

Fast Facts & Commentary Index

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Relationship Commitment

1. Half of all cohabiting couples either broke up or married within two years, and after five years, only 10-percent of cohabiting couples stayed together. In contrast, 55-percent of first marriages lasted a lifetime.

Edward Laumann, John Gagnon, Robert Michael and Stuart Michaels, *“The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States,”* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

2. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the spread of non-marital unions occurred at variable rates across Europe. In the Nordic countries of Sweden and Denmark, consensual unions were as common as marital unions. In the Mediterranean region (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain), cohabitation was substantially lower. The idealization of marital commitment hindered the spread of informal unions in Poland. Cohabitation was perceived as something unstable and insecure in Poland.

Monika Mynarska and Laura Bernardi, “Meanings and Attitudes Attached to Cohabitation in Poland,” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Population Association of America, Los Angeles, March 30-April 1, 2006, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research.

3. A study of U.S. divorce rates indicated that cohabitation increased the likelihood of divorce by about 35-percent among those who live together before marriage.

Jay Teachmen, “Stability across Cohorts in Divorce Risk Factors,” *Demography* 39 (2002): 331-351.

4. More than half of first marriages were preceded by cohabitation, compared to virtually none in the mid-1900s.

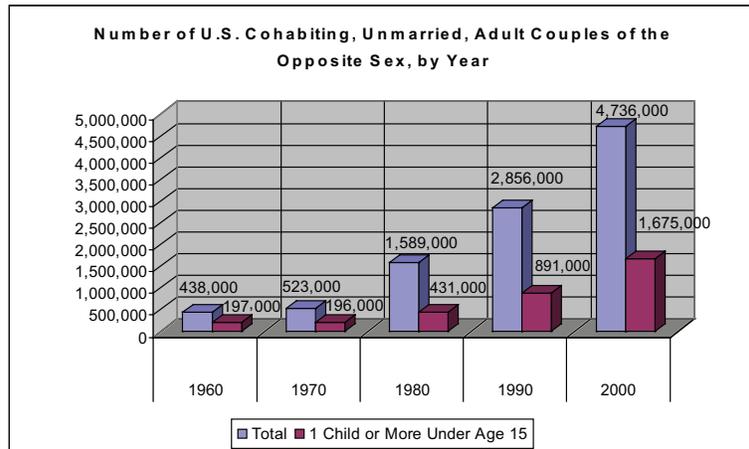
Larry Bumpass and Hsien-Hen Lu, “Trends in Cohabitation and Implications for Children’s Family Contexts in the U. S.,” *Population Studies* 54 (2000): 29-41.

The dissolution rate for women who cohabit premaritally with their future spouse were, on average, nearly 80-percent higher than the rate of those who do not.

Neil Bennett, Ann Blanc Klimas and David Bloom, “Commitment and the Modern Union: Assessing the Link Between Premarital Cohabitation and Subsequent Marital Stability,” *American Sociological Review* 53 (1988): 127-138.

Relationship Commitment continued

CHART 1



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P20-537, *America's Families and Living Arrangements: March 2000 and earlier reports.*

The U.S. Census Bureau reported 4.5 million cohabiting couples in 1999, compared to just 1.6 million in 1980.

Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2000, Tables, 57, 60, 62, 86, U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2 September 2003.

5. A husband's dedication to his wife and levels of satisfaction in marriage were significantly lower if cohabitation had preceded the wedding.

Scott Stanley, Sarah Whitton and Howard Markman, "Maybe I Do: Interpersonal Commitment and Premarital or Nonmarital Cohabitation," *Journal of Family Issues* 25 (2004): 496-519.

6. In a 40-year period at the end of the 20th century, the number of U.S. cohabiting couples increased by nearly 1,200-percent. In comparison, U.S. population grew 61-percent in the same time frame.

State of our Unions 2005, National Marriage Project, Rutgers, The state University of New Jersey. Data from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P20-537; *America's Families and Living Arrangements: March 2000*. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Division, Current Population Survey, 2004 Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Information Please Almanac Atlas and Yearbook 1976, Ann Golenpaul, ed., Dan Golenpaul Associates, p. 696.

Relationship Commitment continued

7. U.S. couples that cohabited before marriage had a 46-percent greater risk of divorce than couples that did not live together before marriage.

Alfred DeMaris and Vaninadha Rao, "Premarital Cohabitation and Subsequent Marital Stability in the United States: A Reassessment," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 54 (1992): 178-190.

8. "Throughout the annals of human experience, in dozens of civilizations and cultures of varying value systems, humanity has discovered that the permanent relationship between men and women is a keystone to the stability, strength, and health of human society — a relationship worthy of legal recognition and judicial protection."

Senator Robert C. Byrd, West Virginia, at the signing of the Defense of Marriage Act, 1996.

9. Couples in the Netherlands that cohabited prior to marriage had a 29-percent higher risk of divorce than couples that did not cohabit.

Matthus Kalmijn, Paul De Graaf and Anne-Rigt Poortman, "Interactions Between Cultural and Economic Determinants of Divorce in The Netherlands," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66 (2004): 75-89.

10. Premarital cohabiters in Canada had more than twice the risk of divorce in any year of marriage when compared with non-cohabiters.

David Hall and John Zhao, "Cohabitation and Divorce in Canada: Testing the Selectivity Hypothesis," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 57 (1995): 421-427.

11. An international study revealed that within two years, 32.4-percent of cohabiting couples had separated, compared to just 8.3-percent of married couples. Cohabiters had rates of separation that are 4.62 times as high as married couples.

Georgina Binstock and Arland Thornton, "Separations, Reconciliations, and Living Apart in Cohabiting and Marital Unions," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65 (2003): 432-443.

12. In spite of a high divorce rate, 92-percent of people surveyed said having a successful marriage is very important to them.

Wirthlin Worldwide, August 1996. Cited by: "The Family, Marriage: Highly Valued," *Public Perspective* February/March (1998): 17.

The majority of cohabitating couples will maintain a relationship for just 18 months.

Larry Bumpass and Lu Hsien-hen, "Trends in Cohabitation and Implications for Children's Family Contexts in the United States," *Population Studies* 54 (2000): 19-41.

