



**A War No More**  
**The Truth Behind the “War on Women”**

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**A Publication of Concerned Women for America  
and the Beverly LaHaye Institute**



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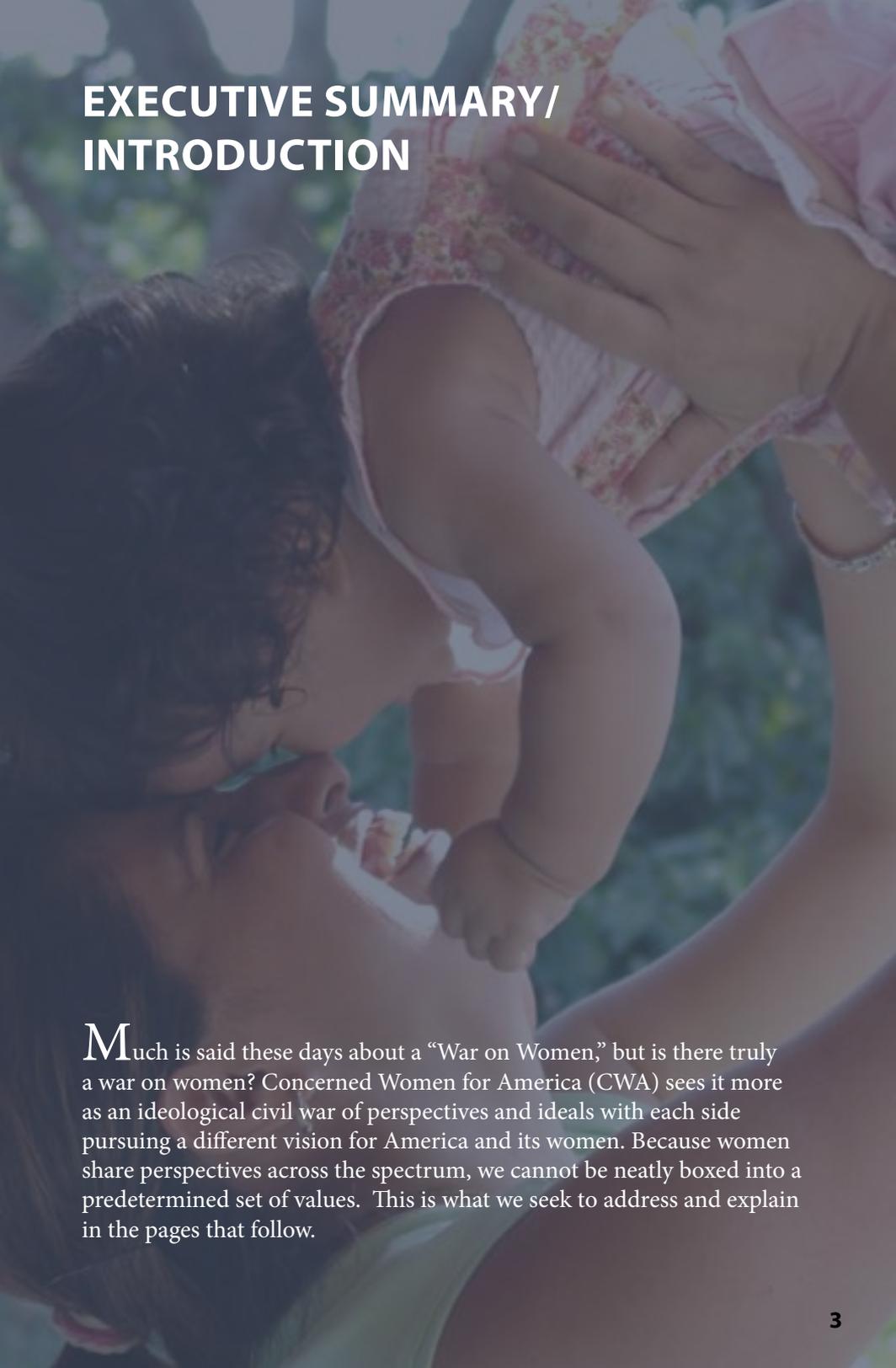
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A photograph of a woman with dark hair and glasses kissing a baby on the forehead. The baby is wearing a floral patterned onesie. The woman's hands are visible, gently holding the baby. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey filter.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/ INTRODUCTION

**M**uch is said these days about a “War on Women,” but is there truly a war on women? Concerned Women for America (CWA) sees it more as an ideological civil war of perspectives and ideals with each side pursuing a different vision for America and its women. Because women share perspectives across the spectrum, we cannot be neatly boxed into a predetermined set of values. This is what we seek to address and explain in the pages that follow.

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America is an amazing country, blessed by God throughout her history. As American women, we enjoy legal protections, including anti-discrimination laws that provide us the means with which to seek justice when we are not treated fairly, the freedom to pursue any path in life, and liberty at levels that are historically unprecedented, making us the envy of other nations around the world.

Women from around the world come to the United States to pursue the American Dream — a concept that embodies freedom, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness along with the promise that those, including women, who are willing to sacrifice and work hard have virtually unlimited possibilities. This is not a global secret. According to the Department of Homeland Security, almost **55 percent** of those obtaining legal permanent residency in the U.S. in 2012 were females,<sup>1</sup> and more women because naturalized citizens than men.<sup>2</sup>

Their belief is not unfounded. The hope offered to women reaches new heights with each successive generation. A report by Pew Charitable Trusts shows that today's women earn three times as much as their mothers did, and at every rung of the economic ladder, women increased their median wages by **50 percent** or more over the previous generation.<sup>3</sup>

Penny Nance, CEO and President of Concerned Women for America, describes her family as a perfect example of opportunities offered to women in the U.S.:

“My maternal grandmother came from Appalachia, had little or no education, mothered nine children and worked in a factory in order to support them. My mother dropped out of high school at sixteen to marry my father, but eventually went to community college after receiving her GED. Both women worked hard, enjoyed more opportunity, and made better choices than the generations before her. I went to college, worked hard, married my husband, and became the leader of the nation's largest public policy women's organization. Thus, in two generations, the women in our family have risen from abject poverty to a position of influence and relative affluence.”

Her story is not an isolated one. Clearly, women are strong and resilient. However, the mainstream media and professional left still insist on

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portraying American women as weak, victimized, and dependent upon big government. And while our nation's institutions and free-market economic system are no longer fundamentally unfair to women, somehow, these myths still resonate with many, making the "War on Women" narrative a wildly successful wedge issue in the political fray where women constitute the winning voting bloc at election time.

We are not all so easily convinced, however. There is a rising tide of women who have grown tired of being used as political pawns — tired of being treated like victims, when we should be treated like capable adults. We believe a course correction is necessary to get the rhetoric about women's issues back on track. One thing is certain: It is high time to start looking past the skewed images being fed to us through the politically expedient lenses of our political leaders to the reality of the progress we've made and the things yet to be done. Much is at stake for both women and children, indeed for the whole family, with regards to the fundamental conflict between the two perspectives of women in America.

Everyone concedes that there is a sharp political divide in the nation and that one of the major fault lines is over women's issues. What we endeavor to do in the pages that follow is to examine two pervasive narratives on the well-being of American women and on decipher the truth behind women's rights. Then we will discuss frankly the topics of sexual choices, marriage decisions, economic realities, and workplace opportunities as they relate to women, and how these topics impact the progress we are making. Each section is followed by a philosophical statement that defines our stand on policy that governs that topic.

Beyond that, we seek to address the fact that conservatives have been slow to respond to the charge of a "War on Women" and have done so ineffectively. It is our belief that conservatives must counter the "War on Women" rhetoric in effective ways by being solutionists and offering workable alternatives to oppressive government intrusions.

To that end, we offer a guide, which details legislative solutions and ideas for community and church programs, based on the principles and discussions set forth in the paper. It is our hope that by offering an honest examination of the issues — and a set of ideas and tools with which to address them — that we can rise above the current political mechanizations and help bring relief to women who desperately need it.

# THE IDEOLOGIES OF THE “NEW CIVIL WAR”

Everyone concedes that there is a sharp political divide in the nation and that one of the major fault lines is over women’s issues. There are two pervasive narratives on the well-being of American women.

## 1

### Perspective One:

Based on the idea that there is an inherent unfairness in the free-market system, adherents to this perspective believe that women need and desire government intervention to acquire equal standing in the workplace. They believe, in order to achieve equality and avoid poverty, women require taxpayer-subsidized birth control and abortion-on-demand. This perspective glorifies independence from men as a ticket to avoid patriarchal attitudes aimed at holding women back. This has led to a delay and decrease in marriage and an advocacy for government assistance to fill the financial void that being unmarried with children brings. This perspective seeks to create new entitlements including federalized daycare and other programs. In this perspective’s reality, “women’s rights” are human rights that should be unconditionally provided to them by the government, resulting in mandated equal outcomes.

## 2

### Perspective Two:

Based on a belief that all are created equal, adherents to this perspective believe women need equal opportunities and the economic freedom to achieve equality in the workplace. Recognizing that women are the givers of life, Perspective Two advocates for both women and their children. We believe families are a necessary institution to address poverty. This perspective acknowledges that children have the best chance of avoiding poverty in a married mom-and-dad family and supports a father’s role in the home. It also notes the harms of abortion to women and advocates for adoption and supporting women in crisis pregnancies. This perspective advocates for personal responsibility, life-affirming choices, and a deep respect for religious liberty. Those who adhere to this perspective promote a free market system that enables upward mobility and opportunity for women to prosper.

# THE TRUTH BEHIND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

That women are meant to prosper is an idea that echoes down the corridors of our collective history. At the outset of our American Founding, the colonies declared their independence from Britain with these most famous words:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

To ensure that these rights are protected, “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” That is us. “The governed,” or “We the People,” as so beautifully written in our Constitution: “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”<sup>5</sup>

From the beginning, women have always been an important part of “We the People.” Although it has taken time for women to gain the full rights given in the Declaration and the Constitution, we have steadily moved forward in the pursuit of those rights and freedoms. We say it early on here, and we must not lose sight of the fact that the government was never meant to grant us our freedoms. They are God-given, and the government is merely the defender thereof.

The rights of women were declared in the beginning (“All men are created equal”), and while they were in some measure denied us, we have successfully fought to correct the trajectory of government and culture in that respect. And it is our ongoing duty to do so today.

Moving forward, it is our desire to discuss frankly the topics of sexual choices, marriage decisions, economic realities, and workplace opportunities as they relate to women, and how these topics impact the progress we are making. Each section is followed by a philosophical statement that defines our stand on policy that governs that topic.

# SEXUAL CHOICES



There is no denying that women were treated unequally in early America, but in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, we made major headway. Women gained the right to vote, control our money, own property, and attend college. Today, it is illegal to discriminate against women in any way. Women and men are equal under the law, and under it there is nothing that women cannot do. However, there are still people who capitalize on the victim mentality and feel that women are still stuck in the subservient 20s when, in reality, we have won our basic rights and must continue to defend them just like any other citizen.

In addition to the rights women had gained under the law in the 1960's, America adopted the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act,<sup>6</sup> which protected against discrimination in the workplace. However, some women still felt they were being held back from their true potential. And instead of the government, their oppressors this time around were their husbands and children — shackles the feminists were determined to shake off.

