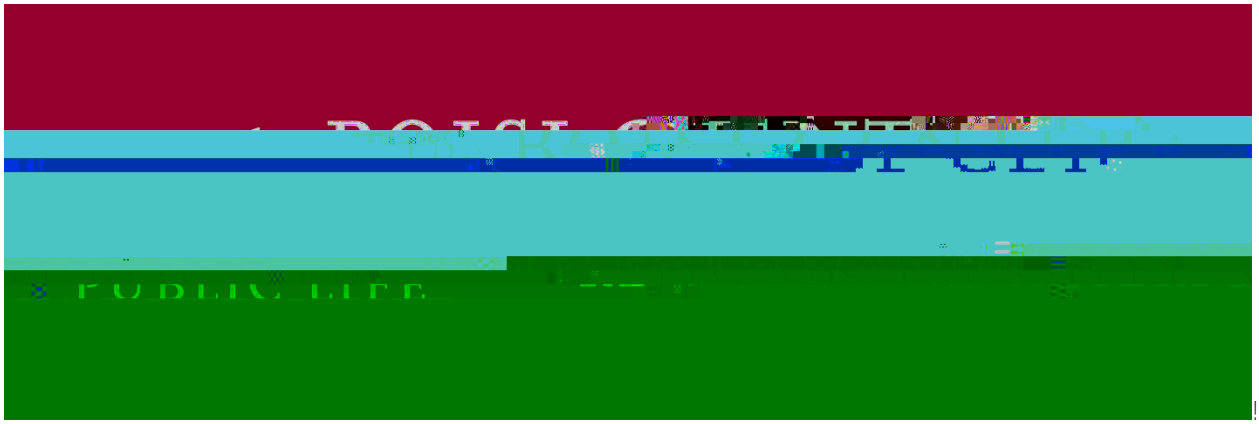


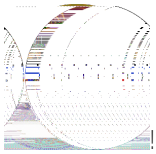
Symposium on Religion and Politics

THE FUTURE OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

"Marriage"

Reading Packet 2

2014–2015



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merely pointers, holding no deeper meanings for the named. A rose by any other name would surely sm sweet. The lion were he called a lamb would still be king of beasts. And human beings, whether know anthropoi, viri, beney adam, or menschen, remain unalterably rational, animal, and just as mortal. Like names that Adam gave the animals, these names designate but do not determine the thing. They are m conventional handles for grasping the beings handled, which, because they are already naturally distinct distinctive, beg only to be recognized with names peculiarly their own. In naming beings distinctively we little more than acknowledge the articulated and multiform character of the given world.

Not all acts of naming are so innocent. Sometimes they actually shape and form the things they name. S creative naming is, for example, especially characteristic of the biblical God, Who, in the account of creat given in the first chapter of Genesis, names five things: light, darkness, the firmament, the dry land, and th gathered waters. As Robert Sacks observes,

> We can best grasp the significance of naming by comparing the things God named

named a son Jack) or that would in other ways be likely to be burdensome to or resented by a typical c
Here parents will no doubt be guided both by their imaginations and by their own experience: they w
surely remember the miseries in"icted by cruel or insensitive peers on one or another of their childho
acquaintances who had been saddled with a name too unusual, too pretentious, too quaint, too prissy,
foreign, or too stained by one of its disgraceful namesakes. Some parents, to avoid the dangers that
those who stand out, especially among the conformist young, may well refrain from giving a name tha
utterly without precedent-for it may not !nd in the child that gets it the strength to stand alone and apar
On the other hand, some parents, seeking to avoid the commonplace, may opt for something out of
ordinary, a name with charm or class or appealing novelty, implying thereby the wish to help the child g
distinction. In such matters, di#erent parental choices will no doubt re"ect reasonably di#ering parenta
attitudes toward the balance between standing out and standing within, between distinction and inclusio
between risk and safety.

Parents who give the matter some thought will try to choose a name that wears well not only du
childhood but, even more, also during adulthood; for we bear our names much longer as adults tha
children. Some names that are cute when worn in infancy or childhood seem ridiculous when attached
mature-or elderly-men and women. Connected with this matter of t tness are also considerations of like
nicknames and diminutives, both those to be given at home and those likely to be acquired at school c
play. One feels for the little fellow in postwar Shaker Heights whose pretentious, upwardly mobile Jew
parents named him Lancelot, and even more because they could not refrain from calling him by
a#ectionate (and standard) diminutive-which resounded through the streets when they called him in fro
play-ÓLancelotkele.Ó (ÒLatkele,Ó gentle reader, is Yiddish for a small potato pancake, eaten traditior
Hanukkah).

But these considerations are largely negative and serve mainly to prevent mistakes. They do not guide
positive choice. How then do we choose?