Relationship Commitment continued

Premarital sexual activity results in a significantly higher chance of marital failure.

Joan Kahn and Kathryn London, "Premarital Sex and the Risk of Divorce," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991): 845-855.

13. After five to seven years, 39- percent of all cohabiting couples have broken their relationships, 40-percent have married (although the marriage might not have lasted) and only 21- percent still cohabit.

Lynne Casper and Suzanne Bianchi, "*Continuity and Change in the American Family*," (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002).

14. Forty-six percent of all cohabitations in a given year are classified as "precursors to marriage." Yet, only 52-percent of those classified as "precursors to marriage" actually married after five to seven years and 31-percent split up.

Lynne Casper and Suzanne Bianchi, "*Continuity and Change in the American Family*," (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002).

15. The expectation of a positive relationship between cohabitation and marital stability has been shattered by studies in several Western nations. Those who cohabit before marriage had substantially higher divorce rates than those who did not; the recorded differentials ranged from 50-100 percent.

William Axinn and Arland Thornton, "The Relationship Between Cohabitation and Divorce: Selectivity or Causal Influence?" *Demography* 29 (1992): 357-74.

16. Young people who had cohabited desired significantly fewer children and were significantly more approving of divorce than young people who never cohabited.

William Axinn and Jennifer Barber, "Living Arrangements and Family Formation Attitudes in Early Adulthood," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 59 (1997): 595-611.

17. Couples with single and multiple cohabitation experiences displayed poorer communication skills compared to couples with no premarital cohabitation.

Catherine Cohan and Stacey Kleinbaum, "Toward a Greater Understanding of the Cohabitation Effect: Pre-marital Cohabitation and Marital Communication," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 64 (2002): 180-192.

Relationship Commitment continued

18. Couples that cohabited prior to marriage reported greater marital conflict, poorer communication, more individualistic views of marriage (wives only), less commitment to the institution of marriage, and a greater likelihood of divorce.

Elizabeth Thomson and Ugo Colella, "Cohabitation and Marital Stability: Quality or Commitment," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 54 (1992): 259-267.

19. Cohabitation was probably least harmful when viewed as prenuptial — when both partners definitely planned to marry, had formally announced their engagement and had chosen a wedding date.

David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," The National Marriage Project, 1999.

20. The reasons for cohabitating vary. Some saw it as a prelude to marriage, some as an alternative to marriage, and for others it was an alternative to living alone.

R. Rindfuss and A. Van Den Heuvel, "Cohabitation: A Precursor to Marriage or an Alternative to Being Single?" *Population and Development Review* 16 (1990): 703-726. Wendy Manning, "Marriage and Cohabitation Following Premarital Conception," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 55 (1993): 839-850.

21. No positive contribution of cohabitation to marriage had ever been found.

William Axinn and Arland Thornton, "The Relationship Between Cohabitation and Divorce: Selectivity or Causal Influence," *Demography* 29-3 (1992): 357-374. Lee A Lillard, Michael Brien, and Linda Waite, "Premarital Cohabitation and Subsequent Marital Dissolution: A Matter of Self-Selection?" *Demography* 32-3 (1995): 437-457.

Unmarried cohabiting parents were five times more likely to break up than married parents.

Alexandra Freen,
"Unmarried Families Are More Likely to fall Apart," *The London Times* February 5, 2005.

Fidelity

Individuals who engaged in premarital sexual activity were 50-percent more likely to divorce later in life than those who remained abstinent prior to their marriage.

Joan Kahn and Kathryn London, "Premarital Sex and the Risk of Divorce," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991): 845-855.

22. Couples that cohabited prior to marriage were at 39-percent greater risk of marital infidelity.

Judith Treas and Deirdre Giesen, "Sexual Infidelity Among Married and Cohabiting Americans," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (2000): 48-60.

23. Cohabiting women were 3.3 times more likely than married women to cheat on their partners. The researchers stated: "Cohabiting relationships appeared to be more similar to dating relationships than to marriage."

Renata Forste and Koray Tanfer, "Sexual Exclusivity Among Dating, Cohabiting, and Married Women," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (1996): 33-47.

24. Twenty percent of cohabiting women had a secondary sex partner, compared to only 4-percent of married women.

Edward Laumann, John Gagnon, Robert Michael and Stuart Michaels, *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

25. Cohabitants were twice as likely to be unfaithful as are married people. Researchers concluded that the lower investments of cohabiting unions – rather than their values – accounted for the increased infidelity.

Judith Treas and Deirdre Giesen, "Sexual Infidelity Among Married and Cohabiting Americans," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (2000): 48-60.

26. Young men who fathered a child outside of marriage were twice as likely to cohabit and much less likely to marry than those who did not.

Steven Nock, "The Consequences of Premarital Fatherhood," *American Sociological Review* 62 (1998): 250-263.

Fidelity continued

27. A U.S. study found divorce more common among those who engaged in premarital sex. Men were 63-percent more likely and women 76-percent more likely to divorce if they had sex before marriage.

Edward Laumann, John Gagnon, Robert Michael and Stuart Michaels, *“The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States,”* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 364.

28. “A major problem with cohabitation is that it is a tentative arrangement that lacks stability; no one can depend upon the relationship — not the partners, not the children, not the community, nor the society.”

Dr. Janice Shaw Crouse, Senior Fellow, The Beverly LaHaye Institute of Concerned Women for America.

Compared to married peers, cohabiting men were almost twice as likely to cheat on their partners.

Julie Pulerwita, Jose-Antonio Iszazola-Liecea, and Steven Gortmaker, “Extrarelational Sex Among Mexican Men and Their Partners’ Risk of HIV and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases,” *American Journal of Public Health* 91 (2001): 1650-1652.

Domestic Violence

Cohabiting couples reported rates of physical aggression in their relationship that were three times higher than those reported by married couples.

Sonia Miner Salari and Bret Baldwin, "Verbal, Physical and Injurious Aggression Among Intimate Couples Over Time," *Journal of Family Issues* 23 (May 2002): 523-550.

