



The Myth of the Missing Black Father: The Persistence of Black Fatherhood in America

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Common stereotypes portray black fathers as being largely absent from their families. Yet while black fathers are less likely than white and Hispanic fathers to marry their child's mother, many continue to parent through cohabitation and visitation, providing caretaking, financial, and other in-kind support.

This volume captures the meaning and practice of black fatherhood in its many manifestations, exploring two-parent families, cohabitation, single custodial fathering, stepfathering, noncustodial visitation, and parenting by extended family members and friends. Contributors examine ways that black men perceive and decipher their parenting responsibilities, paying careful attention to psychosocial, economic, and political factors that affect the ability to parent. Chapters compare the diversity of African American fatherhood with negative portrayals in politics, academia, and literature and, through qualitative analysis and original profiles, illustrate the struggle and intent of many black fathers to be responsible caregivers. This collection also includes interviews with daughters of absent fathers and concludes with the effects of certain policy decisions on responsible parenting.

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Editorial Review

Review

This book demonstrates the gap in positive procreative stories of responsible Black fathers as opposed to a deficit-based model and invites more research on Black fathers 'doing the well' for Black families and children. Comprehensive, largely qualitative snapshots provide the diverse picture of what fathering in Black communities looks like.

(Bette Dickerson, American University, and past president of the Association of Black Sociologists)

About the Author

Roberta L. Coles is associate professor of sociology in the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she teaches courses on family, race and ethnicity, and social inequality. She is the author of *Race and Family* and *Best Kept Secret: Black Single Custodial Fathers*. Her publications have appeared in the *Sociological Quarterly*, *The Sociological Review*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Journal of Aging Studies*, *Sociology of Religion*, and *The Western Journal of Black Studies*.

Charles Green is professor of sociology in the Department of Sociology at Hunter College (CUNY) and also teaches in the Ph.D. sociology program at the CUNY Graduate School and University Center. His published works have focused on race and ethnic relations, urban politics, Caribbean migration, and issues in comparative urban development. He is the coauthor of *The Struggle for Black Empowerment in New York City: Beyond the Politics of Pigmentation* and editor of *Globalization and Survival in the Black Diaspora: The New Urban Challenge*. His most recent work is *Manufacturing Powerlessness in the Black Diaspora*.

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