Who Ever Thought Need-Based BEOG/Pell Grants Would Produce Greater Equality in Postsecondary Educational Opportunity?

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“No qualified student who wants to go to college should be barred by lack of money.”

--President Richard Nixon, 1970 Presidential Message on Higher Education
Assessments of BEOG Effects; A Graphical Representation

Hartman (1972)

Enrollment Rate

Most Conservative Estimate
Least Conservative Estimate

1970

Under $3,000 $3,000-$4,999 $5,000-$7,499 $7,500-$9,999 $10,000-$14,999 $15,000+

Assessments of BEOG Effects; A Graphical Representation

OECD (1980)

Enrollment Rate

Full Equalization
Equalize with middle class

1970

Under $3,000 $3,000-$4,999 $5,000-$7,499 $7,500-$9,999 $10,000-$14,999 $15,000+
Assessments of BEOG Effects; A Graphical Representation

Leslie & Brinkman (1988)

Hansen (1982)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment Rates</th>
<th>Ratios</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>&lt; Median = 35.8</td>
<td>0.727</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Median = 49.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>&lt; Median = 32.2</td>
<td>0.703</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Median = 45.8</td>
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</table>
Did BEOG/Pell program fail because of:

- Inadequate funding?
- Lack of focused targeting?

Note: BEOG/Pell spending, 1973-2005 amounted to a quarter trillion dollars (in constant 2005 dollars). Total federal spending amounted to almost $1.5 trillion in constant 2005 dollars.

Lessons Learned

- Analysis: Simple is better
- Conduct reality check
- Don’t overestimate effect of money transfers
- Don’t expect loans to perform miracles
- Don’t neglect non-financial barriers
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For Reflection: Has BEOG/Pell grant program provided financial aid grants to those who would have gone to college anyway?