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The Enduring Strength of the Black Family

A Douglass Leadership Institute Report

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An Introduction to the Enduring Strength of the Black Family: A DLI Report

Preface

For decades, if not centuries, the prevailing narrative about the Black American family has been a negative one. Negative stereotypes include, but are not limited to, the assumptions that Blacks do not value marriage, that the majority of Black fathers do not take responsibility for or involve themselves in the lives of their children, that Black parents are not sufficiently attentive to their children and do not value or invest in education, and that Black families are not interested in or willing to adopt children.

Proponents of this narrative have come from both the political right and left. Those on the right have used this set of assumptions as an explanation (sometimes the sole explanation) for any remaining racial disparities in wealth or academic performance (for example), and those on the left have used it to justify all manner of government control over Black individuals and communities. While there is much work to do to strengthen all Americans families, **critics on both sides have failed to recognize the enduring strengths of the Black American family,** despite the work of scholars such as Robert Hill,[1] and the deliberate role that the exercise of both government and private power has played both historically and contemporarily in weakening the Black American family.

This report will introduce the following ideas:

- There have always been groups—first the slave-owning class and presently the social service industrial complex—that have a vested interest in preventing or discouraging the formation of stable, strong, growing, self-sufficient Black American families.

- Most Black American families—counter to the prevailing narrative—remain strong by some important, if often undervalued, measures.

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[1] Dr. Hill's books, including The Strengths of Black Families (1972) and The Strengths of African American Families: Twenty-Five Years Later (1997), debunked nearly every negative stereotype of Black families. His research badly needs to be repeated and will be discussed in more depth in subsequent reports.

Historical Examples and Illustrations

When white colonists brought Africans to North America, first as indentured servants and then as slaves, it was in their interests to discourage them from forming stable families and self-sufficient communities. This was achieved in several ways throughout the colonial and antebellum period.

Colonial Tax Incentives Against Black Marriage

Although the ability of slaves to marry and stay with their spouses was always conditional on the preferences and whims of their "owners," free Blacks in colonial America regularly entered into marriages governed by the same traditions and beliefs as white marriages at the time. During the seventeenth century, a non-trivial number entered into interracial marriages with whites (as well as with Native Americans) before the practice was outlawed in 1691.[2] However, because free Black women were not accorded the same tax-exempt status as white women at the time, "a free black married couple paid twice as much tax as a free white married couple, a burden that could lead to re-enslavement."[3] Furthermore, a man of any race marrying a Black woman doubled his tax burden.[4]

Black Family Formation in the Antebellum South

It is well established that most slave owners as well as the governments of slave-states forbade marriage and thus family formation among slaves. William Goodell, who documented the laws surrounding enslaved people in the United States, wrote in 1853:

> *"The slave has no rights. Of course, he or she cannot have the rights of a husband, a wife. The slave is a chattel, and chattels do not marry. 'The slave is not ranked among sentient beings, but among things;' and things are not married."*

University of Kentucky professor Vanessa M. Holden explains,

> *"Slaveholders went as far as espousing the idea that African Americans were unable to make family attachments, that Black parents had little regard for their children, and that white*

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2 "Free Blacks in Colonial Virginia" Encyclopedia Virginia. Retrieved from: https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/free-blacks-in-colonial-virginia/
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.

slaveholders acted in a parental role in the lives of their slaves. This paternalistic myth of kind slaveholders and childlike slaves remained embedded in early representations and histories of American Slavery into the early twentieth century."[5]

Yet the actual behavior of Black Americans tells a profoundly different story. Sociologists Katrina Bell McDonald and Caitlin Cross-Barnet note,

"Even as fear of severe punishment was omnipresent during slavery, men and women went to great lengths to form forbidden, intimate bonds with one another. That is, they went to great lengths to marry…by conservative estimates, hundreds of thousands of black slaves went to great lengths to be married."[6]

It is also well documented that slaves took extraordinary measures to *keep* their families together and to connect with kin when separation was unavoidable. Contemporaneous narratives record slaves traveling many miles on foot to visit spouses and children who had been sold away from them.[7]

Emancipation and Jim Crow

After emancipation, newly freed Blacks worked tirelessly to find and reunite with family members that they had been separated from during slavery. For years, they inquired and investigated, placed ads in newspapers, and walked miles on foot to locate lost kin. As one scholar noted:

"The late Herbert Gutman - a tough-minded historian - was once on the verge of tears as he described the desperate efforts of blacks in the years after Emancipation to try to find family members who had been sold, sometimes hundreds of miles away.