29. The Family Violence Research Program at the University of New Hampshire found that cohabiters were much more violent than married couples, that the overall rates of violence among cohabiting couples was double that of married couples and "severe" violence was five times as high for cohabiters.

Kersti Yllo and Murray Straus, "Interpersonal Violence Among Married and Cohabiting Couples," *Family Relations* 30 (1981): 339-347.

30. Cohabiting women were more likely than married women to report experiencing lifetime and current relationship intimate partner violence (42-percent vs. 30-percent). Compared to cohabiting or single women, married women reported less substance use. Women may increase their drug use frequency in response to experiencing partner violence.

Maria Testa, Jennifer Livingston and Kenneth Leonard, "Women's Substance Use and Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence: A Longitudinal Investigation Among a Community Sample," *Addictive Behaviors* 28 (2003): 1,649-1,664.

31. Three times as many cohabiters admitted "hitting, shoving, and throwing things at their partners in the past year," compared to married couples. Cohabiters are also more likely to exhibit depression and drunkenness than married couples.

Jan Stets, "Cohabiting and Marital Aggression: The Role of Social Isolation," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991): 669-680.

32. Aggression was at least twice as common among cohabiters as it is among married partners. During a one-year period, 35 out of every 100 cohabiting couples experienced physical aggression, compared to 15 out of every 100 married couples.

Jan Stets, "Cohabiting and Marital Aggression: The Role of Social Isolation," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991): 669-680.

Domestic Violence continued

33. The risk of experiencing violence was significantly higher for a woman living in a de facto rather than a married relationship.

Christopher O'Donnell, Angie Smith and Jeanne Madison, "Using Demographic Risk Factors to Explain Variables in the Incidence of Violence Against Women," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 17 (2002): 1,239-1,262.

34. U.S. and Canadian women in cohabiting relationships were nine times more likely to be killed by their partner than women in marital relationships.

Todd Shackelford, "Cohabitation, Marriage and Murder," *Aggressive Behavior* 27 (2001): 284-291. Margo Wilson, Martin Daly and C. Wright, "Uxoricide in Canada: Demographic Risk Patterns," *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 35 (1993): 263-291.

35. The U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey found violent behavior among men strongly linked to marital status. More than 57,000 women per year were violently assaulted by their husbands. In contrast, more than 200,000 women per year were assaulted by their boyfriends and 216,000 by ex-husbands. Of all the violent crimes against women committed by intimates during this period, 65-percent were committed by either boyfriends or ex-husbands, compared with 9-percent by husbands.

David Blankenhorn, "*Fatherless America: Confronting our Most Urgent Social Problem*," Harper Perennial p. 35. Cited by: Carolyn Wolf Harlow, *Female Victims of Violent Crime*, Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 1991, 1-2.

36. A New Zealand study compared violence in dating and cohabiting relationships, finding that cohabiters were twice as likely to be physically abusive toward their partners after controlling statistically for selection factors.

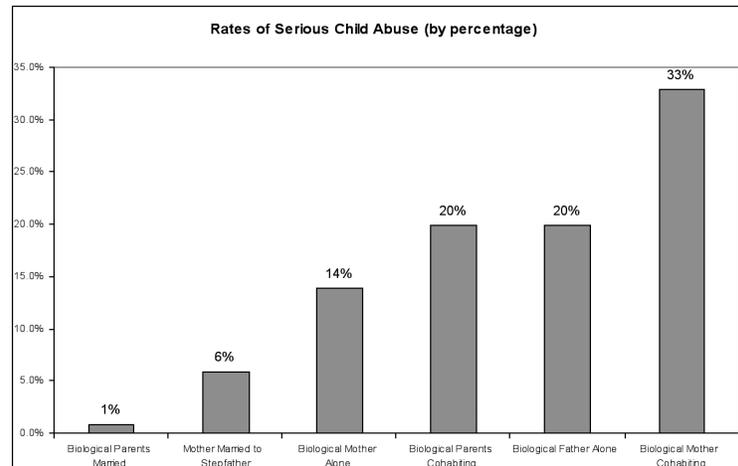
Lynn Magdol, T.Moffitt, A.Caspi and P.Silva: "Hitting Without a License," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 60 (1998): 41-55. Cited by: David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," National Marriage Project, 1999.

Aggression was at least twice as common among cohabiters as it is among married partners. Women in cohabiting relationships were more likely than married women to suffer physical and sexual abuse.

Jan Stets, "Cohabiting and Marital Aggression: The Role of Social Isolation," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991): 669-680. David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," The National Marriage Project, 1999.

Impact on Children

CHART 2



Sources: Robert Whelan, *Broken Homes and Battered Children: A Study of the Relationship Between Child Abuse and Family Type*, London: Family Education Trust, 1993. Cited by *The Heritage Foundation*.

Children living in homes occupied by their mothers' boyfriends or other non-relatives were up to 48 times more likely to die from child abuse than those who live with two biological parents. Households with a single parent and no other adults had no increased risk of fatal injury.

Patricia Schnitzer and Bernard Ewigman, "Child Deaths Resulting From Inflicted Injuries: Household Risk Factors and Perpetrator Characteristics," *Pediatrics* 116, 5 (2005): e687-e693.

37. Child abuse has increased in recent decades by more than 10-percent a year, according to one estimate.

Researchers suggest this increase is related strongly to changing family forms.

Andrea Sedlak and Diane Broadhurst, "The Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect," (Washington, DC: HHS-National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect), 1996.

38. Cohabitation was more unstable for children than either married two-parent or single-mother families and tended to produce worse outcomes for children.