Whether we know it or not, the way we approach this serious, indeed awesome, task speaks volumes a
our basic attitudes not only toward our children but also toward life. For we can name, just as we can live
a spirit of self-indulgence and enjoyment, in a spirit of acquisition and appropriation, in a spirit of pride ar
domination, in a spirit of creativity, in a spirit of gratitude, in a spirit of blessing and dedication. Consider

that imparts personal or human meaning. They may stress continuity of family line, by naming a son for father, a daughter for a grandmother. They may memorialize some worthy friend or ancestor, whose qualities they hope to see replicated in the child. They may name after prophets or saints or other histor or literary !gures, in the hope of promoting emulation or at least admiration through namesa identi! cation. In these various ways, parents identify their children not with themselves but with what the look up to and respect. In such namings, parents, at the very least, express their fondest hopes-blessing were, their children through names of blessed memory or elevated standing. At best, they thereby dedi themselves to the work of making good the promise conveyed in the good name thus bestowed.

The solemnity of such naming, and its meaning as dedication, is, of course, evident when names are g within religious ceremonies. At a baptism, the newborn child is symbolically puri!ed, sancti!ed, and received by name into the Christian community, obtaining his or her name in an act of christening baptizing. The child is reborn by being named in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, implicit promise by the parents to rear the child in the ways of the Lord. Among its other intention baptism denies the parentsÕ natural tendency to think of the child as property or as an object of pride power. During the ceremony, the parents ritually hand the child over to the minister or to godparen representatives of the church and community, literally enacting the meaning of naming as dedication. T name given is understood to be eternal, inscribed in the Book of Life.

At a brith milah, the Jewish act of ritual circumcision, male children on the eighth day of life enter into covenant between God and the seed of Abraham, obtaining at this time their given Hebrew name (here, the boy is handed over to the godfather for the ceremony); daughters are publicly named in the synag soon after birth. Often, the meaning of the name and the reasons for its choice are publicly discussed a name is given. The prayer for both Jewish sons and daughters that accompanies their naming is for a life embracesTorah (learning and observance), Chuppah (marriage and family), and Maasim Tovim (good deeds Names given in such contexts are, at least implicitly, understood to be sancti!cations and dedications.

It is, of course, not possible to gauge the spirit of the act of naming simply from the name given. The nam a beloved forebear may be perpetuated not because of what made him lovable but, say, because of this received by the namer or as a result of family expectation or as an expression of mere sentimentality family we know, for example, a man named his son after his deceased father, a man of unrivaled good

and gentleness, admired and loved by everyone who knew him, without exception or qualification. As it happens, the boy not only carries the grandfatherÕs name; because he is and will be the only male child generation, the entire family name resides now with him. But such thoughts are alien to, even resisted by father, who believes that the past must be happily buried. No attempt has been made to teach the

The given name, given seriously, thus provides identity and individuality but within family and community
recognizes continuity with lives of the past but bears hopes and promises for the new life in the futu
embodies general aspiration but acknowledges individual distinction; re"ects both present action and
desire for future improvement; acknowledges at least tacitly that oneÕs child is to be oneÕs replace
celebrates the joyous wonder of the renewal of human possibility while accepting the aweso
responsibility for helping that possibility to be realized; and pays homage to the mysterious source of hum
life and human individuality.

In all these ways, the naming of a child is, in fact, an emblem of the entire parent-child relation, in both
human generality and its radical particularity. Human children are born naked and nameless, like
animals; they become humanized only through rearing, the work not of nature but of acts of speech
symbolic deed, including praise and blame, reward and punishment, custom, habituation, and educat
They become humanized, in the first instance, at the hands of parents, who, among other duties, try stead
to teach children how to call all things by their proper names and to show them how to acquire a good na
for themselves.

III

Mention of calling things by their proper names prompts a digression on the proper usage of proper nam
itself a central issue of propriety. In fact, it was observations on the prevalent use and misuse of given first
names that, long ago, aroused our interest in the subject of naming in the first place.

As amateur observers of the American social scene, we are struck by how much more of our public socia
is nowadays conducted on a first-name basis. The open-faced waiter in the yuppie restaurant begins
with, ÒGood evening. Are you ready to order?Ó but with, ÒHi, IÕm Sherman. IÕm your server this eveni
IÕd like to tell you about our specials.Ó The gynecologist and all members of his sta# (including the b
post-adolescent receptionist) call all the patients by their first names, even on first encounter. In the home
for the aged, venerable ladies and gentlemen are uniformly called Sadie or Annie, Herman or Mike
people who will never know a tenth of what some of the elderly have forgotten. Small children are n

taught to call uncles and aunts Uncle Leon and Aunt Amy, but plain Leon and Amy. Children of all ages a generally allowed to call all grown-up guests in the home by their first names, even on first meeting. At socia mixers, the typical tag is for first names only: ÒHello, My Name is Ste$e.Ó Total strangers, soliciting for st brokerages or the local police museum, call during dinner oozing familiarity, asking to speak to Leon or A (not knowing that they have thus completely blown their slim chance of success). Students introdu themselves to one another, to their teachers, or to the parents of their friends by first names only. Even som college professors and many members of the clergy prefer to be called by their first names, even when in cla or in church and synagogue.

