiller The American University