

Welfare Reform: Failure & Remedies

Alvin L. Schorr

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Schorr provides an informed examination of the sources of welfare reform, its successes and considerable failures, and the economic and social forces that shaped the 1996 welfare reform. He summarizes developments in the history of welfare that led to an overwhelming public call for reform. Having participated in many of these developments as a high government official and as a policy practitioner, Schorr brings a unique perspective to these issues.

Assessment of accomplishments and damage rests on reports, research, and extensive data. Concluding that the 1996 legislation was the wrong way to go, Schorr explores underlying policy issues; Should all mothers be required to work at all times? How do we define poverty? How are wages related to welfare?--to frame solutions. In the process, Schorr underscores why welfare recipients are not a population distinct from the working poor population; that low wages, poor welfare, and our unequal distribution of income are tightly linked; and that reforming welfare will require major economic and social changes. Schorr offers a chilling forecast of the society we will have if we continue on our current course and, as an alternative, outlines deeply changed, more constructive policies. Must reading for scholars, students, and policy makers as well as those in the general public concerned with social welfare policies.



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