These poor and illiterate people would find somebody who could read and write, who would write what were called "inquiring letters" to black churches in the South.

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5 Vanessa M. Holden, "Slave and Free Black Marriage in the Nineteenth Century," African American Intellectual History Society, (September 19, 2018). Retrieved from: https://www.aaihs.org/slave-and-free-black-marriage-in-the-nineteenth-century/

6 Katrina Bell McDonald and Caitlin Cross-Barnet, Marriage in Black: The Pursuit of Married Life among American-Born and Immigrant Blacks. Routledge (2018) (pp. 21-22; 29)

7 Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave. (Originally published 1845) p. 20, 82; Ebook retrieved from: https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Douglass/index.html

In these churches, someone would then read these letters aloud to the congregations, asking if anybody who knew anything about the person being sought would speak up, so that this family could be reunited again."[8]

After the Civil War, the enormous population of free Blacks created a shock for both Southern culture and economy. **It was in the interests of the white elites to prevent free Blacks from forming stable families and thus strong communities who would then have been better organized to demand higher wages and better treatment.** Historian Tera M. Hunter explains,

"Many local jurisdictions throughout the South demanded high fees to discourage ex-slaves from marrying or simply refused to give them access to courts or licenses."[9]

Yet despite all these obstacles, **Black Americans married at higher rates than white Americans in the post-slavery era.**[10] They formed families and communities that thrived both socially and economically all over the country, including the Greenwood district in Tulsa, Oklahoma; the Rosewood community in Levy County, Florida; the Parish Street District in Durham, North Carolina; the community in Wilmington, North Carolina; and the Sweet Auburn District in Atlanta, Georgia. All these communities were peaceful, prosperous, self-sufficient, and full of intact, healthy Black families. These accomplishments also attracted the envy of whites, who, on several occasions, murdered residents and destroyed property in these communities, often without facing legal consequences for their crimes.

Black Suffrage and the Uneasy Relationship with White Progressive Feminism

After the end of Reconstruction, Black Americans also strove to obtain the full rights of citizenship, including suffrage. This led to a tenuous and often one-sided partnership with white suffragettes. From its beginnings, it seems quite obvious that **white**

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8 Thomas Sowell, "Creating Frauds about the Past," (March 16, 2002). Retrieved from:
https://products.kitsapsun.com/archive/2002/03-16/0001_thomas_sowell__creating_frauds_ab.html
9 Hunter, Tera W. Bound in Wedlock: Slave and Free Black Marriage in the Nineteenth Century. Harvard University Press (2017) p. 241.
10 "Furthermore, it is dramatically clear that black females married at higher rates than white females of native parentage until 1950." Erol Ricketts "The origin of black female-headed families," Institute for Research on Poverty University of Wisconsin.

American feminism has been primarily concerned with obtaining power parity for elite white women with elite white men. Even in their earliest partnership with the Black suffrage movement, key leaders demonstrated greater concern for elite white women than for Black liberation.

Famous feminist icons like Elizabeth Cady Stanton joined forces with Frederick Douglass to fight for universal suffrage not primarily out of concern for equal rights for Black Americans, male or female, but likely because they hoped the relative popularity of Douglass and his cause would help further their own agenda. This is clearly evidenced by Stanton's public statements after Black men were enfranchised ahead of white women after the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment.

> *"The representative women of the nation have done their uttermost for the last 30 years to secure freedom for the Negro...but now, as the celestial gate to civil rights is slowly moving on its hinges, it becomes a serious question whether we had better stand aside and see 'Sambo' walk into the kingdom first...Why should the African prove more just and generous than his Saxon compeers?" (Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in an 1865 letter to the editor of the New York Standard)*

A similar if more publicly muted sentiment could be observed among white progressive feminists in 2008 when then candidate Barack Obama—who was in every way their political and ideological ally—prevailed over Hillary Clinton to win the Democratic nomination.[11] Although most declined to use racial epithets in print, it was clear many felt someone like Hillary Clinton *deserved* to be president before someone like Barack Obama. Gloria Steinem asserted in the *New York Times*,

> *"Gender is probably the most restricting force in American life, whether the question is who must be in the kitchen or who could be in the White House."[12] Steinem wrote those words in a year when the unemployment rate for black men was two and a half times that of white women.[13] She complained about what she called the "historical pattern of making change" in the United States, lamenting that, "Black men were given the vote a half-century before women..."[14]*

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11 David Paul Kuhn, "White women cold toward Obama," Politico (May 29, 2008). Retrieved from:
https://www.politico.com/story/2008/05/white-women-cold-toward-obama-010691
12 Gloria Steinem "Opinion | Women Are Never Front-Runners." The New York Times, 8 Jan. 2008. Retrieved from:
https://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/08/opinion/08steinem.html.
13 Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity, 2008. Retrieved from:
https://www.bls.gov/cps/race_ethnicity_2008_unemployment.htm.
14 Gloria Steinem. "Opinion | Women Are Never Front-Runners." The New York Times, 8 Jan. 2008. Retrieved from:
https://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/08/opinion/08steinem.html.

More pernicious than the naked competition for political power is the fact that the values and social norms white progressive feminists fought (and still fight) to disrupt and weaken have been historically vital to the health and strength of the Black family. These include traditional religion, chastity, husbands as heads of the home, and the affirmation of motherhood as a desirable part of womanhood.

Vastly different priorities and life circumstances have often placed the interests of elite white women and non-elite Black women at odds. While many elite white feminists fought to normalize working outside the home, historically most Black woman had no choice but to work, even if they would have preferred more time in the home with their children. Many elite white women fought to denigrate what they considered a "patriarchal" model of marriage where the husband was head of the home, but McDonald and Cross-Barnet observe that for many Black women they interviewed, "an emphasis on male headship was a way to draw men home and make them more involved in family life."[15]

And elite white feminists lobbied for easy, quick sterilizations and abortions for their own convenience, as many sought to obtain sexual parity with men (with regard to some of the consequences of intercourse)—while these same practices were abused by policymakers, healthcare providers and others to bully Black women into unwanted sterilizations and abortions. [See DLI's report on the Office of Population Affairs]

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15 McDonald and Cross-Barnet, p. 82.

The Rise of the Social Service Industrial Complex

It is impossible to discuss the expansion of government services without acknowledging the accompanying expansion of government power. Most "aid" comes with conditions, intentionally or unintentionally incentivizing certain behaviors and disincentivizing others. But even aid that is given "unconditionally" disrupts the naturally emerging self-help mechanisms that are rooted in family and community. **Furthermore, once a government program exists to serve a certain client base, it is in the institutional interests of that program to expand its client base and eliminate its competitors.**

The first large scale expansion of federal power in the name of poverty relief occurred in response to the Great Depression. The first federal minimum wage of any consequence (the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931) was explicitly designed to favor whites-only labor unions and prevent Blacks from competing to work on federal projects.[16] Such tactics had long been favored by eugenicists like Royal Meeker (Princeton economist who served as President Woodrow Wilson's U.S. Commissioner of Labor), who "opposed a proposal to subsidize the wages of poor workers… Meeker preferred a wage floor *because* **it would disemploy unfit workers** and thereby enable their culling from the work force. 'It is much better to enact a minimum-wage law even if it deprives these unfortunates of work,'"[17] he argued. Instead, Meeker hoped total dependence on the state would make the poor (and one can imagine the Black and brown), more malleable to forced sterilization. He wrote, "**Better that the state should support the inefficient wholly and prevent the multiplication of the breed** than subsidize incompetence and unthrift, enabling them to bring forth more of their kind."[18]

FDR's National Recovery Act was colloquially called the "Negro Runaround Act" because it so obviously took jobs and thus financial independence from Blacks in favor of whites.[19] Decades later, President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society gave rise to an ever-growing web of government agencies whose budget allocations relied on

16 David E. Bernstein, "The Davis-Bacon Act: Let's Bring Jim Crow to an End" Cato Institute Briefing Papers (January 18, 1993).

