

Marriage Benefits Children.

- ☞ **Marriage provides children with a safe haven:** The absence of married parents means that the fundamental needs of children are at risk.¹⁹
- ☞ **Children are safer from poverty:** In 2007, the poverty rate of single-parent families was 32.7 percent and the poverty rate of married-couple families with children was 6.7 percent.²⁰
- ☞ **Children are safer from exploitation and abuse:** Children of single parents are at a sickening 77 percent greater risk of physical abuse and an appalling 80 percent greater risk of serious injury or harm. They are three times more likely to be educationally neglected and more than two times more likely to suffer some type of child abuse than children living with both parents.²¹
- ☞ **Marriage can provide children with a moral foundation and a value system:** Children too often miss out on critical moral development because they do not have the benefit of seeing essential moral qualities lived out in the efforts of a mother and father doing the hard work required to keep their commitments to each other — and to their children.²²
- ☞ **Marriage provides children with educational and cultural advantages:** Though a great deal of factual information is conveyed primarily at school, all the measurements point to the fact that cultural knowledge is “most strongly transmitted within the home rather than the school.”²³

A Holy Estate Worth Protecting, Promoting and Strengthening.

Now, it goes without saying — there are good marriages and there are bad marriages, depending upon the values and virtues of the persons involved. But marriage does provide a framework with a tremendous potential and incentive for learning how to work together.

Marriage has been called the “social glue” for the way that it binds fathers to their children and unites couples while helping to strengthen the bonds between people and their nation.

Those “in the know” recognize that promoting and strengthening marriage and the family are challenges that are in the national interest, and are, thus, appropriate and legitimate public policy issues. But the need for reform goes much deeper than either the personal or the public policy dimensions. Marriage is anchored in the spiritual dimension, and it is obvious that the institution has not fared well separated from the view of marriage as a holy estate that is instituted by God.

Footnotes:

¹Chuck Donovan, “Marriage Gets a Defense in Court,” The Foundry (blog), The Heritage Foundation, April 19, 2011, <http://blog.heritage.org/2011/04/19/marriage-gets-a-defense-in-court/> (accessed October 4, 2011).

²“Doma Watch: Your Legal Source for Defense of Marriage Acts Information,” Alliance Defense Fund, <http://www.domawatch.org/index.php> (accessed April 23, 2011).

³Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, “The Marrying Kind: Which Men Marry and Why,” *The State of Our Unions: The Social Health of Marriage in America, 2004* (Rutgers University, The National Marriage Project, 2004), <http://www.virginia.edu/marriageproject/pdfs/SOOU2004.pdf> (accessed October 3, 2011).

⁴Associated Press, “Poll: Family Ties Key to Happy Kids,” Fox News, August 19, 2007, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,293760,00.html> (accessed September 29, 2011).

⁵Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Co-Director, National Marriage Project, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, “Testimony before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions: Subcommittee on Children and Families,” United States Senate, April 28, 2004, http://www.virginia.edu/marriageproject/pdfs/print_whitehead_testimonial.pdf (accessed September 29, 2011).

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹DiscoveryHealth.com writers, “Marriage and Sex,” HowStuffWorks.com, April 28, 2005, HowStuffWorks.com, accessed March, 2011, <http://healthguide.howstuffworks.com/marriage-and-sex-dictionary.html> (accessed March 2011)

¹⁰David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, “Ten Important Research Findings on Marriage and Choosing a Marriage Partner: Helpful Facts for Young Adults,” Information Brief: Ten Things to Know Series, The National Marriage Project, November 2004. <http://www.virginia.edu/marriageproject/pdfs/pubTenThingsYoungAdults.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹¹Maggie Gallagher, “Why Marriage is Good for You,” City Journal, (Autumn 2000), http://www.city-journal.org/html/10_4_why_marriage_is.html (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹²Barbara Kiviat, “The Economic Benefits of Marriage: A Closing Gap,” Time, September 19, 2009, <http://www.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,1924327,00.html> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹³Kristen Stewart, “The Health Benefits of Marriage” [Medically reviewed by Lindsey Marcellin, MD, MPH], Family Health Center, Everyday Health, February 11, 2010, <http://www.everydayhealth.com/family-health/understanding/benefits-of-tying-the-knot.aspx> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹⁴W. Bradley Wilcox and Steven L. Nock, “What’s Love Got to do with it? Equality, Equity, Commitment and Women’s Marital Quality,” Social Forces 84, no. 3 (March 2006): <http://www.virginia.edu/sociology/peopleofsociology/wilcoxpapers/Wilcox%20Nock%20marriage.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹⁵“Marriage and the Public Good: Ten Principles,” The Witherspoon Institute, June 2006, <http://www.protectmarriage.com/files/WitherspoonReportonMarriage.pdf> (accessed October 11, 2011).

¹⁶U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Employment Status of Women by Marital Status and Presence and Age of Youngest Child, 2009,” Marital and family table package: unpublished work tables from the March ASEC 2009 Current Population Survey (DSG03_2009.pdf).