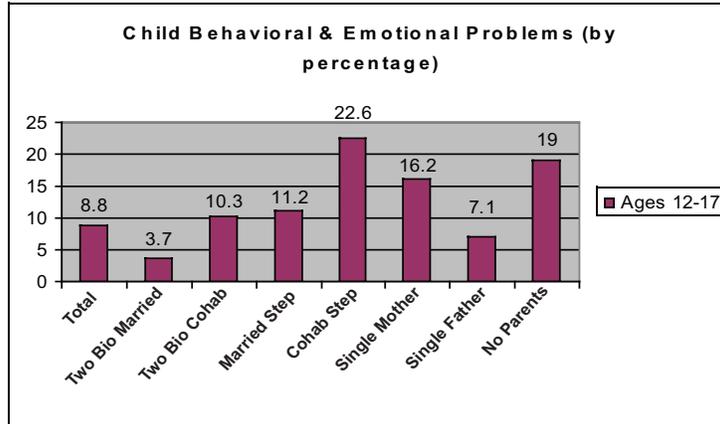
American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on the Family, "Family Pediatrics," *Pediatrics* 111 Supplement (2003): 1,541-1,553.

39. Children in several nations were beaten by stepfathers at a rate of 100 times more than genetic fathers. The rate was 120 times in Canada. Children residing with stepparents were at higher risk of abuse even when socio-economic factors were considered.

Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, "The Cinderella effect: parental discrimination against stepchildren," *Samfundskøkonomien* 2002 (4): 39-46.

Impact on Children continued

CHART 3



Source: Alan Booth and Ann Crouter, editors, "Just Living Together: Implications of Cohabitation on Families, Children and Social Policy.

40. Parental cohabitation was associated with worse child outcomes, especially relative to two biological parent married families. Adolescents in cohabiting stepfamilies were more delinquent than their counterparts in married stepfamilies and they exhibited lower levels of well-being than their counterparts in two biological married parent families. Adolescents in stable cohabiting stepfamilies reported high levels of academic problems.

Susan Brown, "Parental Cohabitation and Child Well-Being," unpublished manuscript, Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, pp. 5, 6, 23, 27.

41. Children living in cohabiting households were less inclined to care about school and homework performance and their academic performance was poorer than that of children living with their married biological parents.

Susan Brown, "Child Well-being in Cohabiting Families," in Alan Booth and Ann Crouter, eds., *Just Living Together: Implications of Cohabitation on Families, Children, and Social Policy* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 173-187. Elizabeth Thomson, Thomas Hanson and Sara McLanahan, "Family Structure and Child Well-Being: Economic Resources vs. Parental Behaviors," *Social Forces* 73 (1994): 221-242.

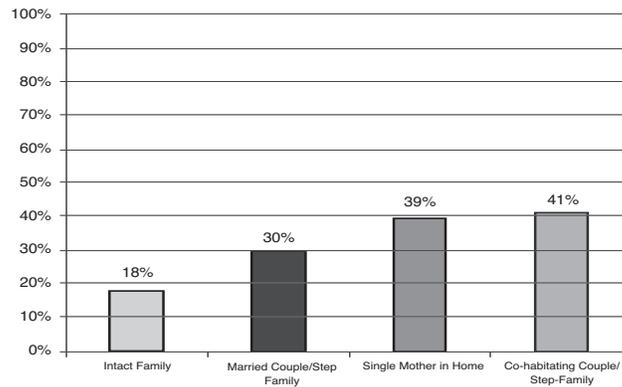
Evidence suggests the least safe of all environments for children is that in which the mother is living with someone other than the child's biological father. This is the environment for the majority of children in cohabiting couple households.

David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," National Marriage Project, 1999.

Impact on Children continued

CHART 4

Adolescents Suspended or Expelled from School



Source: Wendy D. Manning and Kathleen A. Lamb, "Adolescent Well-being in Cohabiting, Married, and Single-Parent Families," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65 [2003]: 876-893

Compared to children with married parents, four times as many children in cohabiting homes live in poverty.

Susan Brown, "Child Well-being in Cohabiting Families," in Alan Booth and Ann Crouter, eds., *Just Living Together: Implications of Cohabitation on Families, Children, and Social Policy* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 173-187.

42. The poverty rate for children living in cohabiting households was more than five times the poverty rate of married couple households, (31-percent to 6-percent).

David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," National Marriage Project, 1999.

43. Cohabiting couples with children in the household earned just two-thirds of the annual income of married couples with children. The difference was attributed to the fact that the average income of male cohabiting partners was only about half that of male married partners.

Wendy Manning and Daniel Lichter, "Parental Cohabitation and Children's Economic Well-Being," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (1996): 998-1,010.

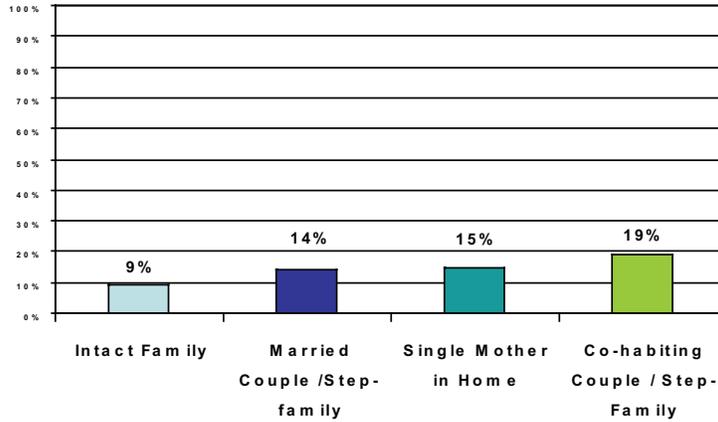
44. Children in cohabiting households demonstrated more emotional and behavioral problems, such as not getting along with peers, experiencing difficulty in concentration and feeling sad or depressed. Among adolescents ages 12-17, the percentage of those exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems was six times greater in cohabiting stepfamilies than in married biological-parent families. Negative school engagement was also more common among children in cohabiting families.

Susan Brown, "Child Well-being in Cohabiting Families," in Alan Booth and Ann Crouter, eds., *Just Living Together: Implications of Cohabitation on Families, Children, and Social Policy* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 173-187.

Impact on Children continued

CHART 5

Students with Low Grades in Two or More Subjects, by Home Conditions



Source: Wendy Manning and Kathleen Lamb, "Adolescent Well-Being in Cohabiting, Married and Single-Parent Families," Journal of Marriage and Family 65 (2003): 876-893.