Feminist icon Gloria Steinem popularized the saying that, “A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle,” and the feminists of the “swinging sixties” led many women to believe that in order to truly be equal to men they should stay single, focus solely on their career, and not confine themselves to a monogamous relationship.

An era of “free love” ensued, and the thought of pursuing sex without the chains of commitment and family skewed the intention of the Founders with regards to the words “Liberty” and “Happiness.” In short, “liberty” became “license,”<sup>7</sup> and happiness was kicked from its lofty pedestal to land among the baser instincts.

As the consequences of “free love” — pregnancy and babies — became an issue, feminists led the fight for abortion and birth control under the banner of “reproductive rights.” However, while these feminists often declared that they were fighting on behalf of all women, there was — and still is — a large group of women who refuse to conform and be blindly led by the feminist philosophy with regards to parenting and childbearing.

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## DID YOU KNOW?



**47%** of teen girls in TV shows are shown participating in sexual depictions



STDs cost the nation **\$16 billion** a year in health care costs

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**56 million** babies have been aborted since 1973



In tens of 1,000,000s

## The Consequences of “Free Love”

By failing to mentally take Perspective One to its logical conclusion, the nation’s girls and young women have become the primary victims of the utopian ideology about unattached, casual sex. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are epidemic in the United States.

### DID YOU KNOW?



There are nearly **20 million** new STD cases in America every year

- There are nearly 20 million new STD cases every year — half of those being among young people ages 15-24.
- STDs cost the nation \$16 billion a year in health care costs.
- An estimated 24,000 women become infertile each year due to an undiagnosed STD.<sup>8</sup>

The CDC says women “disproportionately bear the long-term consequences of STDs,”<sup>9</sup> because our anatomy makes us more vulnerable to STDs than men. This fact leaves millions of young women vulnerable to diseases, some of which are incurable.

Consequently, drug makers mislead women by insinuating that STDs are now minor problems, easily remedied. Yet, while medications treat the STDs, they do not cure all of them. In 2011, CWA released a report that listed 49 STDs and showed at the time there were 19 million new STD cases each year — three years later, there are another million new cases a year and another 72,000 infertile women.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to diseases, casual sex is linked to other less-than-desirable outcomes. College counselors report that over the past two decades on their campuses, depression cases have doubled, suicides have tripled. Further, the mean percentage of female clients has climbed to **63.9 percent**.<sup>11</sup> When nearly two-thirds of college coeds are seeing counselors, parents and others who care about young people should be concerned. It is significant to note that men are just as susceptible to the damaging consequences associated with casual sex as women.<sup>12</sup>

# The Consequences of Abortion

Women who are fortunate enough to avoid STDs and infertility still face the natural and beautiful result of sex: Children. Regrettably, instead of being seen as blessings and gifts, children are sometimes viewed as a “punishment” and a “problem.” Admittedly, facing the reality of an unplanned pregnancy can be overwhelming. As a result, abortion-on-demand is sold to women as the solution. Yet, the consequences of abortion-on-demand have been devastating to women and future generations. Since abortion was legalized in the U.S. through *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* in 1973, it is estimated that more than 56 million babies have been aborted.<sup>13</sup>

Forty years later, women are more opposed to abortion, not less. Public opinion shows **58 percent** of Americans oppose all or most abortions.<sup>14</sup> And according to a Quinnipiac poll, nearly two-thirds (**67 percent**) of Americans oppose taxpayer-funded abortions.<sup>15</sup>

Fortunately, adoption is a very real option for parents when they are faced with a pregnancy and feel they can’t adequately provide for the child. It is an option, however, that is seemingly paid little regard within the walls of America’s largest abortion provider. In 2012, Planned Parenthood handed out 2,197 adoption referrals to other agencies — a mere **.02 percent** of their total services.<sup>16</sup> While this number has remained fairly average since 2000, the number of abortion procedures Planned Parenthood performs per year has risen from 197,070 in 2000 to 327,166 in 2012.<sup>17</sup>

Statistics also show the one group that has been hardest hit by abortion. While the smiling face of an African-American woman graces the front cover of Planned Parenthood’s 2012-2013 Annual Report, news outlets have reported that in 2012, more black babies were aborted than were born in New York City: 31,328 black children were aborted, while only 24,758 were born. Of the total number of abortions in New York City, **42.4 percent** were black children.<sup>18</sup> Black-Americans make up only **25.5 percent** of the population of New York City.<sup>19</sup> In the CDC’s *Abortion Surveillance – United States*, 2010 report, the abortion rate for black women was shown to be 31.8; it was 18.6 for Hispanics, 16.0 for Non-Hispanic Other, and the rate for white women was 8.6.<sup>20</sup> Little wonder, Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider, has located **79 percent** of their abortion clinics in minority neighborhoods.<sup>21</sup>

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Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., notes how easy a solution abortion is, but what a final and deeply regrettable decision it is as well. Here is part of her story:

“Soon after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, I became pregnant again. There was adverse pressure and threat of violence from the baby’s father. The ease and convenience provided through *Roe v. Wade* made it too easy for me to make the fateful and fatal decision to abort our child. I went to a doctor and was advised that the procedure would hurt no more than ‘having a tooth removed.’ The next day, I was admitted to the hospital, and our baby was aborted. ... As soon as I woke up, I knew that something was very wrong. I felt very ill, and very empty. I tried to talk to the doctor and nurses about it. They assured me that ‘it will all go away in a few days. You will be fine.’ They lied.”<sup>22</sup>

“Safe, legal, and rare.” That is the mantra we hear all the time, but that too is a lie. Let’s put 56 million dead babies in perspective. According to the U.S. Census Bureau estimates in 2012, the populations of Texas (26,059,203), New York (19,570,261) and North Carolina (9,752,073) equals 55,381,537 people.<sup>23</sup> Legal abortion over the past 41 years has killed the equivalent of the entire populations of three states. Does that sound like a rare medical procedure?

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## DID YOU KNOW?

The population of Texas, North Carolina, and New York is relatively equal to the number of babies that have been aborted since 1973.



# The Consequences of the Sexual Exploitation of Women

The furor over the so-called “women’s issues” most often obscures the fact that much of the fuel poured on those flames comes from media companies. The push for increased promiscuity and the hyper-sexualized representation of women in entertainment online and in video games promotes objectification and a devaluing of the worth of women. This is true down to the youngest among us. Brian L. Wilcox, chair of the American Psychological Association’s Task Force on Advertising and Children, said:

“Probably the clearest evidence we have that television influences children’s thinking and behavior is the fact that advertisers invest literally billions of dollars trying to influence perceptions, choices, and behaviors of children through advertising. We know that advertisers wouldn’t be investing the amount of money they do without clear evidence that those messages are influencing kids.”<sup>24</sup>



As the media pushes for more outrageous behavior from some of its shining stars, young women see a standard set based on sexuality and sensuality.

- The Federal Trade Commission found that **80 percent** of the R-rated movies that they studied were marketed to children under seventeen.<sup>25</sup>
- In *USA Weekend’s* 11th Annual Special Teen Report survey of nearly 300,000 teens, about half of the respondents had misgivings, especially about their appearance. Only four in ten consider themselves attractive. A mere **15 percent** like themselves as they are.<sup>26</sup>

A media watchdog group, The Parents Television Council, issued the results of their study in which researchers found that on broadcast TV:<sup>27</sup>

- 47%** - Underage female characters shown participating in sexual depictions. (Compared to **29 percent** of adults).
- 86%** - Sexualized female characters that were presented as only being of high school age.

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- 93%** - Sexual incidents involving underage female characters that occurred within a context that qualified as “unhealthy.”
  - 98%** - Sexual incidents involving underage female characters that occurred outside of any form of a committed relationship.
  - 73%** - Underage sexualized incidents that were presented in a humorous manner or as a punch line to a joke.

As our young people absorb this information, their relationships with others change and the image they have of themselves changes as well.

According to a report by the American Psychological Association (APA), “There are several components to sexualization, and these set it apart from healthy sexuality.”<sup>28</sup> The APA notes that sexualization occurs in cases where: a person’s value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclusion of other characteristics; a person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness (narrowly defined) with being sexy; a person is sexually objectified — that is, made into a thing for others’ sexual use, rather than seen as a person with the capacity for independent action and decision making; and/or sexuality is inappropriately imposed upon a person.

The message coming from the media is mixed at best. What our young women hear is that they should be strong and powerful and independent; however, the images they see tell them that the way to do this is to devalue, debase, and disrespect themselves, instead of pursuing purity and strength of character.

The nonprofit advocacy group Common Sense Media joined with the National Institutes of Health to analyze 173 studies and combed through 30 years of research on childhood media consumption. The conclusion? A strong correlation exists between greater media exposure and adverse health outcomes. Researchers demonstrated that more time with TV, movies, video games, magazines, music, and the Internet could be linked to rises in childhood obesity, tobacco use, and sexual behavior.<sup>29</sup> And a strong link was shown between heavy media use and drug/alcohol use and low academic achievement — so much so, it was characterized by the study’s authors as a “surprisingly lopsided finding.”<sup>30</sup>

Ultimately, the sexualization of young girls by the media primes the girls to make unwise choices when they reach their teenage and young adult years.

## PHILOSOPHY OF POLICY OF SEXUAL CHOICES

While women have made gains in some areas, we find much of our “progress” in the last fifty-plus years has made us less happy and whole in other areas. CWA believes that **women can be feminine and have a family, while still pursuing a career** and being a leader in the workplace and community. We believe that **we do not have to sacrifice our families**, but that rather our fulfillment includes being supported by the strength of our families.

**Sex is a beautiful physical expression of love designed by God** and sanctioned in Scripture in the framework of Holy matrimony. Natural law sets boundaries because promiscuous behavior damages both men and women. It inevitably leads to a damaged heart and soul with consequences that can be lasting and harmful to individuals, their progeny, and their community.

In a perfect world, we would all choose to live within the boundaries of God’s laws. However, as human beings we sometimes fall short, but that doesn’t mean that we concede morally high standards and that our culture must necessarily continue to erode traditional Judeo-Christian values on sex. Just the opposite. Decades of social science affirm our concerns, and service to others includes hard facts on personal responsibility and good choices. In addition, the entertainment industry’s propagation of sex without love and marriage has tarnished the United States’ image in the eyes of other nations as well as harmed women (and girl’s) view of themselves. We support **enforcement of current laws on indecency on the publicly owned airwaves** and call for **increased parental involvement in children’s media consumption**. We believe the Proverb, “As [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he.”<sup>31</sup>

Regarding the fallout of human frailty, CWA believes that two wrongs don’t make a right. We believe that **life begins at conception and that, as studies are showing, abortion hurts women**.<sup>32</sup> CWA will fight to protect life from conception to natural death.

Because children, including babies in the womb, are part of our human family, we believe that they deserve both practical and legal protection. Being pro-life encompasses support for babies and their mothers. That means that we must work to **support women in crisis pregnancies through adoption, community support, religious institutions** and, when necessary, short-term governmental support that helps them onto the path to independence. It is not enough for abortion to be illegal; it must be unthinkable.