¹⁷Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, “Full Report of the Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence against Women: Findings from the National Violence against Women Survey,” U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, NCJ 183781 (November 2000): 17, <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹⁸“Benefits of Healthy Marriages,” The Healthy Marriages Initiative, Administration for Children and Families, The United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2005, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/benefits/index.html> (accessed September 29, 2011).

¹⁹Janice Shaw Crouse, *Children at Risk: The Precarious State of Children’s Well-Being in America* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 26, <http://www.janiceshawcrouse.com> (accessed November 21, 2011).

²⁰Computations by the author for this hypothetical comparison are as follows: If the distribution of families that existed in 1973 had existed in 2007, the poverty rate would have been $10.7 = 6.7 \times 0.847 + 32.7 \times 0.153$. The data come from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Poverty Status of Families, by Type of Family, Presence of Related Children, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2007,” Current Population Survey Reports: Historical Poverty Tables—Families, Table 4, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/families.html> (accessed November 21, 2011).

²¹Andrea J. Sedlak and Diane D. Broadhurst, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (Washington, DC: GPO, 1996), Executive Summary.

²²Crouse, *Children at Risk*, 195.

²³P. Bourdieu and J. C. Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage, 1990), 494. As quoted in Alice Sullivan, “Cultural Capitalism, Cultural Knowledge and Ability,” *Sociological Research Online* 12, no. 6 (November 30, 2007): <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/6/1.html> (accessed November 21, 2011).

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Marriage Matters.



God said, “It is not good for man to live alone.”
Genesis 2:18

Highlights from Dr. Janice Shaw Crouse’s book,
*Marriage Matters: Perspectives on the Private and Public
Importance of Marriage*, Transaction Publishers, 2012.

Concerned Women for America Resource

Marriage Does Matter.

When the definition of marriage is expanded to include everything, meaning the whole spectrum of possible couples, the result is that it ends up meaning nothing.

Marriage performs a critical function for society. The family is the context within which the next generation establishes lifelong habits and develops character. The child will learn — to the degree that the child's family has the desirable characteristics and the child's family life prepares him or her — to become a well-adjusted, productive adult who will contribute to the community and nation as a law-abiding and involved citizen.

States in support of marriage:

- œ 45 states have retained their protections for traditional marriage¹
 - 31 of them have strengthened their laws via voter-approved constitutional amendments
- œ 37 states have their own Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)²

Public opinion on marriage:

- œ Most Americans — 90 percent — will marry in their lifetime³
- œ The vast majority of young people (92 percent) think marriage would make them happy and want to be married someday; most also want to have kids⁴

Marriage Benefits Couples.

- œ On average, married couples are happier, healthier, wealthier, enjoy longer lives, and report greater sexual satisfaction than single, divorced, or cohabiting individuals.⁵
- œ Research indicates that married people are less likely to take moral or mortal risks, and are even less inclined to risk-taking when they have children.⁶
- œ Married people are better equipped to cope with major life crises, such as severe illness, job loss, and the extraordinary care needs of sick children or aging parents.⁷
- œ Poverty rates for married couples are half those of cohabiting couple parents and one-third that of non-cohabiting single parents.⁸
- œ Sexual activity, depending on the age of the couple, ranges from 25 to 300 percent greater for married couples versus unmarried ones.⁹
- œ The most comprehensive and recent survey of sexuality indicates that married couples are more satisfied with their sex lives than either sexually active single couples or cohabiting couples.¹⁰
- œ The average net worth of married couples at retirement is about \$410,000, never-married couples average \$167,000, and divorced couples average only \$154,000.¹¹



- œ Married baby boomers increase their wealth an average of 16 percent per year, while single baby boomers increase their net worth by about eight percent year.¹²

Marriage Benefits Women.

- œ Ninety percent of married women who are alive at age 45 make it to 65, vs. slightly more than 80 percent of divorced and never-married women. Mortality rates are 50 percent higher for unmarried women.¹³
- œ In terms of their personal well-being, married women suffer less from depression than those women who are not married or who cohabitate.¹⁴
- œ Married mothers are far less likely to live in poverty than are unmarried mothers.¹⁵
- œ The unemployment rate in 2009 for married women 25-54 without children was 5.4 percent, and for unmarried women without children it was 7.5 percent. In this same age group, the unemployment rate of married women with children was 5.2 percent, compared with an 11.8 percent rate for unmarried women.¹⁶
- œ A United States Justice Department Victimization Study found that 65 percent of violent crimes against women were committed by a boyfriend or ex-husband, while only nine percent were committed by husbands.¹⁷



Marriage Benefits Men.¹⁸

- œ Longer life expectancy
- œ Physically healthier
- œ Wealthier
- œ Higher wages
- œ Increase in the stability of employment
- œ Emotionally healthier
- œ Decrease in the risk of drug and alcohol abuse
- œ Better relationships with their children
- œ Less likely to commit violent crimes
- œ Less likely to contract STDs



"The first bond of society is marriage" - Roman philosopher and orator, Cicero