45. Children in single-parent families, born to unmarried mothers, living in stepfamilies or cohabiting relationships faced higher risks of poor outcomes. Compared with children from traditional families, children from nontraditional families showed more psychological problems (as rated by their parents) and more internalizing behavior (as rated by their teachers). Boys from nontraditional families were especially at a disadvantage; they demonstrated lower self-concept, more externalizing, poorer classroom behavior and lower grade-point averages.

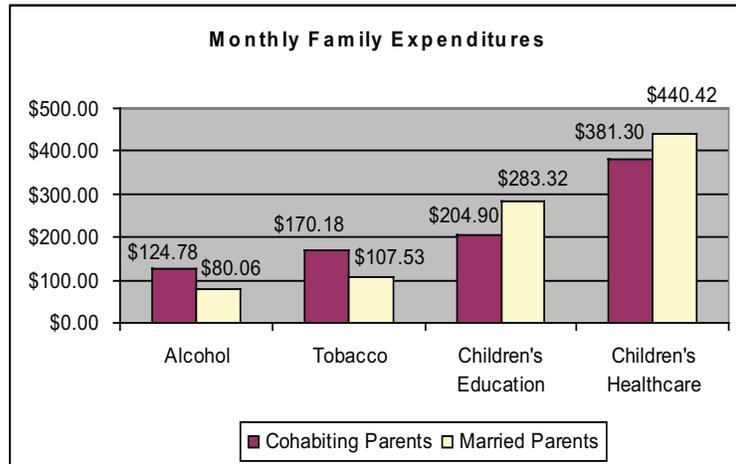
Phyllis Bronstein, JoAnn Clauson, Miriam Frankel Stoll and Craig Abrams, "Parenting Behavior and Children's Social, Psychological and Academic Adjustment in Diverse Family Structure," *Family Relations* 42 (1993): 268-276.

Children whose parents are married are healthier, display higher educational attainment and were less likely to be on welfare or involved in crimes and drugs.

Patrick Fagan,
"Perception Correction for Congress: New Study Indicates Poor Parents Want to Marry,"
Heritage Foundation,
October 2001.

Impact on Children continued

CHART 6



*Source: Thomas DeLeire and Ariel Kalil, "How Do Cohabiting Couples with Children Spend Their Money?" *Journal of Marriage* 67 (May 2005): 290.*

Few propositions have more empirical support in the social sciences than this one: Compared to all other family forms, families headed by married, biological parents best for children.

David Popenoe, "The Scholarly Consensus on Marriage," Center for Marriage and Family at the Institute for American Values Fact Sheet #2 (February 2006).

46. Children currently living with their mother and her unmarried partner had significantly more behavior problems and lower academic performance than children in intact families.

Elizabeth Thompson, T. Hanson and Sara McLanahan, "Family Structure and Child Well-Being: Economic Resources versus Parental Behaviors," *Social Forces* 73 (1994): 221-242. Rachel Dunifon and Lori Kowaleski-Jones, "Who's in the House? Effects of Family Structure on Children's Home Environments and Cognitive Outcomes," *Child Development*, forthcoming. Susan Brown, "Parental Cohabitation and Child Well-Being," unpublished manuscript, Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio.

Adolescent Crime

47. Family structure was one of the strongest, if not *the* strongest, predictor of variations of urban violence across the United States. All else equal, in cities where family disruption is high, the rate of violence was also high.

Robert Sampson, Unemployment and Imbalanced Sex Ratios: Race-Specific Consequences for Family Structure and Crime. In: M. B. Tucker; C. Mitchell-Kernan (Eds.), *The Decline in Marriage Among African-Americans* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1995): 229-254.

48. The vast majority of juvenile delinquents in Wisconsin were either born out of wedlock or the product of broken homes. Only 13-percent of delinquents came from families in which the biological mother and father were married to each other. By contrast, 33-percent had parents who were either divorced or separated and 44-percent had parents who were never married.

"Family Status of Delinquents in Juvenile Correction Facilities in Wisconsin." Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Youth Services, April 1994. Sourced from Wade Horn, "Father Facts," 3rd Edition, National Fatherhood Initiative.

A study of adolescents convicted of homicide found that at the time of the crimes 43-percent of their parents had never been married, 30-percent were divorced and 9-percent were separated.

Patrick Darby, Wesley Allan, Javad Kashani, Kenneth Hartke and John Reid, "Analysis of 112 Juveniles Who Committed Homicide: Characteristics and a Closer Look at Family Abuse," *Journal of Family Violence* 13 (1998): 365-374.

Cohabitation and Parenting

Nearly half the mothers who gave birth outside of marriage were cohabiting with the child's father at the time of the birth. Both the father and mother are typically in their early twenties.

Sara McLanahan, Irwin Garfinkel, Nancy Reichman, Julien Teitler, Marcia Carlson and Christina Norland Audigier, "The Fragile Families and Child Well being Study," The National Report, Revised March 2003.

49. Eighty-six percent of people worldwide agreed that "[a]ll things being equal, it is better for children to be raised in a household that has a married mother and father."

Justin Torres, "Study: Support For Traditional Family is Global," CyberNews Service, November 4, 1999.

50. A substantial proportion of non-marital births occurred with couples that lived together. In the 1990s, 40-percent of out-of-wedlock births occurred in cohabiting unions.

Amara Bachu, "Trends in Premarital Childbearing: 1930-1994," U.S. Census Bureau, Washington D.C., (1999): 23-197.

51. An estimated 40-percent of all children were expected to spend some time in a cohabiting household while growing up. The proportion of cohabiting mothers who eventually marry the fathers of their children declined from 57-percent in 1987 to 44-percent in 1997.

Larry Bumpass and Hsien-Hen Lu, "Trends in Cohabitation and Implications for Children's Family Contexts in the U.S.," *Population Studies* 54 (2000) 29-41.

52. Regardless of economic and parental resources, the outcomes of adolescents in cohabiting families were worse, on average, than those experienced by adolescents in families headed by two married, biological parents.

Susan Brown, "Family Structure and Child Well-Being: The Significance of Parental Cohabitation," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66 (2004): 351-367.