17 Leonard, Thomas C. "Retrospectives: Eugenics and Economics in the Progressive Era." Journal of Economic Perspectives, vol. 19, no. 4, Nov. 2005, pp. 207–24. DOI.org (Crossref), doi:10.1257/089533005775196642.

18 Ibid.

19 Jonah Goldberg Liberal Fascism (Doubleday, 2007) p. 156.

increasing the dependence of growing numbers of people on those agencies. While the numeric majority of recipients of aid programs often termed "welfare" are and have always been white, **the various incentives embedded in the conditions of such aid have had a profound and disproportionate effect on the structure the Black family, the role of Black men as providers, and the authority of Black parents to raise and educate their own children as they see fit.**

In the name of giving government aid only to low-income single mothers, the policies governing the allotment of aid financially punished women for marrying. This meant in many neighborhoods, government aid began to take the place of the Black father as provider for children. In the worst cases, social workers would come to inspect the home to ensure no man was living there as a condition of the mother keeping subsidies to help her feed and clothe her children.[20]

Many of these policies persist today. As the left-of-center Brookings Institute noted,

> *"The earned income tax credit penalizes lower-wage married couples. Moreover, welfare rules have frequently made it harder for married households than for single-parent households to get benefits. Although few couples sit down and calculate the possible economic effects of getting married, there is a sense, especially within low-income communities, that getting married means you lose "stuff." Couples may not be able to calculate exactly how much "stuff" they stand to lose, but they know marriage, at least financially, is a bad deal."[21]*

Similar perverse incentives are observable in the social service industry, which depends on an invisible and unverifiable "epidemic" of child abuse for its existence. The majority of social workers are white (and 80% are not Black) from educated, middle class backgrounds, and they bring their cultural and racial views of parenting and family life to their work. Thus, it is not surprising that the social service industry disproportionately intervenes in Black families and punishes Black parents. According to Dorothy Roberts, scholar and author of *Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare,*

> *"black children were four times as likely to be removed from their homes as white children, were the largest group of children in foster care in many cities, and had the worst outcomes while in state custody."*

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20 Welfare Expands in the 1960s | Soc 315 – Social Welfare. Retrieved from: https://people.eou.edu/socwelf/readings/week-2/welfare-expands-in-the-1960s/.
21 Horn, Wade F. "Wedding Bell Blues: Marriage and Welfare Reform." Brookings, 30 Nov. 2001, Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/articles/wedding-bell-blues-marriage-and-welfare-reform/.

In their study of the role of racial bias in investigations of child-maltreatment, researchers from Princeton, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Urban League concluded that, in addition to race becoming a proxy for socioeconomic status in the eyes of some (meaning that some may assume that because a parent is Black, that parent is also less educated or poor),

> *"race matters when people are assessing the parenting behavior of others. There are systematic racial differences in how black and white interviewers rate parenting techniques, mothers' characteristics, and the behavior and appearance of children."*[22]

In short, **Black parents—especially those with lower incomes—are not given the benefit of the doubt with regard to their parenting, and are thus more likely to have the government intervene and break up their families.**

Perhaps the most egregious example of the bias against Black parents and toward white parents is the tragic story of the murder of six Black children adopted by **Jennifer and Sarah Hart**. The Harts—a white couple that had been together since college—had already failed as foster parents, abandoning a child in their care at her therapy appointment.[23] Even after this incident, they were permitted to adopt two sets of siblings, gaining preference in family court over the biological aunt of one of the sibling-sets who fought to adopt them and was denied.[24] Despite multiple reports of child abuse from neighbors and teachers,[25] the Harts were never investigated, and in March 2018 they murdered all six of their adopted Black children by driving their SUV off a cliff.

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22 Lawrence M. Berger, Marla McDaniel, and Christina Paxson, "How Does Race Influence Judgements About Parenting?" Focus (Institute for Research on Poverty) Vol. 24, No. 2, Spring-Summer 2006.

23 Nina Shapiro, "Story of Harts' foster care is one of heartbreak, though not in the way some might expect" Seattle Times (April 12, 2018). Retrieved from: https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/story-of-harts-foster-child-is-one-of-heartbreak-though-not-the-way-some-might-expect/

24 Oregonian/OregonLive, Everton Bailey Jr |. The. "Devonte Hart's Aunt Fought -- and Lost -- Battle for Custody, Court Records Show." Oregonlive, 12 Apr. 2018 Retrieved from: https://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/2018/04/hart_children_should_be_remove.html.

