

SCHOOL OF HARD SHOCKS: SHOULD EVERYONE GO TO COLLEGE?

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Jean Johnson is the executive vice president of Public Agenda and head of its Education Insights division. At Public Agenda, she wrote or cowrote opinion studies on education, higher education, families, religion, race relations, civility, and foreign policy. She is the principal author of *Life after High School: Young People Talk about Their Hopes and Prospects* and *Reality Check*, which tracks attitudes among parents, students, teachers, and administrators on key education topics. She is the coauthor of *Where Does the Money Go? Your Guided Tour to the Federal Budget Crisis* and the forthcoming *Who Turned Out the Lights? Your Guided Tour to the Energy Crisis*.

Charles Kolb is the president of the Committee for Economic Development (CED). Prior to joining CED in 1997, Kolb was the general counsel of United Way of America for five years. His government service includes positions as the deputy assistant to the president for domestic policy at the White House (1990–1992), where he worked on economic, education, legal, and regulatory matters; assistant general counsel, Office of Management and Budget (1983–1986); deputy general counsel for regulations and legislation, U.S. Department of Education (1986–1988); and deputy undersecretary for planning, budget, and evaluation, Department of Education (1988–1990). Earlier, he practiced law at two Washington, D.C., firms.

Robert Lerman, an expert on how education, employment, and family structure work together to affect economic well-being, is the Urban Institute's first Institute fellow in labor and social policy. He directed its Labor and Social Policy Center from 1995 to 2003. Lerman was one of the first scholars to examine the factors leading to unwed fatherhood and the effects of early unwed fatherhood on earnings. His work on youth apprenticeships in the late 1980s encouraged the creation of national school-to-work programs. Lerman's current research includes youth transitions from school to career. He chaired the American University economics department from 1989 to 1995 and continues to be a professor of economics there.

Paul Lingenfelter is the president of State Higher Education Executive Officers. Since 2000, his work there has focused on increasing successful participation in higher education, teacher quality, accountability systems, and financial policy. Earlier, he spent 15 years at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, where he led the Program on Human and Community Development. Lingenfelter was the deputy director for fiscal affairs for the Illinois Board of Higher Education from 1980 to 1985. From 1968 to 1980, he held administrative positions with the Illinois board and the University of Michigan.

Claudio Sanchez is National Public Radio's education correspondent. A former elementary and middle school teacher, Sanchez focuses his reporting on the "three p's" of education reform: politics, policy, and pedagogy. He joined NPR in 1989 after serving as the executive producer for the Latin American News Service and as the news and public affairs director of El Paso's KXCR-FM. In 2008, Sanchez won First Prize in the Education Writers Association's National Awards for Education Reporting, for his series "The Student Loan Crisis." In 1985, he was honored with an Alfred I. DuPont–Columbia University Silver Baton for a series he coproduced, "Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad."