children. About 90% of household expenditure is "expended on behalf of the whole family, rather than on behalf of individual family members" (716). This creates a wide range of choice in allocating family expenditure to children. Analysts can as easily manufacture a child cost estimate at 10% of custodial parent spending as 30% of the combined income of both parents. What is not mentioned in Beld's defense is that Robert Williams chose to use *intact* family spending estimates, which is itself a radical departure from the established child support law that relied on the actual economic circumstances of each family in post-divorce separated households. I also disagree with Beld's conclusion that the estimating method chosen, even in the context of intact families, did not "yield high estimates of parental spending on children" (716).

What must be classed as error rather than a difference of opinion is that the enforcement system's choices did not conform to established child support decision theory. Beld explains: "The empirical question at the heart of state child support guidelines is, 'What do parents spend on their children?'" (716). But their technical approach lacks a theoretical foundation that would put the empirical question in context. The choice of focus on indeterminate child cost calculations to the exclusion of sound theoretical development is itself strong evidence of a will to maintain arbitrary control. The new child support laws present a circular dilemma and a *fait accompli* for those who wish to present a logical challenge to presumed award levels. What is legally regarded as child support, the specific obligation of the paying parent, and the factors used to determine amounts are whatever the guidelines say. Parents are at the mercy of arbitrary economic choices made by bureaucrats and collection entrepreneurs who have a direct personal financial interest in generating higher levels of debt.

The effect of judicial acceptance of the enforcement system's choices has been dramatic. *P.O.P.S. v Gardner* (1993) was a federal class action suit against the State of Washington alleging that the arbitrary nature of their guidelines, which are also based on Robert Williams' recommendations, violate the Constitution. The group bringing the suit was composed of noncustodial parents whose families had never received public assistance and were unlikely to in the future. In support of the State, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals accepted the classification of child support decisions as "social policy." This classification invites political control that is unconstitutional when applied to private issues. Had it not been for this transition, the application of constitutional principles would have forced correction of the guidelines (*Georgia DHR v. Sweat* 2002).

The legal reclassification of a private family issue sets a dangerous precedent that opens the door to further government tactics to manipulate families. In regard to child support decisions, the system of checks and balances, the constitutional protections against arbitrary government intrusion, have been destroyed. Baskerville has suggested that political scientists should focus attention on "the large governmental machinery that has arisen . . . to address family issues" (2002, 695). I certainly agree, and would put special emphasis on the dramatic shift in power between branches of government along with the need to restore basic family and other individual rights. Child support reform has led to a fundamental shift in the relationship between government and the primary social unit.

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"Small Spaces" Correction

When compiling data for the article "Small Spaces for Different Faces: Political Science Scholarship on Asian Pacific Americans" (July 2004 *PS*), I inadvertently omitted the numbers for one issue of *Social Science Quarterly*. The omission does not change any of the rankings, but it does alter some figures slightly. The correct numbers for the affected totals are as follows:

[Figure 1] Articles on APAs, 1990–2003, Interdisciplinary journals: 1.31% [rather than 1.15%]

[Table 1] *Social Science Quarterly* APA articles: 2.89% [rather than 2.77%]

[Table 1] *Social Science Quarterly* articles on race: 25.43% [rather than 23.82%]

[Figure 2] Articles on race, by discipline—Interdisciplinary journals: 13.85% [rather than 13.40%]

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