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## Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African-American Families

*Andrew Billingsley*

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**Andrew Billingsley : Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African-American Families** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African-American Families:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Ray SmithGreat condition2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. excellent service!By bami wish they had other shipping options available because it took a little long for my book to come, but it came in brand new, like the description said, very satisfied! and i will be ordering from them again.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A MARVELOUS AND THOROUGH STUDY OF BLACK FAMILIESBy Steven H ProppAt the time he wrote this 1992 book, Andrew Billingsley was Professor and Chair, Department of Family and Community Development at the University of Maryland."He wrote in the Introduction, "But to say that black families are alive is not to say that they are all faring well... But there is another side to the story. And we argue in this book that this other side---enduring, positive, and powerful--is more important because it is more generative. It can continually renew and sustain this vital sector of American society in the years ahead."Here are some quotations from the book:"It is perhaps the height of irony that while social scientists were describing black families as being characterized by a tendency toward female-headed families with children born out of wedlock, they were also assuring the public that blacks rejected these children. At the very same time the transracial adoption movement was being championed as a solution to the problem, blood relatives accepted a majority of these

children into their families. This is still the case today." (Pg. 29)"In short, the common misconception that African-American families are characterized by single-parent, female-headed structures is as misleading as is the widespread assumption that they got that way because of factors internal to their culture." (Pg. 35)"Consequently, we argued that by changing the structure of social institutions so that they would function as well for blacks as they do for whites, and as well for female-headed families as they do for male-headed families, and as well for poor families as they do for more privileged families, both family stability and more effective family functioning would follow." (Pg. 79)"(T)he African-American family. It is characterized now as then by its matricentrism, its extended families, and its remarkable flexibility, adaptability, and resilience." (Pg. 107)"Why, then, do more black men cross this racial line than black women? ... It is difficult to avoid the suggestions that white men are the major obstacles to intermarriage. Their attitudes are changing, however, though they have changed more slowly than those of white women." (Pg. 254-255)

Traces black family history from ancient Africa, through slavery and Reconstruction, to today, examining the effects of technology, war, education, and the economy on black families across five social classes. 30,000 first printing. Tour.

From Publishers Weekly  
In this companion to *Black Families in White America* (1968), sociologist Billingsley addresses the strengths and weaknesses of African American families, concluding that their strengths are "by far more powerful and contain the seeds of their survival and rejuvenation." Drawing on many studies and using numerous charts, the author first discusses African American family structure, then goes on to consider the legacy from Africa, family patterns during slavery and after, and the rise and fall of the black working class. Stressing the African American family's adaptiveness, he shows how the extended family, as well as community institutions, can serve as stepping stones to success. The black church, self-help and government, he writes, can all play a part in bolstering the African American family. Although Billingsley argues that forces in society lead to single-parent families, he glosses over the epidemic of teenage pregnancy. A chapter on single mothers includes only success stories, and his contention that African American youths value marriage and stability pivots on an observation made by a sociologist in 1967. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From Library Journal  
This very readable work focuses on the means by which many African Americans have managed to survive in this country despite frequently unsupportive community and societal attitudes and pressures. Billingsley, author of *Black Families in White America* (Touchstone: S. S., 1988, rev. ed.) emphasizes the importance of the family (in all its myriad forms) as the critical factor in the process by which blacks manage to maintain not only their sense of integrity but also achieve upward mobility. He feels that this process would be hastened and broadened if there was a more balanced approach in policy-making affecting this group--a public policy that would not deny very real problem areas but would recognize and base assistance and support on existing individual and group strengths. Highly recommended for academic, professional, and general public attention.- Suzanne W. Wood, SUNY Coll. of Technology, Alfred  
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