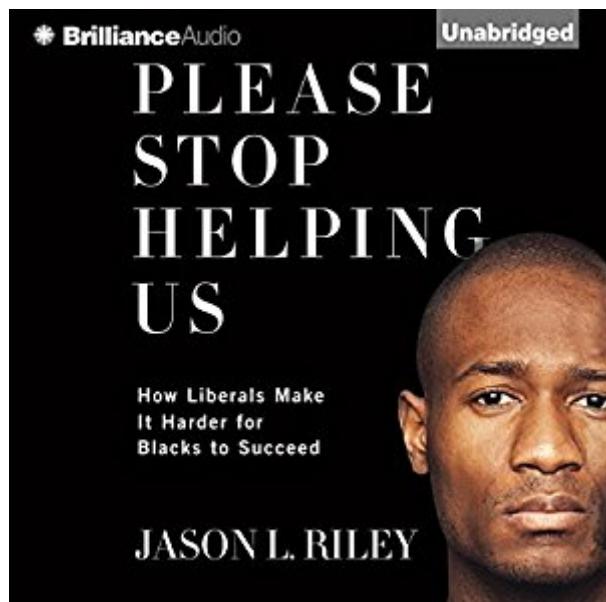


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Please Stop Helping Us: How Liberals Make It Harder For Blacks To Succeed



Synopsis

Why is it that so many efforts by liberals to lift the black underclass not only fail, but often harm the intended beneficiaries? In *Please Stop Helping Us*, Jason L. Riley examines how well-intentioned welfare programs are in fact holding black Americans back. Minimum-wage laws may lift earnings for people who are already employed, but they price a disproportionate number of blacks out of the labor force. Affirmative action in higher education is intended to address past discrimination, but the result is fewer black college graduates than would otherwise exist. And so it goes with everything from soft-on-crime laws, which make black neighborhoods more dangerous, to policies that limit school choice out of a mistaken belief that charter schools and voucher programs harm the traditional public schools that most low-income students attend. In theory these efforts are intended to help the poor - and poor minorities in particular. In practice they become massive barriers to moving forward. *Please Stop Helping Us* lays bare these counterproductive results. People of goodwill want to see more black socioeconomic advancement, but in too many instances the current methods and approaches aren't working. Acknowledging this is an important first step.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hours and 41 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: August 12, 2014

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00MNSACAA

Best Sellers Rank: #78 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Education #92 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Policy #106 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Politics & Current Events > Freedom & Security

Customer Reviews

Can Affirmative Action and similar programs be hurting those it intends to help? To even raise this question will be puzzling to many of us, but social policies based on emotion and empathy, the ones that "feel" right, often have the worst unintended consequences. This book examines them all in detail. I would say that Riley's thesis roughly boils down to this: Affirmative Action and other

well-intended programs are essentially training wheels for blacks. They may have had their place early on, but continued reliance on them is now more harmful than helpful. He does a thorough job researching relevant data and provides a strong case for this. He reminds me of Dambisa Moyo, Zambian economist, who reveals to clueless Westerners that endless aid was actually hurting Africa by creating a culture of dependence and thwarting initiative and self-reliance. The same is true here in the US. In many large American cities, generations of black households have grown up on welfare, creating a distorted sense of expectations and entitlement. If you, your parents, and your grandparents were all substantially supported by government, why would you believe that anything else is likely, or even possible? If, on the other hand, like so many Asian-American success stories, you believe the only way to make it is study your tail off, and become self-reliant, then so many doors will be open to you in medicine, engineering, business, and more. Riley really has his work cut out for him. There are more unquestioning drones in modern America than the skies of Afghanistan. He will be called all the usual names--Uncle Tom, Self-hater--used by the Politically Correct to punish those who color outside the lines. But if he can change the minds of just a few, create a few more black superstars like Ben Carson, etc, then it will be all worth it.

Government "war on poverty" programs of the last 50 years have failed in spite of increasing expenditures. There appear to be limits on what the government can do beyond removing barriers to freedom. The focus on "equality of result" seems to be creating more barriers to progress. The book examines the track record of various laws and programs and their undesirable consequences:^{*} Welfare programs that trap people in poverty.^{*} Affirmative action in higher education that results in fewer black college graduates.^{*} Minimum wage laws that price blacks out of the labor force.^{*} Soft-on-crime laws that make black neighborhood more dangerous.^{*} Limitations on school choice that trap students in failing schools. The book is well written, with many personal examples from the author's life. It reveals how black culture, more than anything, explains the continuing academic achievement gap between black and white. I highly recommend this book.

This is at heart a book of Love. Riley does not seem to write the book solely to rip on liberals but to demonstrate the social disasters that have trapped so many African Americans. On many levels it is a heartbreaking window into the soul of American culture and Riley demonstrates most poignantly that it does not have to be this way. We have dumbed-down the notion of success in America and left it with "the soft bigotry of low expectations." A first-rate book and definitely well written....I only wish there were 100 more pages and yet the book continues for us everyday in the newspapers and

in our communities.

Yet more information, with supporting data, that all should know. Mr. Riley doesn't disparage the good intentions behind the ideas and programs that have been created, but points out there utter failure to achieve the goals for which they were designed. Other uses for federal and state tax dollars could better help the wholly inclusive society we live in. This book is a very good read for those who do not know of the unintended consequences of social program follies of the past. Thank you, Mr. Riley

Riley, who has spent his career at the Wall Street Journal makes an extremely well researched case that various "programs" supposed to help poor black people actually hurt them: minimum wage laws, affirmative action, welfare transfer payments, antipathy to school vouchers. His prescription is for the government to back off and let black people reform 'black, culture. Mr. Riley quotes extensively from scholarly studies yet the book remains very readable. Good job!

This is must reading for anyone believing that our government esp the liberals, is helping not only the blacks but all minorities to achieve their fair share of our American opportunity. I had first seen the falsehood in Johnson reading Mayor Daly's autobiography and seeing how the Johnson money ended up used by Daly to reward political patronage - and in fact keeping the blacks out of white neighborhoods! Now we even have blacks like Jackson and Sharpton reaping huge financial rewards with their culture of entitlement that is further hurting the black opportunity. I suggest you also read *Losing the Race, Self Sabotage in Black America* by John McWhorter

If I had highlighted anything in this book, then I would have highlighted so much that very few sections or paragraphs would NOT have been highlighted. The author did a masterful job of making his case, and the title expresses the conclusion perfectly. Well done, Mr. Riley!

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