25 Oregonian/OregonLive, Shane Dixon Kavanaugh |. The. "Devonte Hart Family Crash: Deceptions, Missed Signals Preceded Deaths." Oregonlive, 8 Apr. 2018 Retrieved from: https://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/2018/04/devonte_hart_family_crash_dece.html.

The Enduring Strength of the Black Family

Despite centuries of discrimination and deliberate attempts to undermine healthy family formation among Black Americans, the Black American family has proven remarkably resilient, and is some ways stronger and healthier than many white families, some of which are insulated from their inherent weaknesses by wealth. Among other factors, the tendency of many analysts on the right and left to view income as both a precursor for and result of family health—rather than a single data point about a household that may have a variety of causes and produce a variety of results—has led to many false assumptions about Black families. Some of these will be briefly addressed here.

Valuing Education

Black families do in fact value education value education a great deal. A recent Pew study revealed that **a much higher percentage of Black parents (79%) than white parents (67%) said it was "either extremely or very important that their children earn a college degree."**[26] Yet, the myth that Black families do not value education persists among educators. This perception has consequences for student performance: one study,

> *"found that when teachers perceived there to be a large difference between their own educational values and the values of students' parents, they had lower expectations for the students, even when students' actual skills were controlled."*[27]

Still, the perception of teachers and the general public has <u>not</u> prevented Black Americans from achieving academically. Columnist Coleman Hughes pointed out that from 1999 to 2017,

> *"the number of black students who earned bachelor's degrees increased by 82 percent…The 2018 census data showed that 37 percent of black Americans aged 25–34 had some kind of college*

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26 NW, 1615 L. St, et al. "Hispanic, Black Parents See College Degree as Key for Children's Success." Pew Research Center, Retrieved from: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/02/24/hispanic-black-parents-see-college-degree-as-key-for-childrens-success/.
27 Laurel Puchner and Linda Markowitz "Do Black Families Value Education? White Teachers, Institutional Cultural Narratives, and Beliefs about African Americans" Institute of Education Studies (2015).

*degree. If black America were its own country, that would place it in between Germany (31
percent) and Spain (43 percent) in terms of educational attainment."[28] Despite false assumptions,
Black American educational achievement continues to rise.*

Adoption, Extended Kin and Mental Health

Contrary to some popular perceptions, the majority of Black children who are adopted
are adopted by Black families.[29] Moreover, while white parents who adopt children of
any race tend to be of higher income/socioeconomic status than white parents who do
not adopt, Black parents who adopt, on average, "do not share the same privileged
socioeconomic status" as white adoptive parents.[30] In short, among whites, adoption is
an elite activity, whereas for Blacks, it is something that everyday people do.

The role of extended kin networks has been discussed in pundit circles on the right and
left as a substitute or even a competitor for the traditional nuclear family, setting up
the false dichotomy that those who support or affirm the foundational nature of the
nuclear family by definition diminish or devalue extended kin network.[31] Black
families—especially Black families active in local churches, where marriage rates are
generally higher—defy this oversimplification. **They demonstrate that it is both
healthy and desirable to have a solid nuclear family supported by a robust extended
kin network.**

Multiple studies confirm that lower income Americans value extended kin networks
more than higher income Americans, but Black families of all income levels
demonstrate deeper commitments to their extended family members than whites of
comparable incomes.[32] This means that Black Americans rely on, interact more often
with and value their connection to their grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins more
than do white Americans, regardless of income.

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28 "The Case for Black Optimism." Quillette, 28 Sept. 2019 Retrieved from: https://quillette.com/2019/09/28/the-case-for-black-optimism/.
29 Rose M. Kreider (Fertility and Family Statistics Branch, US Census Bureau) and Elizabeth Raleigh (Carleton College) "A
Nationally Representative Comparison of Black and White Adoptive Parents of Black Children" Paper presented at the
annual meetings of the American Sociology Association, Seattle, WA, August 20–23, 2016.
30 Ibid.
31 Brooks, Story by David. "The Nuclear Family Was a Mistake." The Atlantic (March 2020). Retrieved from:
https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/03/the-nuclear-family-was-a-mistake/605536/.
32 Hays, William C., and Charles H. Mindel. "Extended Kinship Relations in Black and White Families." Journal of
Marriage and Family, vol. 35, no. 1, 1973, pp. 51–57. JSTOR, doi:10.2307/351096.