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Over the past 40 years, there has been the life-affirming development of Pregnancy Resource Centers and now, Pregnancy Medical Clinics that have opened as a result of *Roe v. Wade*. There are over 2,300 pregnancy centers/clinics across the country that meet the emotional, psychological, medical, spiritual and practical needs of pregnant women and their families. These centers are predominantly privately funded, community-oriented, faith-based, and volunteer-driven enterprises. We must support legislation that **protects women and their unborn children**. Concerned Women for America members around the nation support these centers through time, talent and treasure. Women should never feel the need to choose abortion solely because of resources.

In addition, we need to **eliminate the obstacles that hinder adoption in this country**. Over the past several years, we have seen a decrease in the numbers of adoptions in this country. A number of factors influence this decline such as the cost of adoption, disincentives for interstate adoptions, and invasive regulations like “creating a child-friendly environment.” Adoptive parents can spend as much as \$50,000 for a domestic adoption and upwards of \$100,000 if adopting internationally.<sup>33</sup> Even then, the wait to be adopted isn’t over. We must support legislation to **encourage adoption and stronger families**.

The cost of adoption and dearth of children available at a young age are obstacles that should be further addressed. There are more than 250,000 children that enter foster care in the U.S. each year.<sup>34</sup> While over half are able to return home to their parents, the remainder will stay in the system, and the children can languish in foster care for years waiting for the termination of parental rights. On average, children are in the foster care system for about two years, with about 20,000 foster kids aging out of the system each year without ever being adopted.<sup>35</sup> Not including medical care, food stamps, cash welfare, and child care payments to the foster care families, the foster care system is costing us more than \$9 billion in state and federal expenditures.<sup>36</sup>

In cases of abuse and neglect, states should move more quickly to terminate parental rights. Family reunification is a worthy goal but only in some circumstances. Today’s standards allow children to be passed back and forth between home and the state for far too long.

Concerned Women for America would support the use of state and federal funds to **fund domestic adoptions for children who are difficult to adopt, special needs and older children**.

# MARRIAGE DECISIONS

Flying amidst the conflicting messages of independence for women is the idea of marriage with its “settle down,” “ball-and-chain” image of tying oneself to another. It is hard to deny that views on love and marriage have changed over the years. In 1920, the national marriage rate was about 92 marriages per 1,000 single women, but today the rate is only 31 marriages.<sup>37</sup> Seventy-two percent of Americans were married in 1960, but only roughly 51 percent are married now.<sup>38</sup> Today, the average age at which a woman gets married for the first time is 27, but a century ago it was only 23 years old.<sup>39</sup>

There are many factors at play in this decline. Many women and men now view marriage as something to be done once they have their lives in order. This includes being in a stable job with a sound source of income. In earlier times, American men and women were joining together in a marriage first and then organizing their lives around their marriage afterwards.

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Additionally, the rise of reality television and America's infatuation with pop-culture has made celebrities dysfunctional relationships and the broken values displayed in movies more of the cultural norm. The commitment of marriage is oftentimes seen as a cumbersome barrier on the path to personal fulfillment or as an unwanted restriction of one's independence. It is no longer shocking to hear of someone in their third or fourth marriage,<sup>40</sup> delaying marriage even though they are cohabiting in a long-term relationship,<sup>41</sup> or completely writing off having a family for fear of children interfering with their life goals.<sup>42</sup>

Women today are supposed to be liberated from all that. We can have relationships without commitment. We can have sex without consequences. That's called "freedom." That's what women's rights are all about. But women today are confused and frustrated by the contradictions in the prevailing ideology. While the media and culture continue to push the idea that liberated freedom means sex without consequences, women feel that we have lost something in the process. We have a hard time reconciling the inconsistencies.<sup>43</sup>

Today, we are getting short shrift, but not because we don't have the same rights as men. The reason is much more insidious; it is because we allow ourselves to believe womanhood is a weakness. But we want more than this. We deserve more than this. We are aware that something more than this exists, some of us have seen it in the lives of our parents and grandparents who loved and cherished each other for a lifetime.

Biblically, marriage is a divine covenant that joins a husband and a wife together who can grow, support each other, and possibly raise children. But we are being told that commitment is bondage that we should set our goals higher than marriage and family. And yet, when women bash men and family and eschew all the things that make us feminine, ultimately we coarsen and debase ourselves.

It is not laughable to want a love that lasts a lifetime, to want to be cared for and to spend your life caring for the love of your life, to have children and to raise them to be honorable and decent.<sup>44</sup> That dream has not been shattered; it's been hidden behind barriers that we have allowed to be constructed in our culture — the easy out of divorce, the normalization of having children out of wedlock, and the lie of strategic cohabitation.

# Cohabitation

Cohabitation before marriage is another damaging after-effect of the sexual revolution and abortion-on-demand culture. The CDC reports that **48 percent** of the women they interviewed between 2006 and 2010 said they cohabited with a partner as a first union. This is an increase from **34 percent** in 1995. Nearly **20 percent** of these women became pregnant in the first year of their cohabitation.<sup>45</sup> It has also resulted in a decline in marriage. The percentage of women in a first marriage decreased from **44 percent** in 1982 to **36 percent** in 2006-2010. The percentage of women who never married increased from **34 percent** in 1982 to **38 percent** in 2006-2010.<sup>46</sup>

Overall, the numbers suggest that cohabitation is a losing proposition with men and women failing to stay together for more than a couple of years before moving on to “greener pastures.” According to a study by the National Center for Health Statistics, “The probability of women remaining in their first cohabiting union for three years or more was 0.31 (or **31 percent**); for men it was 0.24 (or **24 percent**).”<sup>47</sup> Translation: Chances for success are dismal at best.

## DID YOU KNOW?



**48%** of women in a study were cohabitating with a partner



**20%** of those women became pregnant in the first year of cohabitation



**31%** of women remain in their cohabitating union for three or more years



**36%** of women are in their first marriage



**38%** of women have never married

## Divorce

**M**arriage has historically been the foundation of the American family. Tragically, divorce has become commonplace and expected in today's society. However, the fall out for children, even as adults is significant. This fact became abundantly clear recently as young CWA staff shared their own views that too often adults place their own desires over the needs of children. Social science data show that there is no acceptable replacement for a present mom and dad in a child's life. Obviously, divorce may be necessary in cases of abuse or infidelity, as stated in the Bible.<sup>48</sup> We do not advocate for women staying in unhealthy marriages and, in fact, would argue that it is utterly wrong to stay in an abusive environment that hurts you and/or your children.

Granted, we all know single moms and dads who tackle each day with heroic effort and children who have successfully maneuvered into adulthood after growing up in a single-parent home. But we must face the reality that both parties deserve better. Whether or not we reinforce the divorce culture or begin to restore marriage through policies that encourage men and women to commit to each other and assume responsibility and protection for any children their union produces depends on your perspective.

We have forty years of social science data which details what is best for women, men, and children. Divorce leads to heartache and difficulty for everyone. This we know: children do better when raised by a married mother and father. In fact, fatherless or single-parent homes produce children who are:



**Two times** more likely to be arrested for juvenile crime.<sup>49</sup> **Two times** more likely to be treated for emotional and behavioral problems.<sup>50</sup> **Two times** more likely to be suspended or expelled from school.<sup>51</sup> **Thirty-three percent** more likely to drop out of school.<sup>52</sup> **Three times** more likely to end up in jail by age 30.<sup>53</sup> Children of divorce are more likely to have difficulty in school, to be sexually active earlier, and to have a child out of wedlock.<sup>54</sup>

Unfortunately, divorce is not an equal opportunity destroyer; it disproportionately affects children. Granted, it is true that divorce does not condemn all of its children. Most children do, indeed, “cope” with their parents’ divorce and go on to live reasonably happy lives. Nevertheless, divorce does put children at greater risk for significant issues in life.

The research of Dr. E. Mavis Hetherington, professor emerita in the department of psychology at the University of Virginia and a highly respected researcher on the subject of children and families, reveals that, although only a minority (**some 20 to 25 percent**) of children of divorce have serious social, emotional or psychological problems, that is more than twice the rate among children from intact families (**10 percent**). Among children in stepfamilies, twice as many (**20 percent**) have trouble with depression or anti-social behavior as their peers from intact families.

Judith Wallerstein, another respected researcher on the effects of divorce and author of two significant books on the subject, cautions adults. She points out that Hetherington's research reveals that a full **40 percent** of divorced adults describe their lives as "good enough," although they have the same problems they had before the divorce, only with different partners. "Having the same problems is not progress. That is not a finding to go dancing about," Wallerstein cautions.<sup>55</sup>

Perhaps more significant, children of divorce tend to be more favorable of divorce than their peers from intact families. Some **70 percent** of children of divorce say that divorce is acceptable, even if children are present, compared to **40 percent** of children from intact families.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, children of divorce tend to perpetuate the cycle of divorce, a sad outcome in anyone's estimation.

We must ask, "How can the U.S. handle this better?" A survey of divorcing couples with children done by the University of Minnesota found that in **45 percent** of the couples either one or both partners were interested in reconciliation.<sup>57</sup> We as a society can do more to protect the hundreds of thousands of children who are hurt by divorce every year, especially the children of couples who would consider reconciliation. America has the shortest divorce waiting periods out of any Western nation.<sup>58</sup> In Germany, couples must be separated for three years prior to a no-fault divorce, in Britain they must be separated five years, and in France they must be apart for six years.

Currently, 32 states do not have any requirements for how long couples must be separated before they can get divorced. In states where there are such requirements, there is a greater chance for reconciliation. In fact, studies show that if couples are able to reconcile that in five years they report being happier than before they began experiencing marital issues.<sup>59</sup>

## Having it All

On an encouraging note, some research shows that the majority of teenagers in the U.S. say they value marriage: **82 percent** of the girls and **70 percent** of the boys report that it is “extremely important” to them to have “a good marriage and family life.”<sup>60</sup> Those values do not seem to change later in life, either. A recent study by Citi and LinkedIn indicates that both men and women evaluate success in terms of “having it all.”<sup>61</sup> The majority of men (**79 percent**) and women (**66 percent**) believe that a “strong, loving marriage” is necessary for “success” and “having it all.” Both men and women state unequivocally that having children is essential for their definition of success (**86 percent** men and **73 percent** women). In fact, the authors of the Citi and LinkedIn study were quite surprised that today’s men place a higher value on family than women and do not view making money as the source of “having it all.”

Perhaps those dreams, values, and desires explain why women who have children often choose to step off the career fast track for a season in order to raise their children. Actually, while many analysts lament women’s so-called “forced” choices, studies indicate that more and more of today’s professionals — both men and women — are unwilling to make the kind of trade-offs that previous generations made. In fact, both male and female professionals today rate personal and family goals higher than career goals.<sup>62</sup>

They are smart to desire marriage. The benefits of marriage extend to men, women, and children, as well as to communities and nations, but some benefits are gender specific with very important benefits accruing to women. Married women are safer — not just from abuse within their own households, but also from other crimes. Married mothers are better off financially, and married women experience greater well-being and health.<sup>63</sup>

### DID YOU KNOW?

“Having it all” is defined by:

Having a strong, loving marriage -



**66%** of women

Having children -



**73%** of women

## PHILOSOPHY OF POLICY OF MARRIAGE DECISIONS

It is essential that we as a society **support reconciliation and acknowledge the importance of marriage** so women can thrive, children can be supported, and men can adopt their role in families. We must **stop adopting laws and policies that promote divorce and discourage marriage**.

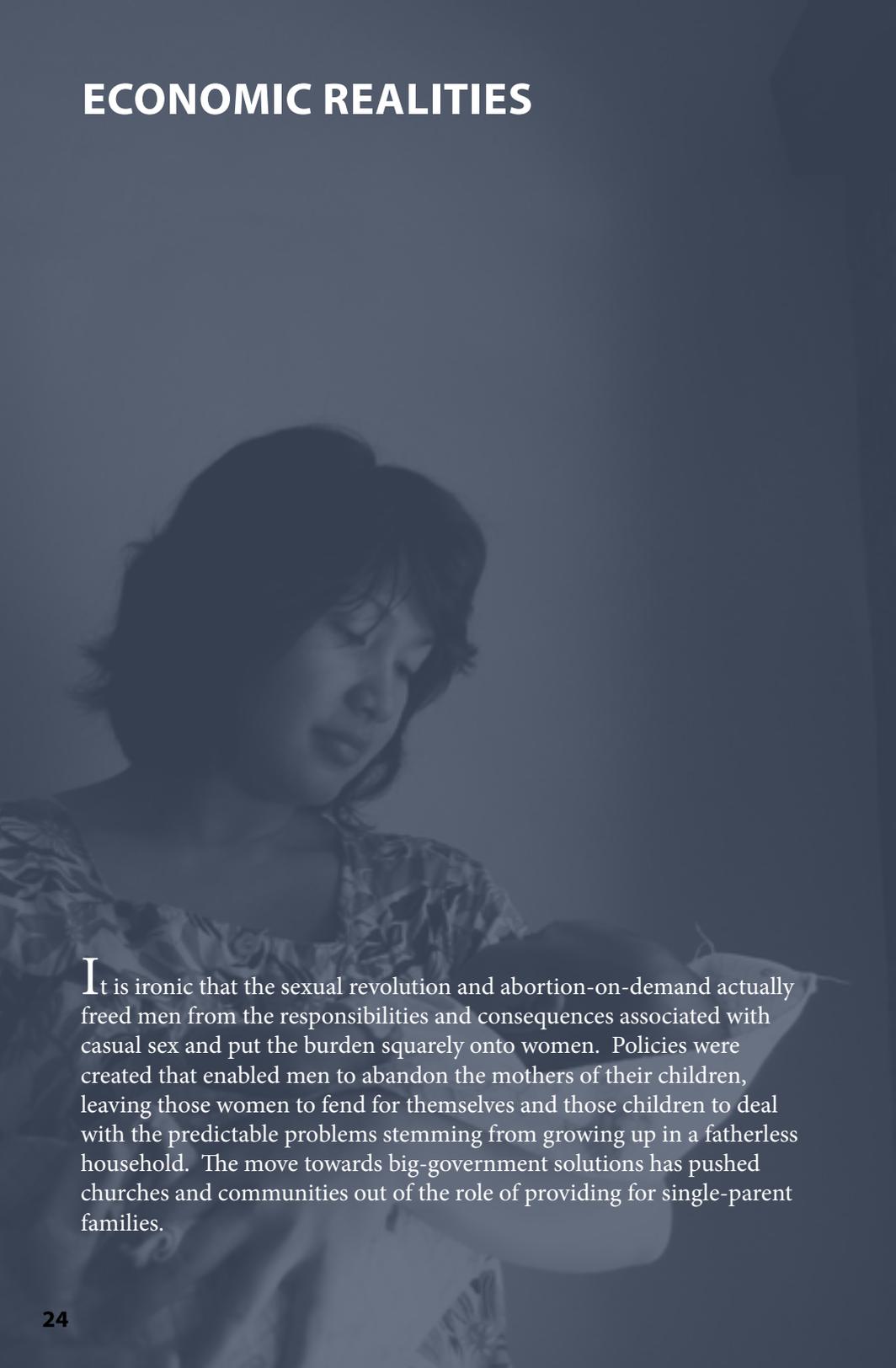
Refreshingly, many books and courses have catalyzed a movement to restore marriage harmony. Those who used to support divorce as a solution to marital and parental unhappiness are rethinking their views. Counselors have found that couples on the verge of divorce who work their way through their problems end up happier in five years than they were before they faced seemingly insurmountable problems.<sup>64</sup>

Government support exists as a safety net for those who are desperate. But **mothers deserve the all-encompassing daily support from a committed man** over a monthly check from the government. President Ronald Reagan knew that “welfare’s purpose should be to eliminate, as far as possible, the need for its own existence.”

As Dr. Janice Shaw Crouse, Executive Director of the Beverly LaHaye Institute and author of *Children at Risk*, notes:

“It is past time for us to overturn the negative cultural perceptions about marriage. We must demonstrate by our own personal commitments the value of marriage on both an individual level and at the community/society/national level. Only then will the nation’s children be able to thrive through infancy to adolescence and reach adulthood as well-adjusted persons. Further, they will have the internal strength and confidence to become successful in their personal and professional lives as well as prepared and willing to contribute to their communities and nation.”<sup>65</sup>

# ECONOMIC REALITIES



It is ironic that the sexual revolution and abortion-on-demand actually freed men from the responsibilities and consequences associated with casual sex and put the burden squarely onto women. Policies were created that enabled men to abandon the mothers of their children, leaving those women to fend for themselves and those children to deal with the predictable problems stemming from growing up in a fatherless household. The move towards big-government solutions has pushed churches and communities out of the role of providing for single-parent families.

## Poverty and the Single Mother

Ultimately, government programs have to pick up the financial slack and perform the “provider” responsibilities of husband and father, with taxpayers picking up the tab. Or, as we have put it, “Women are left both rocking the baby and paying the rent.”<sup>66</sup>

Statistics show that all individuals — women, men, and children — do better within marriage. A recent *Atlantic* article reported on a women’s conference where wealthy leftist women rejected marriage because it supposedly promoted patriarchy. The *Atlantic* author pointed out that while wealthy women can get away with adopting such elitist attitudes, poor women cannot. “For a poor woman, deciding whether to get married or not will be a big part of shaping her economic future.”<sup>67</sup> According to the U. S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey from 2007-2009, marriage reduces the probability of child poverty by **82 percent**; conversely, **71 percent** of poor families with children are led by single-parent households.<sup>68</sup>

Poverty statistics from 2007 (the Bush years) show that **24 percent** of children under the age of 18 lived in a female-headed household with no husband present. The poverty rate for these households was **37 percent**. For related children under 18 living in families with a female householder with no husband present, **43 percent** were in poverty. It was also noted that the poverty rate in 2007 was **12.5 percent** and the number of Americans who were “poor” (below the federal poverty thresholds) was 37 million.<sup>69</sup> Fast-forward to President Obama’s first term in office and the numbers are worse — significantly worse. According to the Congressional Research Service, in 2012 the percentage of children under the age of 18 living in female-headed households with no husband present rose to **25.3 percent**. At the same time, the poverty rate for these households was significantly higher; it now stands at **47.2 percent**, more than four times higher than children living in a married-couple family. Of the 15.4 million poor children in 2012, **56.1 percent** were living in female-headed households with no husband present.<sup>70</sup> The overall poverty rate in 2012 was **15 percent** and the number of people who were poor skyrocketed to 46.5 million people (both numbers remained statistically unchanged from 2010 and 2011).<sup>71</sup>

Sadly, having a baby out of wedlock has a 50-50 chance of condemning a woman and her child to an impoverished life. Having a second child out of wedlock increases the possibility to **60 percent**.<sup>72</sup> And yet, the trend for having a child out of wedlock is increasing. In 2006, there were more than 1.6 million non-marital births, which represented **38.5 percent** of all births.<sup>73</sup> By 2011, that percentage had increased to **40.7 percent**.<sup>74</sup>

### DID YOU KNOW?



**50%** of women who have a child out of wedlock will live in poverty with their children

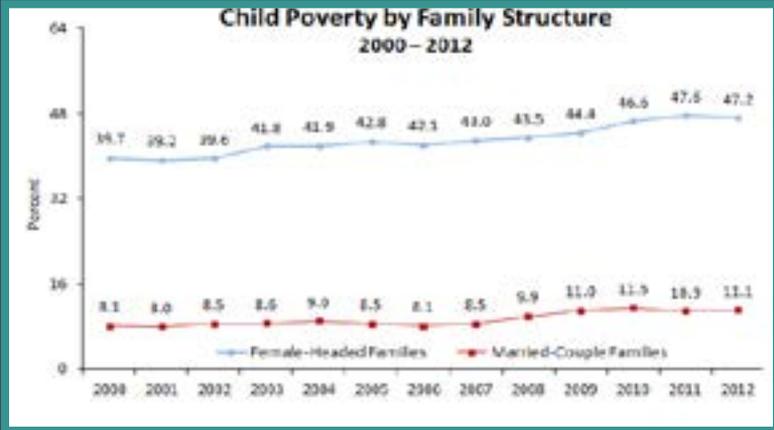


**60%** of women who have two children out of wedlock will live in poverty with their children

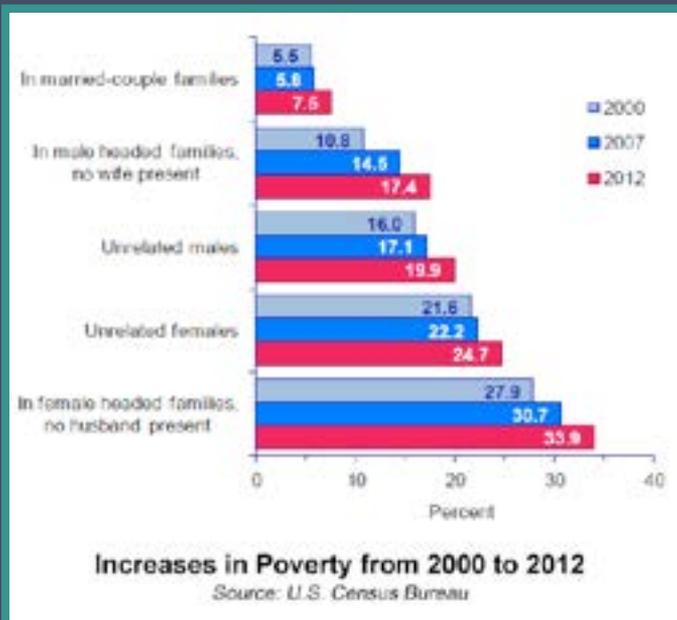
The consequences of bad policies making the situation worse are described in Crouse's *Children at Risk*:

“For decades when liberals, progressives, feminists, and welfare advocates tried to get to the bottom of the problem posed by the triad of out-of-wedlock childbearing, single motherhood, and child poverty, they typically asserted that: (1) either the below-par public education in the young woman’s poor neighborhood failed to adequately explain sex and conception, or (2) poverty is the source, rather than the result, of the problem. The solution to the problem, in their eyes then, is to provide abortion-on-demand and higher welfare benefits. From their point of view, there are only two options to avoid inflicting the hardship of poverty on an unmarried woman’s child. Either she should (1) terminate the pregnancy — no child, no child poverty — or (2) the government must give her the funds she needs for the necessities of life both for herself and her child.”<sup>75</sup>

The accompanying chart shows the dramatic difference in poverty rates between female-headed households and married-couple households.<sup>76</sup>



The data below clearly show what Penny Nance, Chief Executive Officer and President of Concerned Women for America, frequently says, “The way to avoid poverty is to get an education, avoid substance abuse, and wait until you are married to get pregnant.”



## Poverty and America's Churches and Communities

Where, in all this mess, is the Church? In 1948, **91 percent** of Americans identified as Christian,<sup>77</sup> but in recent years, that number has fallen to **77 percent**.<sup>78</sup> As a result, the once-strong pillars of American Evangelicalism have all but crumbled, becoming a shadow of their former usefulness in the culture.

Where once churches were founding hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the poor, they are barely able to keep the doors of their soup kitchens and clothes closets open. It is easier for members within the church to forego support of such ministries, because “the government” will take care of those people. This sidesteps Jesus’ admonition to feed the poor and give shelter to the homeless.

We have shown that women are most economically and emotionally stable when they are married, but all too often a woman is left to raise her children alone. Instead of our churches and communities stepping up to help our single mothers, taxpayers are increasingly expected to fund a woman’s new provider: the government.

But when the government steps in, it brings regulation, and usually the kind that very often interferes with the efforts of those churches which are still able to lend assistance. Take, for instance, what happened to Catholic Charities in Washington, D.C. Because of the Catholic Church’s religious beliefs on marriage and the family, the D.C. government discontinued its relationship with the organization. Catholic Charities was forced to issue a press release which read, “Although Catholic Charities has an 80-year legacy of high quality service to the vulnerable in our nation’s capital, the D.C. Government informed Catholic Charities that the agency would be ineligible to serve as a foster care provider due to the impending D.C. same-sex marriage law.”

The Church cannot cede areas of ministry to a secular government and expect that government to act and minister as the Church would; it is foolishness. Instead, the Church must step up and make government take a back seat. We must be willing to give all — as our Lord did — in order to rescue those in need.

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Yes, there are people who game the system, but all too often, the status of “single mom” is a cyclical one, and most of America’s single mothers did not plan on raising their children alone. We need to have more organized church and community programs aimed at providing them with financial and parenting advice, low-cost child care, and/or emotional counseling. The only way to break the cycle is to provide these moms a needed hand up, not a hand out.

“Several years ago I volunteered through my local church with Birth Mothers. I was paired with a single woman who was a recent immigrant. She was alone and needed transportation to her doctor’s appointments and to learn some basic life skills. I worked with her for months, and she asked me to be with her in the delivery room. I found myself having to advocate for her in the hospital because she had a difficult delivery. Afterwards I worked to make sure that she and little Rubin were being cared for by her own church. While working with Pamela, other women in the church and I routinely went out and brought diapers, formula and other necessities for women in acute need. I remember one young woman was going to work but needed formula to leave with the baby’s father. I had the honor of meeting many families, praying over their beautiful new babies and connecting them to our local church if they so choose. This ministry was the most pro-life activity in which I have ever participated.”

- Penny Nance

## PHILOSOPHY OF POLICY OF ECONOMIC REALITIES

No doubt life is complicated, but **women are capable of making responsible choices for themselves and their children.** Special interest groups with both a profit and political motive conveniently forget this fact. Truly loving advocates for women will be truthful about harmful choices and will encourage responsibility. Setting the bar for success includes honest discussions about out-of-wedlock birth, divorce, and cohabitation. Having said that, Concerned Women for America recognizes the inevitable lapses and failures that are inherent in the human condition.

However, part of what makes America great is the many opportunities she gives struggling people for second chances, and the best response to women who find themselves in poverty is one that is multifaceted. Multiple institutions: Families, communities, churches, and sometimes government have intricately woven roles in guiding women to wholeness. Clearly, **education is a component of moving women out of poverty.** Whether for themselves or their children, it is part of the solution to breaking the cycle of dependence.

It is essential to note that the once-robust response from non-governmental entities — specifically American churches — has diminished in the past years with benevolence funding falling **48 percent** since 1968.<sup>79</sup> This must change.

CWA calls on churches in general and Christians specifically to right this wrong. Acknowledging that **people are best governed closest to home** and that there is a legitimate place for government programs, we still believe that **government is incapable of either love or real accountability.** That role must be filled with a personal relationship, not with a check.

# WORKPLACE OPPORTUNITIES

A woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored top, is smiling and looking down at a large white document she is holding. The background is a blurred office setting with shelves. The entire image has a semi-transparent blue overlay.

In early America, professions were limited for women. However, with the need for dual incomes in many families and the rise of the Industrial Revolution and better educational opportunities, the world began to open up for women. World War II created a further demand for women in the workplace. The percentage of women in America's workforce increased from 27 to 37 percent in just the five years between 1940 and 1945.<sup>80</sup> And the number of women in America's workforce continues to rise, growing by 28 million from 1984 and 2009.<sup>81</sup>

While women were at one point dangerously overworked and underpaid, especially in comparison to men, there are now laws in place monitoring men's and women's work hours and pay to create a platform of equal opportunity and a method of redress when necessary.

## The Advancement of the Working Woman

A 2012 study commissioned by the Independent Women's Voice found that the vast majority of women (**74 percent**) agree at least somewhat that workplace discrimination is a serious problem, but this does not necessarily translate into support for more government regulation to "solve" the problem.<sup>82</sup> An October 2013 Pew survey, however, is at odds with those numbers, finding that most working women and men do not believe discrimination exists in their own workplaces.<sup>83</sup> When asked if men and women are paid about the same for doing the same job in their workplaces, **75 percent** of the women and **73 percent** of the men said "yes." **Seventy-two percent** of the women and **73 percent** of the men said women have about the same opportunities to advance to top executive and professional positions in their company as men.

Every year, more and more women are entering the high paying professions. According to the Department of Education, women are more likely to graduate from college, graduate school, or become doctors than men.<sup>84</sup> Census data show that women in their twenties are out-earning men in metropolitan America.<sup>85</sup> Carrie Lukas, managing director of the Independent Women's Forum, pointed to a 2010 study of single, childless workers in urban areas between the ages of 22 and 30 that showed women earned on average **eight percent** more than men.<sup>86</sup> It is even estimated that in four years "one-third of American jobs will be generated by companies owned by women."<sup>87</sup>

A study done by American Express OPEN found that as of 2013 in the U.S.:<sup>88</sup>

- There are estimated to be more than **8.6 million women-owned businesses** generating revenues over \$1.3 trillion and employing 7.8 million people.
- Between 1997 and 2013 the number of women-owned firms increased at a rate **one-and-a-half times** the national average.
- The number of women-owned businesses was up **59 percent**, employment in them was up **10 percent** and revenues produced by them were up **63 percent**, which topped the growth rates of all privately-held businesses in this time period.
- Women-owned firms continue to diversify into all industries and since 2002 women-owned firms are exceeding overall sector growth rates in **eight of the 13 most populous industries**.

- 
- Over the past 16 years, women-owned firms **exceeded the national average** in all revenue size classes up to the million dollar mark.
  - Women-owned firms with \$10-plus million in revenue grew by **57 percent** between 2002 and 2012, a rate **47 percent** faster than all \$10-plus million businesses.

These new findings echo what CWA's Beverly LaHaye Institute (BLI) found in its Year 2000 report, *Gaining Ground: A Profile of American Women in the Twentieth Century*, which examined women's well-being over the past century.<sup>89</sup> Dozens of trend graphs in that publication track the astounding forward progress for women in seven different areas: trends in population, health, education, family, economics, attitudes, and historical events. BLI's social science data shows incredible strides forward for women's well-being.

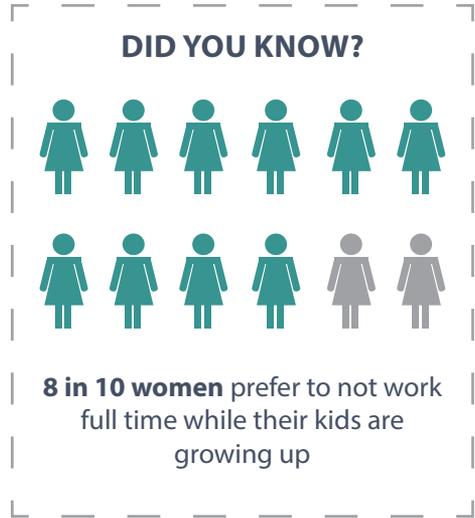
Kay Hymowitz, in *Foreign Policy*, shows how well women are doing in the business world: We are as likely as American men to be company managers.<sup>90</sup> The U.S. has the highest proportion of women in senior management positions (**43 percent**) of any country in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (women comprise **47 percent** of the U.S. labor force); the U.S. was ranked eighth globally in gender equality by the World Economic Forum; **24 percent** of working American women are in professional fields (compared to only **16 percent** of working American men); **46 percent** of American firms are owned or co-owned by women.

In addition to the above-mentioned gains, Hymowitz noted that women are still hitting the "glass ceiling" in some areas.<sup>91</sup> In the legal profession, we make up **47 percent** of law school students, but only **21 percent** of law school deans, **20 percent** of law firm partners, and **23 percent** of federal judges. In medicine, we make up **48 percent** of medical school graduates, but only **13 percent** of medical school deans and department chairs, and only **19 percent** of full professors. In business schools we earn **37 percent** of the MBAs, but we account for only **14 percent** of executive officers, **18 percent** of senior financial officers, and **four percent** of CEOs.

But is this really a case of hitting the glass ceiling, or is there something else at work in these statistics? Again, despite rhetoric to the contrary, men and women are different. Our needs and desires differ significantly from those of men. Our priorities are not the same, and neither is the way we seek to balance our lives with our careers. The decisions that we make in regards to career and family contribute to the perception of a glass ceiling.

## Life Balance and the Working Woman

Giving women and men the ability to operate within a flexible work environment allows us to continue working while raising children if we so choose, or pursuing other interests, without having to greatly sacrifice one for the other. A study done by Boston College shows that work/family balance benefits not only the employee but the employer as well.<sup>92</sup> Their study shows that greater workplace flexibility leads to higher employee job satisfaction, performance, productivity, and commitment.<sup>93</sup>



When women are granted flexibility in the work environment, they are allowed the opportunity to be successful parents as well as valuable employees. One anecdote from the Boston College study suggests that the costs of implementing workplace flexibility are negligible. “When asked about the costs the [accounting] company’s flexibility practices involve, the [spokesperson] laughed. ‘We’re accountants,’ she said, ‘We’ve thought all that through, and let me assure you, the cost of our flexibility practices is nothing compared to the cost of losing good people and hiring and training new ones.’”<sup>94</sup>

Therefore, good public policy should promote “work/life balance” and recognize that women desperately want working circumstances that will allow them to be mothers or pursue other endeavors. We want accommodating workplaces. A 2007 Pew survey found something we already know: **60 percent** of mothers with minor children said that part-time work was their ideal.<sup>95</sup> Another 19 percent preferred not to work outside the home at all. That is nearly 8 in 10 mothers who would prefer not to work full time while their kids are growing up. Some women — especially high level women — temporarily step off the fast track when they begin their families.<sup>96</sup>

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Not surprisingly then, employment among women drops once women begin having children.<sup>97</sup> And that is their choice! Most women want to play an active role in their child's nurturing, development, and life during their formative years. A workplace environment that would allow us to have flextime, work part time, and/or drop out and re-enter the workforce at a comparable level once we choose to do so can be a win/win solution for everyone.

It is revealing to look at Sweden's experience as a country that has supposedly reached equality paradise. Christina Hoff Sommers showed that the expensive benefits offered to parents in Sweden had an unintended negative outcome for women.<sup>98</sup>

Parents in Sweden receive a 16-month parental leave and upon return to work may choose to work part time (six-hour days) for reduced pay up till their child turns eight years of age. It seems that more women than men are choosing to avail themselves of this arrangement, never going back to full-time work (and, thereby, never advancing to higher-level jobs). Sommers said that Cornell economists Francine Blau and Lawrence Kahn found, "Swedish-style paternal leave policies and flex-time arrangements ... make employers wary of hiring women for full-time positions at all. Offering a job to a man is the safer bet. He is far less likely to take a year of parental leave and then return on a reduced work schedule for the next eight years."<sup>99</sup>

Part of the issue is that our priorities are not geared solely toward careers. This is revealed in a 2005 *Harvard Business Review* study showing that **37 percent** of women have left work voluntarily (off-ramping) during their careers, and among women with children it jumps to **43 percent**.<sup>100</sup> When the study was revisited in 2009, the number dropped to **31 percent**.<sup>101</sup> The authors explain that this is perhaps in part due to the poor economy and women being reluctant to leave a job.

#### DID YOU KNOW?



**43%** of women with children voluntarily choose to off-ramp during their career

## Childcare and the Working Woman

Another assumption about working American mothers is that we would choose to stay in the workplace if we had taxpayer-funded childcare. Actually, childcare is not the fundamental issue determining a mother's choices, nor do most mothers want to rely on government-provided childcare. When parents were asked to rank nine childcare options for pre-school children, they ranked government-run childcare centers dead last.<sup>102</sup> Many mothers seem to prefer homecare by a relative, even when other childcare is convenient. Relatives regularly provided childcare to almost half of the more than 20 million preschoolers in the spring of 2011.<sup>103</sup> About **30 percent** of pre-school children are cared for on a regular basis by a grandparent; another **25 percent** by their fathers, **three percent** by siblings, and another **eight percent** by other relatives.<sup>104</sup>

Clare Booth Luce gave an early warning about the reality facing women when she said:

“It is time to leave the question of the role of women up to Mother Nature — a difficult lady to fool. You have only to give women the same opportunities as men, and you will soon find out what is or is not in their nature. What is in women's nature to do they will do, and you won't be able to stop them. But you will also find, and so will they, that what is not in their nature, even if they are given every opportunity, they will not do — and you won't be able to make them do it.”<sup>105</sup>

In *Children at Risk*, Dr. Crouse said:

“Those who are determined to institute full male-female equality in the workplace realize that to achieve that goal, women must be freed from the duties and responsibilities of motherhood (whether they want to be or not). Thus, they push both for taxpayer-funded abortion and child care.”<sup>106</sup>

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Many women today want both a career and family life; it is possible to have both. But a government-run, early childhood education program or government-funded child care facility may not be the route they would take. There is a real disconnect between familial and governmental priorities when it comes to balancing work and family. Families have different ideas on what works for them. They do not want a one-size-fits-all government approach to the problem but rather need policies that facilitate flexibility and creative work options while reducing their financial burden.

According to a Public Agenda survey, **70 percent** of parents with children five and under say that one parent at home is the best child care arrangement during a child's earliest years.<sup>107</sup> This coincides with numerous academic studies which show that the more hours a child spends in daycare the lower their social competence and the higher the incidence of negative behavioral problems.

Right now, the reality in America is that millions of children under the age of five participate each year in federally-funded preschool or other early learning programs or receive federally-supported child care in a range of settings. According to the Government Accountability Office there are 45 federal programs that operate early learning and child care programs from birth to the age of five. The federal programs that specifically fund early learning and child care received \$13.3 billion in federal funding in fiscal year 2010. These programs, under the guise of helping mothers and fathers balance work and family priorities are aimed at facilitating fulltime work and don't address the real needs or preferences of most families. This includes revising the Child and Dependent Care Tax to include non-traditional providers like family and friends.

According to the Heritage Foundation, **80 percent** of four-year-old children enrolled in preschool and day care are served by the private sector and **28 percent** of the private enrollment takes place in churches, synagogues, or community centers.<sup>108</sup>

In addition to the daycare centers, families have many other options: daycare in churches or the parents' places of employment, family daycare where children go to daycare providers' homes, in-home care by a nanny or au pair, or kin care by a relative or friend. Interestingly, many parents utilize more than one daycare option.

## Cottage Industry and the Working Woman

Women have long shown great creativity in crafting options that allow them to both care for children or pursue interests and contribute to their family's income. However, increased government intervention has decreased our options.

Cottage industries are suffering, plagued by government regulation costs and increased taxes at every level, lending truth to the popular maxim, "It takes money to make money." Yet, for many Americans on a shoe-string budget, overbearing government interference limits their economic freedom to innovate and develop jobs.

The current burden of government regulation is smothering the entrepreneurial aspirations of many American women.

In the 1930s, Ruth Briscoe, a young woman from a poor minister's family, was trying desperately to become a teacher. Struggling like everyone else, simply buying food was a hardship. In the midst of the Great Depression, Ruth could not find anyone to hire her. But instead of relying on the government, Ruth relied on her creativity and sheer determination to earn money. She created her own job by going door to door, selling fruit and candy she made in her humble kitchen. Ruth's home venture was so successful that the profits she made were enough to help her through that dark period in America's history.

Today, if Ruth wanted to start up her small business, she would be responsible for 43 forms at the federal, state, and local levels of government with many that have to be renewed each year. Some of those forms have extremely expensive penalties attached if you are late. Some areas of the country are even more burdensome. And this does not take into consideration all the other regulations she would incur. God forbid if she does not have a commercial kitchen in which to make that candy.

To legally run her home-based business today, Ruth would need to install a brand new kitchen in her home, complete with separate stainless steel sinks, counters, and expensive oven exhaust hoods. Then Ruth would need to be sure her neighborhood is within local commercial zoning limits before she could even think about selling her goods.

## Equity and the Working Woman

We continue to hear that a woman makes 77 cents to a man's dollar. This is the so-called "wage gap." However, a look at women's choices clarifies that the wage gap is a myth. Any wage discrepancies between men and women disappear when taking into account education, number of hours worked, industry, years of experience, and career choice. In fact, professor of economics Matthew Rousu, writing in *Forbes*, called it "misguided" to blame any differences in pay between men and women on discrimination.<sup>109</sup>

### DID YOU KNOW?

A childless woman in her 20s just beginning her career will earn -

**\$1.08**

compared to a man's dollar.

The Independent Women's Forum's Carrie Lukas says, "It's not just conservatives who reach this conclusion: Studies by the American Association of University Women and the General Accounting Office have found the same. Researchers vary on how much of a gap lingers after controlling for men and women's different choices, but there's a near consensus that a large portion of that 77-cents-on-the-dollar gap has nothing to do with workplace discrimination."<sup>110</sup>

Derek Thompson, senior editor at *The Atlantic*, argues that while the 77-cent argument makes a good sound bite, the reality is "more dynamic." He said, "The 77-cent talking point is everywhere, and too often the conversation ends with the double-sevens."<sup>111</sup> According to a columnist for *Slate*, once we factor in the choices women make, like those we have mentioned, the 77-cent gap falls to only a nine-cent gap.<sup>112</sup> To counter this, *Forbes* cites estimates that show childless women in their 20s who are just beginning in their career path will earn about \$1.08 to a man's dollar.<sup>113</sup>

But the conversation does not end there. Many continue to argue that women cannot break through the "glass ceiling" because we are treated unfairly. Again, this ignores the factors unique to women, the choices we voluntarily make, and the professions we choose. "A big part of the difference in pay is due to the choice of jobs," Rousu said. "Women are still more likely to be Kindergarten teachers, while men are more likely to work in finance."<sup>114</sup>

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Thompson explains that wage difference is also “about time — time since entering the workforce and time spent working.” He says this is because many women take off time or begin working part time in order to be moms at the point where the rewards for working longer hours pays off.<sup>115</sup>

When viewed in the bigger picture, both men and women showed increased job satisfaction when companies allowed for flex time, job sharing, remote commuting, and other creative-work agreements. Concerned Women for America has greatly benefited from the adoption of such workplace innovations. In fact, the U.S. should be moving towards allowing for greater flexibility in employee/employer contracts, as opposed to recent efforts like the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Historically, it's the small-business mindset that leads the industry when it comes to flex time options. According to the Families and Work Institute's 2014 National Study of Employers, “Small employers are more likely to allow employees to change starting and quitting times within some range of hours, work some regular paid hours at home occasionally, have control over when to take breaks, return to work gradually after childbirth and adoption, and take time off during the workday to attend to important family or personal needs without loss of pay.”<sup>116</sup>

While the option of remote commuting has actually increased in popularity since 2008 (from **50 percent** of companies allowing it in 2008 to **67 percent** in 2014),<sup>117</sup> the option of job sharing is increasingly being eliminated (down from **29 percent** in 2008 to **18 percent** in 2014).<sup>118</sup>

Workplace flexibility is helpful and needed, and numbers from the aforementioned study indicate that it is on the rise, but there is still room for improvement. Women can compete with men in every field. The question is, “Do we really want to?” Christina Hoff Sommers looked at the top ten college majors that have the highest earning potential and found men make up the majority in nine of them:<sup>119</sup>

**87%** – Petroleum Engineering

**48%** – Pharmacy Pharmaceutical Sciences and Administration

**67%** – Mathematics and Computer Science

**88%** – Aerospace Engineering

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- 72%** – Chemical Engineering
  - 89%** – Electrical Engineering
  - 97%** – Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering
  - 90%** – Mechanical Engineering
  - 83%** – Metallurgical Engineering
  - 90%** – Mining and Mineral Engineering

But those numbers seem more based on choice than any type of imagined discrimination, as Sommers then looked at the ten college majors that had the lowest earning potential and found that women dominate nine out of the 10:

- 74%** – Counseling Psychology
- 97%** – Early Childhood Education
- 34%** – Theology and Religious Vocations
- 81%** – Human Services and Community Organization
- 88%** – Social Work
- 60%** – Drama and Theater Arts
- 66%** – Studio Arts
- 94%** – Communication Disorders Sciences and Services
- 77%** – Visual and Performing Arts
- 55%** – Health and Medical Preparatory Programs

So clearly, we are choosing to enter careers that interest us. Carrie Lukas reminds us, “Women are better off understanding that it’s the decisions they make — not systematic sexism — that determine how much they earn and the parameters of their future.”<sup>120</sup>

## PHILOSOPHY OF POLICY OF WORKPLACE OPPORTUNITIES

Concerned Women for America supports all life-affirming choices for women. We believe that **occupational choices for women are integral to a healthy economy and to healthy families.** We reject the notion that the primary factor inhibiting our monetary success is discrimination. In fact, **burdensome tax policy and regulatory overreach is currently far more oppressive.** CWA strongly condemns mistreatment of any worker, including sexual harassment. As conservatives, we must strongly condemn perpetrators, whether in business or politics.

We recognize that **women are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and celebrate our differences from men.** True diversity recognizes and applauds the differences between men and women and believes that they complement one another. Femininity is a wonderful gift.

The majority of women who become mothers intensely love those children and prefer to maximize their time with them. For each family, this means something different, and therefore, flexibility is the key. We support **government policies that encourage, rather than restrict, workforce practices.**

We urge U.S. employers to **institute flexible policies that encourage productive and happy employees.** Whether job sharing, flex time, comp time, or the other multitude of arrangements, innovative employer/employee contracts allow women to maximize participation in the workforce. In addition, government overreach inhibits freedom.

# CONCLUSION



As we began, we likened the “War on Women” to a civil war, and we presented two perspectives of women. The question remains, though, what are the forces driving these two very different perspectives of women’s lives in the United States?

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Perhaps the Dean of the Harvard Business School, Nitin Nohria, revealed part of the answer:

“Lately there are signs that America is shifting from an orientation of ambition toward one of envy. Whether it is the 99 percent who envy the 1 percent or the 53 percent who resent the 47 percent who are receiving government distributions, we are beginning to show signs of focusing more on others than on ourselves. That’s a shift we want to avoid. Over time envy has a corrosive, pernicious effect on an economy. It reduces agency and encourages people to attribute outcomes to forces beyond their control. It shifts people’s gaze toward others in a negative way and takes their focus off their own goals. In an ambition economy, people generally enjoy watching others get ahead, because it reinforces their sense that they, too, can succeed. In an envy economy, in contrast, people often feel like they’re playing in a zero-sum game and that if someone else gets ahead, it comes at their own expense.”<sup>121</sup>

The “War on Women” rhetoric is a perfect example of creating an envy economy.

The perfect “wedge” issue was created when the “War on Women” started to convince women that we are victims doomed for failure at the hands of men and those more successful than us. It is this mentality, however, that leads women down a long road of despair. It leads women to eschew the emotional stability and economic security of marriage for the “freedom” of illicit relationships, with their high risk of STDs, their potential for a downward spiral into poverty for those who become pregnant out of wedlock, and the lure of abortion-on-demand as a “cure” for those pregnancies.

And let’s be honest, we all — women and men — fail at some point in our lives; we all need to reach out for varying degrees of help. In that respect, failure provides us the opportunity to learn — what to avoid, how to do it

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better next time, etc. It also helps us learn that not all hands are friendly ones; just as there are hands that will pull you up, there are hands that will work to keep you down and defeated. That is not where we belong.

The grass may seem greener on the other side, in the world of easy handouts, but it is withered and brown — a barren world of lessening opportunity. Those who reach for it are rewarded with grief.

It is a fact that the women who relate to our “Perspective Two” woman and describe themselves as “conservative” or “extremely conservative” are far more likely to be happy than their liberal counterpart.<sup>122</sup>

In a report produced by the Beverly LaHaye Institute that longitudinally looks at the history of women, it shows that women have made tremendous progress in all areas except in terms of their personal well-being.<sup>123</sup> This was confirmed by a study done by the National Bureau of Economic Research that showed that women’s circumstances have improved greatly by objective measures, but our happiness and subjective well-being has declined.<sup>124</sup>

This is because part of an individual’s happiness is controlled by the positive choices one makes and the hard work one does. According to a *New York Times* article written by Arthur Brooks, about **48 percent** of one’s happiness is influenced by genetics, around **40 percent** changes in relation to events that occurred in the recent past, and the final **12 percent** is based on how faith, family, community, and work is pursued.<sup>125</sup>

Happy people actively pursue faith, family, community, and work. As Brooks puts it, “Few dying patients regret overinvesting in rich family lives, community ties and spiritual journeys.” Women can pursue these areas regardless of education, income, marital status, or any other factor.

An envy economy tells us that we should be equal to the person next to us. We often hear the term “equality” in relation to women’s issues. One side pushes for equal outcomes, while the other pushes for equal opportunity. Giving women an equal opportunity to achieve their goals allows them to pursue happiness through hard work. “Work can bring happiness by marrying our passions to our skills, empowering us to create value in our lives and in the lives of others,” Brooks said. “In other words, the secret to happiness through work is earned success.”

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Giving women an equal opportunity to compete in society is achievable, but demanding equal outcomes has historically sentenced women to poverty and government coercion. It is vulnerable women — the ones most likely to become dependent upon government — who are the prime targets of the cynical politics of envy.

If anyone (even a woman) disagrees with the purveyors of “Perspective One” (or the progressive ideology), then they are accused of waging a “War on Women.” The left assumes that all women think like liberals; that women who want less government in their lives so they can prosper on their own cannot think for themselves and are merely puppets for a husband or male authority figure.

Sadly, unless the discussion and facts favor women, any attempt to bring them to light is seen as an attack. In spite of the facts, the propaganda continues to say (for political and financial profit) that women are weak and dependent upon the government for success.

Conservative women counter that philosophy to say that women are strong and independent and able to make decisions and choices based on what is best for them and their families should they choose to have one. And while the message we constantly receive is to be weak and shallow, women who understand conservative ideology and principles look back across history to see that every time we’ve been challenged, we have drawn on deep wells of strength and determination to overcome the obstacles before us. For that we are eternally grateful to God and our nation.



## REAL PRO-WOMEN POLICIES

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The bombardment of “War on Women” rhetoric is still pervasive — through media, in political speeches, in Congress, and around the water coolers across the nation. Conservatives have been slow to respond and have responded ineffectively. Conservatives must counter the “War on Women” rhetoric in effective ways by being solutionists and offering workable alternatives to oppressive government intrusions. We believe the following concepts will provide the framework for a strategic conservative plan of action.

# SEXUAL CHOICES

Sex is a beautiful physical expression of love designed by God and sanctioned in Scripture in the framework of Holy matrimony. Natural law sets boundaries because promiscuous behavior damages both men and women. It inevitably leads to a damaged heart and soul with consequences that can be lasting and harmful to individuals, their progeny, and their community.

## The Consequences of Free Love

### Legislation

Abstinence Education Reallocation Act of 2013 (S. 13/H.R. 718) - While Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee (CWALAC) would prefer that federal funds are not used for sex education, it is wrong for contraceptive-based sex education to be funded at 16:1 of that of abstinence education.

Title V - The Title V abstinence education program, first authorized in 1996 by President Bill Clinton, provides grants so that American youths are given the tools they need to make healthy decisions. It stresses sexual risk avoidance and personal responsibility, thus empowering students to make life-affirming decisions. Abstinence education teaches students by encouraging them to weigh their choices, knowing all the facts, and then to make healthy decisions. It also encourages students who have previously made poor choices and gives them the power to change their behavior and move forward making better decisions.

### Community/Church Programming

There are successful sexual risk avoidance programs in nearly every metropolitan area. Aim for Success has reportedly reached 2 million youth, parents, and educators throughout the south with 65 percent of the participants claiming they will commit to abstinence or consider abstinence. These programs typically highlight the emotional aspect of sexual activity that is often overshadowed, as well as peer pressure, drugs and alcohol, and other stresses teenagers face. Through Title V or Community-Based Abstinence Education grants, these programs are usually available to schools, churches, and organizations free of charge.

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Mentorship programs for girls, like Best Friends or American Heritage Girls, are valuable resources for girls in which they receive information about dating, sex, and self-respect in a comfortable environment from a mentor they grow to trust. Girls who participated in the Best Friends program were found to be six-and-a-half times less likely to have sex than their D.C. public school peers. American Heritage Girls, which includes more than 32,000 members in all 50 states and in 14 countries, encourages their girls to stay sexual pure until marriage. These programs give children a wholesome environment in which to spend time after school and on the weekends with people who care about them and can mentor them.

## **The Consequences of Abortion**

### Legislation

No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act (S. 946/H.R. 7) - This legislation prohibits public funding for abortion in all federal programs and would ensure that no federal funds would be used for elective abortions.

State legislation that pushes for abortion clinic regulations - CWALAC advocates state legislation that would regulate abortion clinics, requiring hospital admitting privileges for those who perform abortions, building regulations for emergency services, etc., in order to protect women's health.

Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (S. 1670/H.R. 1797) - This bill limits abortion after five months, when babies can feel pain. Additionally, late-term abortions are dangerous for women, because there is a greater chance for hemorrhaging or perforation to the uterus.

Protecting Adoption Act (H.R. 3549) - The Protecting Adoption Act helps children to find a permanent home more quickly by creating a fatherhood registry which will enable the fathers' rights to be addressed in a timely manner.

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The Dave Thomas Adoption Act of 2013 (H.R. 1476) - This act amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow penalty-free withdrawals — up to \$10,000 — from individual retirement accounts (IRAs) if used to pay adoption expenses and unlimited withdrawals for expenses related to the adoption of a special needs child.

### **Community/Church Programming**

The non-profit Psalm 139 Project provides ultrasound machines to crisis pregnancy care centers so abortion-vulnerable parents can see their child before following through with an abortion procedure.

Faith-based, non-profit adoption facilities like Bethany Christian Services and New Beginnings help families adopt a child at a lower cost to the parents. Bethany Christian Services also helps place special-needs and foster-care children with families, and New Beginnings requires the parents to be married and committed to the Christian faith. Both organizations provide counseling to pregnant mothers who are considering abortion.

Birth Mothers, a non-profit in Northern Virginia, pairs a woman in crisis during her pregnancy or after giving birth with women in a local church who volunteer to mentor the woman through her pregnancy and after with life counseling and resources.

## **The Consequences of the Sexual Exploitation of Women**

### **Legislation**

Cable Choice/A La Carte Legislation - This would allow consumers to choose exactly what channels they want to come into their homes. Current cable bundling forces consumers to pay for programming that sexualizes children. The free market could make great strides in solving this problem if the cable companies did not hold consumers captive.

Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act (S.2301) - This act establishes a restitution process for victims of child pornography.

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Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (H.R. 3530/S.1738) - Part of this legislation provides services for child pornography victims. It includes the production of child pornography within the definitions of child abuse. Currently, it is against the law to air obscene programming at any time of the day. It is also against the law to air indecent or profane programming between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., when children are likely to be watching television or listening to the radio. However, recently the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed changing the rules governing their enforcement of broadcast decency laws. Under the new rules, the FCC would only investigate and issue fines against the most “egregious” broadcast content.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Privately-funded organizations like California-based Operation Underground Railroad (OUR) strive to rescue both U.S. children from foreign sex slavery, stop criminals from bringing children into America for slavery, and arrest the perpetrators. OUR works with police and local governments, both in the U.S. and abroad, to not only save children but to then provide those police and local governments with the resources to locate child sex slavery rings on their own.