53. Compared with married mothers, those living in cohabiting unions were more likely to give birth prematurely (14-percent), have undersize babies (18-percent) and deliver underweight babies (21-percent). Their newborns stood a 7-percent greater risk of dying within the first six weeks of birth and a 23-percent greater risk of dying within a year. The disparities persisted when the researchers accounted for factors such as the mother's age, education and whether she had given birth before. Between 1990 and 2004, the number of children born into cohabiting relationships doubled.

Z.C. Luo, Russell Wilkins and Michael Kramer, "Disparities in Pregnancy Outcomes According to Marital and Cohabitation Status," *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 103 6 (2004): 1,300-1,307.

Cohabitation and Parenting continued

54. Three-quarters of children born to cohabiting parents would experience parental breakup before they reach age 16. Nearly a third of children born to married parents faced a similar fate.

David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," National Marriage Project, 1999.

55. Young men who fathered a child outside of marriage were twice as likely to cohabit and much less likely to marry than those who do not.

Steven Nock, "The Consequences of Premarital Fatherhood," *American Sociological Review* 63 (1998): 250-263. Cited by: *Family Planning Perspectives* 30 (September/October 1998): 248-249.

56. Daughters of single parents were 164-percent more likely to have a premarital birth of their own, 111-percent were more likely to give birth as teenagers and 92-percent were more likely to divorce than daughters of married parents.

Irwin Garfinkel and Sarah McLanahan, "Single Mothers and Their Children (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 1989). Cited by: William Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* (Colorado Springs: Random House, 1999): 62.

57. The infants of married mothers were more likely to be securely attached than those of cohabiting or single mothers, even after controlling for age, ethnicity and education.

Stacy Aronson and Aletha Huston, "The Mother-Infant Relationship in Single, Cohabiting, and Married Families: A Case of Marriage?" *Journal of Family Psychology* 18, 1 (2004): 5-18.

58. Married mothers showed greater psychological well-being and reported less ambivalence and conflict, and greater love and intimacy in their relationships with their partners than cohabiting or single mothers.

Stacy Aronson and Aletha Huston, "The Mother-Infant Relationship in Single, Cohabiting, and Married Families: A Case of Marriage?" *Journal of Family Psychology* 18, 1 (2004): 5-18.

The instability of cohabiting families was revealed in statistics showing that "nearly half of cohabiting mothers have ended their relationship with their child's father by the time their children were three years old."

Sara McLanahan,
"Diverging Destinies:
How Children Are
Faring Under the Second
Demographic
Transition," *Demography*
41 (2004): 607-627.

Cohabitation and Parenting continued

The infants of married mothers were more likely to be securely attached than those of cohabiting or single mothers, even after controlling for age, ethnicity and education.

Stacy Aronson and Aletha Huston, "The Mother-Infant Relationship in Single, Cohabiting, and Married Families: A Case of Marriage?" *Journal of Family Psychology* 18, 1 (2004): 5-18.

59. Unmarried parents were five times more likely to break up than married parents. Three-quarters of all family breakdown affecting young children involved unmarried parents.

Henry Benson, Bristol Community Trust, drawing from British data from the Office of National Statistics. Cited by: Alexandra Freaan, "Unmarried Families Are More Likely to fall Apart," *The London Times*, February 5, 2005.

60. Cohabiting parents reported lower psychological well-being, on average, and they tended to provide less parental control and support than married parents (Thomson, Braun, and Curtain 1992; Thomson, Hanson, and McLanahan 1994).

Cited by: Susan Brown, "Parental Cohabitation and Child Well-Being," unpublished manuscript, Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, p. 6.

Economic Impact on Cohabiting Partners

61. Individuals who were not continuously married had significantly less wealth than those who remained married throughout the course of life. Overall, unmarried adults experienced a 63-percent reduction in total wealth relative to those who are married. Researchers reported the following wealth reductions: 77-percent for those who were separated, 75-percent for those never married, 73-percent for the divorced, 58-percent for the cohabiting and 45-percent for the widowed.

Janet Wilmoth and Gregor Koso, "Does Marital History Matter? Marital Status and Wealth Outcomes Among Preretirement Adults," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 64 (2002): 254-268.

62. Cohabitors were more likely to have separate bank accounts and less likely than married people to support or be financially responsible for their partner.

Jeffry Larson, "Verdict on Cohabitation vs. Marriage," *Marriage and Family* (January 2001).

63. In general, married women worked less than cohabiting women and married men work more than cohabiting men.

Robert Leman, "Marriage and the Economic Well-Being of Families with Children," Urban Institute and American University, prepared for U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, July 2002.

64. After dissolution, formerly cohabiting men's economic standing declined moderately, whereas formerly cohabiting women's declined much more precipitously, leaving a substantial proportion of women in poverty. This effect was particularly pronounced for African American and Hispanic women.

Sarah Avellar and Pamela Smock, "The Economic Consequences of the Dissolution of Cohabiting Unions." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67 2 (2005): 315-327.

65. Cohabitors were less likely to share their income than married couples.

A. Winkler, "Economic Decision Making by Cohabitors: Findings Regarding Income Pooling," *Applied Economics* 29, 8 (1997): 1,079-1,090.

"Cohabiting parents are more likely to be covered by Medicaid than are married-parent families (36-percent vs. 15-percent)."

Thomas DeLeire and Ariel Kalil, "How Do Cohabiting Couples with Children Spend Their Money?" *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67 (2005): 291.

Economic Impact on Cohabiting Partners continued

Despite the apparent popularity of cohabitation among young people, women were less interested in this lifestyle than men.

A. Milan, "Would you live common-law?" *Canadian Social Trends*, 70 (2003): 2-6.

66. The median family income for two-parent families was more than double that of families in which the mother was divorced and more than four times that of families in which the mother never married.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1998." Cited by: William Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* (Colorado Springs: Random House, 1999), 60.

67. Relative to their married peers, cohabitants were significantly less likely to give help to their parents, to have received help from their parents and to turn to their parents in emergency. This lack of "exchange relationships" with their parents thwarts the kind of intergenerational ties that often make for a successful relationship and marriage.

David Eggebeen, "Cohabitation and Exchanges of Support," *Social Forces* 83 (2005): 1,097-1,110.