The fact that Blacks commit suicide at a significantly lower rate than whites is well enough established that it is often referred to in social science literature as the "Suicide Paradox."[33] Despite a well-publicized rise in suicide rates for very young black children (which are still much lower than the rates for other age groups), "Suicide in America has been [rising] for two decades, with rates for white Americans consistently well above those for Asian-Americans, Black Americans and Hispanics."[34] In fact, the white suicide rate is consistently about three times that of Black Americans. **In short, if one goes by the measure of the likelihood of ending one's own life, it is far better to be raised in a Black family—even a "weak" one—than a white one.**

Marriage, Fatherhood and Religious Devotion

Lastly, there is data to suggest that Blacks do value marriage deeply and that Blacks who do marry experience many benefits from marriage including protection against poverty. According to McDonald and Cross-Barnett,

> *"A much higher share of Blacks than whites say that it is very important for a couple to marry if they plan to spend their lives together." Furthermore, white couples in their study "didn't commonly identify love and deep friendship as motivations for marriage. American-born black couples did."*

It is well established that married couples of all races are much less likely to be poor. In 2019, just 6.4 percent of Black married couples had household incomes that put them below the poverty line. [35] But less discussed is the fact that the majority of Black fathers actually live with their children, even if they are not married to their mothers.[36] **Furthermore a CDC report found that Black fathers were more likely to do things like feed and bathe their children on a regular basis than were white fathers.[37]**

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33 Gibbs, J. T. "African-American Suicide: A Cultural Paradox." Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior, vol. 27, no. 1, 1997, pp. 68–79. Retrieved from: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/9112725/
34 Frakt, Austin. "What Can Be Learned From Differing Rates of Suicide Among Groups." The New York Times, 30 Dec. 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/upshot/suicide-demographic-differences.html.
35 "Poverty Rate of Black Married-Couple Families U.S. 2019." Statista, Retrieved from: https://www.statista.com/statistics/205097/percentage-of-poor-black-married-couple-families-in-the-us/.
36 Josh Levs, All In: How Our Work-First Culture Fails Dads, Families, and Businesses--And How We Can Fix It Together HarperOne (May 12, 2015).
37 Jo Jones, Ph.D., and William D. Mosher, Ph.D., Fathers' Involvement With Their Children: United States, 2006–2010 Division of Vital Statistics.

Faith and church attendance are also associated with family health and strength. **Black Americans remain more religious the average American, regardless of political affiliation**.[38] And an overwhelming majority see their faith as central to their experience as Black Americans.[39] This gives many Black American families access to all the benefits of participation in religious life. Harvard's school of public health "links religious service attendance to a number of better health outcomes, including longer life, lower incidence of depression, and less suicide." It also found that religious service attendance "is associated with greater marital stability—or more specifically, with a lower likelihood of divorce."[40]

Thus, while critics on both sides of the political aisle have been "sounding the alarm" over the Black American family for centuries, the Black American family can in fact be viewed as an institution that has successfully weathered constant assaults and endures despite them.

The future of the Black American family will be built by Black Americans on its strengths: the continued emphasis on educational achievement, healthy interdependence between nuclear families and extended kin, and the connection to a local community of faith that provides both support and transcendent meaning in an age where many individuals of all incomes and races increasingly find themselves drifting without meaning, community, or purpose.

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38 NW, 1615 L. St, et al. "5 Facts about Black Democrats." Pew Research Center, Retrieved from: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/27/5-facts-about-black-democrats/.
39 "Most Black Adults Say Religion & the Black Experience Go Hand in Hand." Barna Group, Retrieved from: https://www.barna.com/research/sobc-2/.
40 "Religious Service Attendance, Marriage, and Health." Institute for Family Studies, Retrieved from: https://ifstudies.org/blog/religious-service-attendance-marriage-and-health.