



## Welfare: The Hand-Basket Road of Good Intentions

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"More 18 to 34 year-olds are living at home than any other living arrangement" because the government has supplanted the husband in the American nuclear family.

Wednesday's AT featured a [blog](#) by Rick Moran titled "More 18 to 34-year-olds are living at home than any other living arrangement," which speculated attribution of the phenomenon to later marriages in the demographic, a poor economy, and few available jobs.

But the later marriages are not a cause; they are an effect. The cause of the later marriages is the War on Poverty, as amply illustrated in a [report](#) by The Heritage Foundation titled "How Welfare Undermines Marriage and What to Do About It." Under the heading "Penalizing Marriage," author Robert Rector states:

[T]he means-tested welfare system actively penalizes low-income parents who do marry. All means-tested welfare programs are designed so that a family's benefits are reduced as earnings rise. In practice, this means that, if a low-income single mother marries an employed father, her welfare benefits will generally be substantially reduced. The mother can maximize welfare by remaining unmarried and keeping the father's income "off the books."

A [report](#) from the Cato Institute, titled "The Work Versus Welfare Trade-off: 2013," elaborates on p. 8:

[I]n 13 states, welfare pays more than \$15 per hour. The most generous benefit package was in Hawaii, although that may be distorted by the state's high cost of living. The second 4 highest level of benefits was in the District of Columbia, followed by Massachusetts.

In 11 states, welfare pays more than the average pre-tax first year wage for a teacher. In 39 states it pays more than the starting wage for a secretary. And, in the 3 most generous states a person on welfare can take home more money than an entry-level computer programmer.

This is only welfare. It doesn't include additional benefits available to unwed mothers, such as WIC, tuition assistance, Section 8 housing, earned income credits, and so forth, which compound to a healthy annual income to reward out-of-wedlock childbearing.

The reports include charts and graphs and are replete with good information, all of which has been covered by AT in numerous articles. The point of this essay is not to regurgitate familiar numbers; it's to provide illustrative examples to substantiate the premise.

Until the local newspaper downsized a couple years ago, I sidlined as a columnist and wrote about this very issue. After criticizing the entitlement culture, I was inundated with responses that I was just a heartless "angry white man" who doesn't sympathize with minorities and can't relate to people in dire circumstances.

I am a 52-year-old machinist, employed at the same factory for over 25 years. I have three adult children and, after having divorced four years ago, have welcomed homeless people into my home and been involved in ministry to the disadvantaged. When I write about abuse of the system, I'm writing about acquaintances of mine and perhaps family members.

Most of the people I know who abuse the system are not lazy. But going legit would reduce their annual income or opportunity by tens of thousands of dollars.

Marriage doesn't even cross the threshold of the mind of most people I know in their early 20s. It's so complicated and entwining. And if it doesn't work out, divorce is messy and expensive.

The terms "husband" and "wife" have been replaced with "baby-daddy" and "baby-mama." You can enjoy the benefits of marriage without having to grow up: no strings attached, and no stigma if a pregnancy occurs.

If the couple were married, the husband would be expected to provide for all the needs of this burgeoning young family. What are the odds that an average high school graduate or dropout is going to have gainful employment to the tune of \$15+/hr upon graduation to provide that support in today's economy? That would demand severe austerity measures on the household finances.

That's okay. There's a safety hammock in place for just such occasions. If your parents don't have insurance to cover the delivery, Medicaid will pay for it. And since the mother is not married, by social standards, that makes her an unfortunate victim, deserving of all the empathy and charity society can muster. Now she qualifies for free or subsidized housing. Not only that, but the government has decided that you and I need to pay for her college education to boost her out of the morass. But who's going to watch the baby?

Don't worry: you and I will pay for someone to do it.

How many 20-year-old men do you know who can provide like that for a young bride?

The major inconvenience in this scenario is that baby-daddy can't live with baby-mama, or the jig is up. So he lives with Grandma or Grandpa while she enjoys the furnished apartment or house. It's okay for him to make conjugal visits, though. This arrangement provides personal

time apart for video games and web-surfing (or playing the field). And Grandma will be happy watch the kids when the young couple needs to do karaoke night or a rave.

I see it every day in personal acquaintances, and though I despise it, I don't despise them. They are victims – hapless dupes. I despise the nefarious system that orchestrates it.

Incremental, subtle, frog-water dependency is how the Israelites became slaves to ancient Egypt. And it appears that such is the underlying intention of the dependency culture in America: the weakening of the family and the independent male, incapacitating the defiance of servitude.

Uncle Sam has morphed into Father Sam, the surrogate husband. It would take a fierce sense of individuality for a stalwart young person of modest means to avoid this trap, and the public indoctrination machination has been inculcating that out of them for decades. It's the path of least resistance.

Lack of jobs isn't the issue. There are "Help Wanted," "Now Hiring," and "Join Our Team" signs posted on the door of almost every retail or dining establishment in my town. Unfortunately, thanks to Obamacare, none of those jobs is going to provide enough hours to include health care benefits. You'll have to accept two or three of them to garner a complete full-time paycheck. Good luck finding daycare for that crazy schedule, not to mention getting your several employers to accommodate your specific time requirements.

Or just relax, play your Xbox, and bum cigarettes. Maybe you can swap some EBT credits for smokes while you wait for that next government check.

It shouldn't take much more for Father Sam to morph into Pharaoh Sam.