68. Family members were more willing to transfer wealth to "in-laws" than to cohabiting boyfriends or girlfriends.

David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples Need to Know about Cohabitation Before Marriage," National Marriage Project, 1999. Lingxin Hao, "Family Structure, Private Transfers, and the Economic Well-Being of Families with Children," *Social Forces* 75 (1996): 269-292.

Mental Health and Well-Being

CHART 7

The Benefits of Marriage for Adults

- Better health and greater longevity
- Safer homes
- More wealth
- Healthier society
- Better intimate relations
- Less substance abuse and addiction
- Lower taxes
- More happiness

The Benefits of Marriage for Society

- Less premarital sex
- Less abortion
- Less poverty
- Less crime, less violence
- Healthier society
- Less hardship and better outcomes for children
- Less government
- Safer homes

Sources: Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially* (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 97-123. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Intimate Partner Violence*, National Crime Victimization Survey, U.S. Department of Justice, May 2000, 4-5, 11.

69. Cohabiters had a “significantly higher” risk of suicide than married people “even though cohabitation was almost equivalent to an officially certified marriage relationship in the eyes of most people in Denmark.”

Ping Qin, Esben Agerbo, and Preben Bo Mortensen, “Suicide Risk in Relation to Socioeconomic, Demographic, Psychiatric, and Familial Factors: A National Register-Based Study of All Suicides in Denmark, 1981-1997,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 160 (2003): 765-772.

70. Compared to married couples, cohabiting couples reported more frequent disagreements, more violence and less happiness with their relationships.

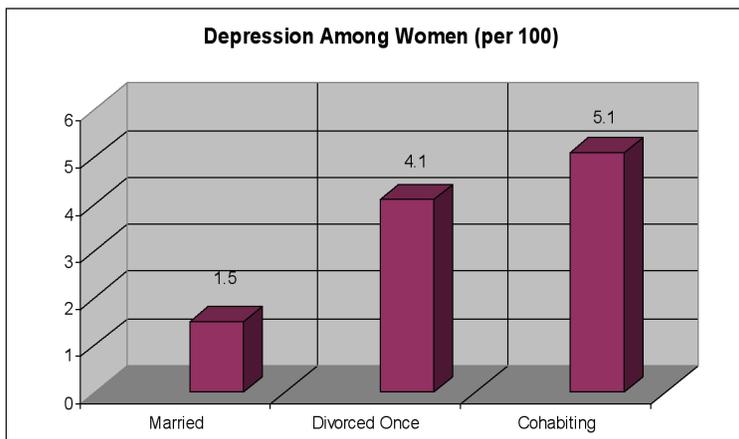
Susan Brown and Alan Booth, “Cohabitation Versus Marriage: A Comparison of Relationship Quality,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (1996): 668-678.

A study of 17 nations found that married men and women reported higher levels of happiness than cohabiting couples.

Steven Stack and Ross Eshleman, “Marital Status and Happiness: A 17-Nation Study,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 60 (1998): 527-530.

Mental Health and Well-Being continued

CHART 8



Source: Lee Robins and Darrel Regier, *Psychiatric Disorders in America: The Epidemiologic Catchment Area Study* (New York: Free Press, 1991): 72.

Married mothers had lower rates of depression than single or cohabiting mothers.

Susan Brown, "The Effect of Union Type on Psychological Well-Being: Depression Among Cohabitors versus Marrieds," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 41 (2000): 241-255.

71. Married workers were, on average, more productive workers. Married men work longer hours, had lower quit rates and longer job tenure than non-married men. Marriage makes men more focused and motivated at work. Married people adopt healthier lifestyles, reduce consumption of alcohol and other substances and engage in fewer risky behaviors. Thus, married employees are less likely to show up for work hung over, sick or sleep deprived.

Maggie Gallagher, *Why Supporting Marriage Makes Business Sense*, Corporate Resource Council, 2002, pp. 1, 2.

72. Annual rates of depression among cohabiting couples were more than three times that of married couples.

Lee Robins and Darrel Reiger, *Psychiatric Disorders in America*. (New York: Free Press, 1990): 72. Susan Brown, "The Effect of Union Type on Psychological Well-Being: Depression among Cohabitors versus Marrieds," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 41 (2000).

73. Married couples reported more commitment and happiness in their unions and better relationships with their parents than did cohabiting couples.

Steven Nock, "A Comparison of Marriages and Cohabiting Relationships," *Journal of Family Issues* 16 (1995): 53-76.

Substance Abuse

74. Marriages preceded by cohabitation were more prone to drug and alcohol use, more permissive sexual relationships and an abhorrence of dependence than marriages not preceded by cohabitation.

Michael Newcomb and P. Bentler, "Assessment of Personality and Demographic Aspects of Cohabitation and Marital Success," *Journal of Personality Assessment* 44 (1980): 11-24.

75. Cohabitants tolerated behavior in their partners that husbands and wives would discourage -- particularly smoking, alcohol and substance abuse.

Allan Horwitz and Helen White, "The Relationship of Cohabitation and Mental Health: A Study of a Young Adult Cohort," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 60, 2 (1998): 505-514.

76. Young people involved in substance use during their secondary school years were more likely than average to become cohabiters during their twenties. High school seniors who smoked cigarettes, and/or used more alcohol, and/or used marijuana and/or used cocaine, were more likely to become cohabiters after high school.

Jerald Bachman, Katherine Wadsworth, Patrick O'Malley, Lloyd Johnston and John Schulenberg, "Smoking, Drinking, and Drug Use in Young Adulthood," (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997): 173-174.

Cohabitants reported nearly three times more alcohol problems than married people.

Allan Horowitz and Helene Raskin White, "The Relationship of Cohabitation and Mental Health: A Study of a Young Adult Cohort," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 60 (1998): 505-514.

Sexual Relations

Compared to married peers, cohabiting women were four times more at risk to suffer from a sexually transmitted disease.

Lawrence Finer, Jacqueline Darroch and Susheela Singh, "Sexual Partnership Patterns as a Behavioral Risk Factor for Sexually Transmitted Diseases," *Family Planning Perspectives* 31 (1999): 228-236.