## **MARRIAGE DECISION**

Across the board, marriage is on the decline. We must work to reverse the negative cultural perceptions about marriage, support reconciliation in troubled marriages, and acknowledge the overall importance of marriage so women can thrive, children can be supported, and men can adopt their role in families. Government support exists as a safety net for those who are desperate. But mothers deserve the all-encompassing daily support from a committed man over a monthly check from the government. We must stop adopting laws and policies that promote divorce or discourage marriage.

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## Cohabitation

### Legislation

Welfare Reform & Upward Mobility Act (S. 2015) - This bill rewards a state that seeks to improve welfare programs by restoring work incentives for individuals and families.

CWALAC would advocate for an end to the Marriage Penalty for all means-tested public benefits.

We would also advocate for an end to the Marriage Penalty for Medicaid benefits.

### Community/Church Programming

There are many programs like Project Six19 that talk to high school and college groups about God's place in relationships. The program discusses the statistics associated with cohabitation and early sexual activity and provides churches with a compelling and thought-provoking way to teach a sensitive but serious subject.

Concerned Women for America calls on the pastors of this nation to teach common sense and Biblical principles. Cohabitation is clearly an issue that cannot and should not be solved with legislation but is instead a cultural concern. Not since the 1990's, when then popular talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger waded into the issue with her book *10 Stupid Things Women Do To Mess Up Their Lives*, has anyone really had this discussion with women. Family breakdown has left our young couples with negative role models. As they cast about looking for answers, we urge cultural leaders to speak truth. Hollywood should not be America's relationship counselor.

## Divorce

### Legislation

CWA supports the reform of divorce laws. Parents with minor children should be required by the states to complete, at minimum, a one-year "cooling off" period combined with marital counseling

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using specified curriculum. Legislation should, naturally, include exceptions for cases of abuse, abandonment, or other extraordinary circumstances.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Programs like Marriage Savers work with communities to strengthen and rebuild at-risk marriages. Marriage Savers has reduced divorce and cohabitation rates and increased marriage rates in more than 100 cities/counties after helping to implement a Community Marriage Policy.

Churches and synagogues around the country often host divorce and recovery sessions or offer free counseling. In the case where reconciliation is not attainable, religious groups that can provide these services can help men and women through the troubling time of divorce and can work to lower the subsequent divorce rate by providing healing and skills needed for a future marriage.

## **Having it All**

### **Legislation**

The American Family Restoration Act - This legislation will eliminate some of the marriage penalties in the tax code.

### **Community/Church Programming**

It is not only women that want to have it all; men do as well. Non-profit fatherhood initiatives like Boot Camp for New Dads' free classes, which have helped more than 325,000 men become more confident in their fatherhood role, and National Fatherhood Initiative workshops, which have distributed more than 6.6 million fatherhood resources, can help strengthen marriages, lessen the number of children living in fatherless households, and build communities.

## ECONOMIC REALITIES

That struggling people can be given a second chance is part of what makes America great, and the best response to women who find themselves in poverty is a multifaceted one. Multiple institutions: families, communities, churches, and sometimes government have intricately woven roles in guiding women to wholeness. For women who desire to move out of poverty, education is a critical component. Whether for themselves or their children, it is an important part of the solution to breaking the cycle of dependence.

### Poverty and the Single Mother

#### Legislation

Student Success Act (H.R. 5) - This is a step in returning educational decisions to the states, thereby allowing parents, teachers, and local school boards — and not Washington bureaucrats — to make the critical decisions regarding a child's education.

School Choice Funding Portability Act - This amendment, included in H.R. 5, allows Title I funds to follow the students to public, magnet, and charter schools. It gives the most disadvantaged students, including homeless and foster children, the opportunity to get the best education possible.

The Children's Hope Act of 2013 (H.R. 422) - H.R. 422 amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a tax credit of up to \$100 (\$200 for joint returns) for charitable contributions to an education investment organization that disburses 90 percent of its contributions to provide grants to students for elementary and secondary education expenses, if at least 50 percent of such disbursements go to students who qualify for free or reduced-cost school lunches. A taxpayer claiming such credit, as a condition of eligibility to receive it, must first claim a state-qualified scholarship tax credit.

The Educational Opportunities Act (H.R.1381) - This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow individual taxpayers a tax credit for charitable contributions to a scholarship-granting organization and allows a maximum credit amount of \$4,500 (\$2,250 for a married individual filing a separate return). It imposes a penalty on

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scholarship granting organizations that fail to distribute at least 90 percent of their total receipts for elementary and secondary school expenses in a taxable year.

The Higher Education Reform and Opportunity Act of 2013 (S. 1904/H.R. 4612) - A college degree remains an important avenue of upward mobility; however, the costs of college have skyrocketed, and the economic returns of a college degree are stagnant. This legislation widens the accreditation process to include lower-priced education alternatives.

Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills Act (H.R. 803/S. 1911) - This bill aims to meet the specific needs of women and ensure they have the tools they need by providing an effective network of workforce training services. It makes sure that women will have the skills they need for jobs that currently exist by including job creators and business leaders.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) - WIOA is bipartisan, bicameral legislation that will improve our nation's workforce development system and put Americans back to work by eliminating 15 federal programs and applying the same outcome metrics to every workforce program. It will also empower local boards to tailor services to their region's employment and workforce needs.

State programs should deal with fathers fulfilling their responsibilities to their families and implementing policies that encourage marriage and the establishment of families so that mothers do not have to shoulder the burden of raising children alone.

Child tax credits should not only be permanent but also refundable.

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## **Community/Church Programming**

First Baptist Church in Garland, Texas, provides an example of how churches can be more active in supporting and building up low-educated women to help break the cycle of poverty. They provide free GED classes to the public and free childcare for the students. Grace Outreach provides tuition-free High School Equivalency classes, college preparatory programs, and career services for women in Bronx, New York. Grace Outreach has helped over 925 women receive their GEDs.

James City County in Virginia provides parenting classes, programs to help parenting and pregnant teens stay in school, services for families facing hardships, etc. They serve approximately 300 families a year and provide an example of how churches or communities can strengthen families through tangible resources and work to release people from the vicious cycle of poverty.

## **Poverty and America's Churches and Communities**

### **Legislation**

CWALAC supports reducing restrictions on churches and community organizations that provide services to the needy and reducing health restrictions or regulations on how restaurants handle surplus food items.

We also feel it would be helpful to review charitable deductions to encourage support of non-profits.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Many food pantries, like Bread of Life Wichita, are able to provide food, clothing, and ministry to the needy. They do not receive funding from the government. They are currently helping more than 51,000 people a year across nine Kansas counties.

# WORKPLACE OPPORTUNITIES

Occupational choices for women are integral to a healthy economy and to healthy families. The primary factor inhibiting our monetary success is not discrimination; rather it is the far more oppressive burdensome tax policy and regulatory overreach of our government. In addition, the majority of women who become mothers intensely love those children and prefer to maximize their time with them, so flexibility is the key. Government policies should encourage, rather than restrict, workforce flexibility practices. Employers should institute flexible policies that encourage productive and happy employees. Whether through job sharing, flex time, comp time, or the other multitude of arrangements, innovative employer/employee contracts should allow women to maximize participation in the workforce.

## The Advancement of the Working Woman

### Legislation

Legislators need to reform our labor laws like the Fair Labor Standards Act to allow for greater workplace flexibility and more job opportunities. Legislators need to eliminate oppressive licensing requirements.

Legislators need to codify best practices that private sector employers currently engage in as it relates to paid time off and flexible work arrangements.

### Community/Church Programming

Concerned Women for America calls on America's business owners to recognize the unique contribution of women to the workforce and the institutional knowledge lost when we leave. Job sharing, telecommuting, flex-time and other non-traditional arrangements should be looked at closely. Job sharing in particular offers mothers an opportunity to continue their career while spending the maximum amount of time with their children. The workforce as a whole could be strengthened by options that both meet the need of the employer and the worker. If women are given the tools to stay employed if they choose, then advancement is more achievable as they rejoin the workforce full-time as children age.

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Goodwill in southwest Florida has a Beyond Jobs program that provides unemployed women with financial education, work clothing assistance, transportation vouchers, and post-job-placement support. Between 2013 and 2015, the program is expected to help 230 women. The Goodwill's Job-Link center also helps with employment searches, skills training, family strengthening, resume preparation, interviewing skills, etc., and even provides free tax assistance.

Many churches and ministries will also offer English as a Second Language classes. GRACE Ministries in northern Virginia provides 14-week College Prep English as a Second Language classes to students of their Multicultural Nurse Aide Training Program.

## **Life Balance and the Working Woman**

### **Legislation**

Working Families Flexibility Act (H.R. 1406) - This legislation gives working women what they strongly desire and value: the ability to strike a balance between family life and work by allowing them to do things like attend a school play, stay home with a sick child, or care for an elderly parent.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Women make unique and different choices from men when it comes to employment. They are more likely to seek to balance their work and familial obligations. These choices impact how women are compensated. CWA encourages business owners to provide options for employees to better move in and out of the work situation as family needs dictate.

## **Childcare and the Working Woman**

### **Legislation**

In addition to increasing the Child Tax Credit for all families, legislators need to increase the Child Tax Credit for the first year of a child's life. This will help poorer women and families deal with

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times they may not be employed.

Currently, the Child and Dependent Care Tax discriminates against families with a stay-at-home parent. Legislators need to support policies that give families the tools they need to make decisions that fit their needs and not force them into the workforce simply for economic reasons. This includes revising the Child and Dependent Care Tax to include non-traditional providers like family and friends.

Legislators need to hold oversight hearings on the federally-funded preschool or other early learning programs to determine whether the money being spent is truly assisting families meet their objectives of balancing familial and work interests. In addition, they need to consolidate fragmented or duplicative federal childcare and education programs and empower states and localities to assist the economically disadvantaged.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Many churches, synagogues, and ministries are able to provide low-cost, all-day childcare for working parents. The First Presbyterian Church in Westerville, Ohio, is able to provide childcare for a couple of hours, one day a week, for the public. This allows unemployed mothers the chance to search and interview for jobs.

## **Cottage Industry and the Working Woman**

### **Legislation**

CWALAC supports legislation that would allow women to enter the work world through the development of a home business (cottage industry) without overbearing government interference limiting their economic freedom. The current burden of government regulation is smothering the entrepreneurial aspirations of many American women.

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## **Community/Church Programming**

The Community College of Philadelphia offers free seminars and training sessions for budding small-business owners so they can learn how to build a successful business that will end up benefiting the community.

Home-businesses like Pampered Chef, which employs over 60,000 independent consultants, Thirty-One, which employs more than 100,000 independent consultants, and Avon, which has more than 400,000 active representatives, allow women to be their own small-business owners while enjoying a flexible work environment. There are also countless careers available to women who want to be independent business owners at home like consulting, photography, child or senior care services, making and selling products online, free-lance writing, etc.

## **Equity and the Working Woman**

### **Legislation**

Women do not want legislators to discourage flexible working arrangements by creating a one-size-fits-all policy. Rather, legislators need to codify best practices that private sector employers engage in as it relates to paid time off and flexible work arrangements.

### **Community/Church Programming**

Women make unique and different choices from men when it comes to employment. They are more likely to seek to balance their work and familial obligations. These choices impact how women are compensated. CWA encourages business owners to provide options for employees to better move in and out of the work situation as family needs dictate.

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