

Show Me the Evidence: Obama's Fight for Rigor and Results in Social Policy

Ron Haskins, Greg Margolis

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The first comprehensive history of the Obama administration's evidence-based initiatives. From its earliest days, the Obama administration planned and enacted several initiatives to fund social programs based on rigorous evidence of success. Ron Haskins and Greg Margolis tell the story of six—spanning preschool and K-12 education, teen pregnancy, employment and training, health, and community-based programs.

Readers will appreciate the fast-moving descriptions of the politics and policy debates that shaped these federal programs and the analysis of whether they will truly reshape federal social policy and greatly improve its impacts on the nation's social problems.

Based on interviews with 134 individuals (including advocates, officials at the Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Policy Council, Congressional staff, and officials in the federal agencies administering the initiatives) as well as Congressional and administration documents and news accounts, the authors examine each of the six initiatives in separate chapters. The story of each initiative includes a review of the social problem the initiative addresses; the genesis and enactment of the legislation that authorized the initiative; and the development of the procedures used by the administration to set the evidence standard and evaluation requirements—including the requirements for grant applications and awarding of grants.



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