77. Female partners of unfaithful men were at great risk for sexually transmitted disease because of the behavior of their male partners.

Julie Pulerwita, Jose-Antonio Iszazola-Liecea and Steven Gortmaker, "Extrarelational sex Among Mexican Men and Their Partners' Risk of HIV and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases," *American Journal of Public Health* 91 (2001): 1,650-1,652.

78. Cohabiting couples reported lower levels of happiness, lower levels of sexual exclusivity and sexual satisfaction than married couples and poorer relationships with their parents.

Judith Treas and Deirdre Giesen, "Sexual Infidelity Among Married and Cohabiting Americans," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (2000): 48-60. Renate Forste and Koray Tanfer, "Sexual Exclusivity Among Dating, Cohabiting, and Married Women," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (1996): 33-47.

79. The rate of women experiencing an accidental pregnancy from condom failure increased from 17.2-percent for married women to 25.5-percent for those not in a union and to 34.2-percent for cohabiting women.

Nalini Ranjit, Akinrinola Bankole, Jacqueline Darroch and Susheela Singh, "Contraceptive Failure in the First Two Years of Use: Differences Across Socioeconomic Subgroups," *Family Planning Perspectives*, 33 (2001): 25.

80. Among sexually active people, married couples who are sexually faithful to one another experienced the most physical pleasure and emotional satisfaction with their sex lives.

Edward Laumann, John Gagnon, Robert Michael and Stuart Michaels, *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 364.

81. Married couples who practiced fidelity reported the most positive feelings about sex. They felt "taken care of," "loved," "satisfied" and "wanted." They were the least likely to experience "sadness," "being anxious or worried," "afraid or scared" or feeling "guilt" about sex.

Edward Laumann, John Gagnon, Robert Michael and Stuart Michaels, *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 368.

Domestic Partner Benefits

82. Social change agents are not concerned about health insurance, but in gaining public approval of alternatives to marriage. The extension of spousal benefits to domestic partners erodes the status of marriage, reduces the well-being of children and increases taxpayer costs while reducing worker productivity and economic progress.

Maggie Gallagher, Why Supporting Marriage Makes Business Sense, Corporate Resource Council, 2002, pp. 9, 10..

83. The average enrollment shift – the number of domestic partners added to the insurance plan – for all companies was 1.2-percent.

Survey Findings: Domestic Partner Benefits 2000, Hewitt Associates, p. 27.

84. The unavoidable adverse selection associated with domestic partner benefit plans exacerbated health-insurance costs for participating firms. An employer with a 1-percent shift in enrollment and only 25-percent adverse selection faced an increase of 14-percent in health-care costs.

Michael Hamrick, The Hidden Costs of Domestic Partner Benefits, Corporate Resource Council, 2002, p. 5.

There is no scientific evidence to support the claim that domestic partnerships are the functional equivalent of marriage. By offering the social rewards of marriage but without its public responsibilities, domestic partnership benefits discourage marriage.

Maggie Gallagher, Why Supporting Marriage Makes Business Sense, Corporate Resource Council, 2002, p. i.

Domestic Partner Benefits continued

Thirteen percent of organizations offering domestic partner benefits did not require any documentation on the existence of actual relationships.

Survey Findings:
Domestic Partner
Benefits 2000, Hewitt
Associates, p. 15.

85. Typically, less than one percent of the work force benefits from domestic partner benefits.

“Domestic Partnership Benefits,” Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples, January 3, 2007.

86. After the City of New Orleans, Louisiana enacted a domestic partnership ordinance for same-sex couples and funded benefits to partners of municipal employees, citizens sought an injunction against it. The trial court held that the plaintiffs lacked standing. The Louisiana Supreme Court reversed, holding that a decision requiring spending of tax money affects the public, and taxpayers have an interest that confers standing to challenge the ordinance.

Ralph v. City of New Orleans, No. 06-C-0153, Supreme Court of Louisiana, May 5, 2006.

87. It is often claimed that senior citizens are discriminated against and harmed financially if a state doesn’t offer a domestic partner registry. It appears, however, that few senior citizens find this to be a concern. The American Association of Retired Persons did not take a position on domestic partner benefits.

Kathy Barrett Carter, *Domestic Partners Awaiting Their Day*, Newark Star-Ledger, July 06, 2004.

Domestic Partner Benefits continued

88. Michigan Appeals Court Rejects Domestic Benefits

Following voter passage of the Michigan marriage amendment in 2004, a group of public employees sought a declaratory judgment that public employers could offer health care benefits to unmarried partners of their employees (*National Pride at Work v. Governor*). A trial court agreed, saying that health care benefits are benefits of employment, not benefits of marriage. Thus, extending the benefits to same-sex couples would not conflict with the marriage amendment's policy.

The Michigan Court of Appeals, in 2007, reversed the trial court on the grounds that the amendment prevents public employers from offering benefits to employees "if the benefits are conditioned on or provided because of an agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union." The court said the domestic partnership policies here "recognized" a same-sex union by "require[ing] proof of the existence of a formal domestic partnership agreement to establish eligibility." To the court, because the domestic partnership is a "public proclamation" of the couple's relationship, it creates a "union." The union is similar to marriage because both (1) have requirements related to the sex of the parties, (2) require an agreement between the parties, (3) prohibit blood relations from contracting, (4) prohibit married persons from entering, (5) include an age requirement and (6) create legal obligations for third parties (here, the employment benefits).

Plaintiffs had also argued that if the amendment were interpreted to preclude benefits, it would conflict with the Equal Protection guarantee in the state constitution. The court rejected this argument, saying that the people of Michigan "could rationally conclude that the welfare and morals of society benefit from protecting and strengthening traditional marriages, and this act of the people constitutes a legitimate government interest." Finally, the court said that the amendment does not "selectively target same-sex couples" because it applies to any unmarried relationship. The court concluded that the amendment "does not preclude the extension of employment benefits to unmarried partners on a basis unrelated to recognition of their agreed upon relationship."

– MARRIAGE LAW FOUNDATION

" . . . [T]he people of Michigan 'could rationally conclude that the welfare and morals of society benefit from protecting and strengthening traditional marriages . . . "'

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