The motives for and reasons behind such increased familiarity are numerous and sometimes complex, surely vary from case to case. A policy favoring forward but easy amiability, thought useful for putti everyone in a good mood and making them feel at home, is no doubt part of the waiterÕs conduct; but is probably also calculation that guests will be more inclined to leave a larger tip for a named Òacquainta than for a merely anonymous servant. The gynecologist may believe he is creating a homey atmosphere will overcome his patientÕs anxieties and embarrassments; but he is culpably unaware that calling vulne strangers by their first names is patronizing, condescending, and unprofessional, that it contributes furth to the indignity of being a patient, that most women receiving pelvic examinations will not be made mo comfortable by a physician who makes himself improperly familiar, and that the patientÕs unavoida exposure and shame are precisely what demands that everyone should be made to uphold the patient dignity. Informality is thought to be a boon to equality and fellow-feeling; titles like Uncle and Aunt, o even Mr. or Ms., are distancing and hierarchical. They get in the way of easy sociability, made possible v everybody, regardless of age or station, is equally just plain Bill.

The change in usage, whatever one thinks of it, is symptomatic of a general breakdown of the bounda between public and private life, between formal and familiar, between grown-up and childish, between h and low, refined and vulgar, sacred and profane. This leveling of boundaries is itself entirely America which is to say, it is the result of the relentless march of the democratic spirit, under the twin banners equality and individualism. But there is something novel and especially revealing-and also espec worrisome-in the self-identification of young students away from home at college.

When we were in college-at the University of Chicago in the 1950s and early 1960s-our teachers called

But we are a vanishing breed. And we have noticed in recent years, outside of classes, a marked dec
student use of last names. If we attend a dinner in the dorms, if unfamiliar students come to o$ce hour

names, about the incorporation of maiden names into a womanÕs married name, etc.-it is now r

of family, not to return to the ! ghting. In these heroic cultures, the past casts a long shadow over the pre and future; and most men die failing to match the recounted successes of illustrious ancestors. patronym (or its equivalent family name), and through it the past, continued to exercise hegemony, albei somewhat muted form, in European aristocratic societies even into the present century.

We liberal democrats have mercifully escaped from this state of a#airs. Our American society and founding thought begin from the radical equality of each individual, including his inalienable right to practice happiness as he himself de!nes it. What counts for us is not birth or station, but oneÕs accomplishments, not who oneÕs parents were but what one has made (and proposes to make) of ones bourgeois democratic family life, with its naming practices, has preserved us, at least until recently, from rootlessness and isolation to which such individuality might lead. The conventional identity of given nam plus inherited family name, in the bourgeois family, represented a sensible mean between the heroic and anonymous, between the aristocratic tyranny of the past (PeleusÕ son) and the servile because rootless of a digni! ed adult future (Jim NoName).

Times have changed. Both as a culture and as individuals, we today care even less about where we from, and also less and less about where we are going, but more and more only about the here and now ways of the fathers and mothers are not our ways. The ways of our children are unimaginable.

surname.Ó The solution: ÒThey took the gold from Goldstein, the brown from Browns, mixed them toget and created Sienna, the legal last name of their children.Ó As Mr. Browns explained, ÒOcher, or those muddy yellow colors, didnÕt seem like nice names.Ó

Dean Skylar and Chris Ledbetter faced a similar dilemma, but not until the birth of their son. Opposed Òthe whole patriarchal tradition,Ó they too wanted a new name for the child, di#erent from their own names

clearly explained, can result in confusion and identity problems.Ó But the worries that are mentioned super! cial: children who canÕt! t their names on a page or on SAT forms, children who canÕt spell their names, children at risk of teasing or ridicule by peers. For the Òexperts,Ó who want only that the Òdevelop an appropriate and healthy identity,Ó identity is entirely a subjective matter, but somehow one yields to Òrational understandingÓ; if the origin of the surname is Òclearly explainedÓ to the child (to be s Òmore than onceÓ), there need be no confusion of identity.

But identity is not just a state of mind. All the explanations in the world cannot alter what the childÕs na loudly declares: my parents and I belong to di#erent families. Because this is how the child is named a known, his lack of a true family name is now central to his identity, whatever he may feel about it. That th creative parents sometimes justify their practice by pointing out that children of divorced and remarri parents or children of Òlive-in relationshipsÓ also donÕt share the parental name, only proves the taking broken or unmarried homes as a suitable nominal norm, and insisting on their own radica individuated identity, they start their children o# in life with a broken family identity. It is almost as if they are preparing their children not only for the liberated life they have chosen for themselves, but also for family fragmentation that now takes its toll of so many of AmericaÕs children.

These ÒcreativeÓ parents are, we suspect, still a very small minority. Far more common are families in the children carry the name of the father, even though the mother has kept her maiden name. Here, too, is #

foundation of all familial attachments and parental care, it seems especially absurd that mothers shoul willing not to have the same last name as their children-unless, of course, motherhood is understood t nothing more than a surrogate Òsocial womb,Ó unconnected with nature, the ÒmotherÓ looking afte children simply as a job or as a form of self-ful!llment.

Responsibility for the child, who did not himself ask to be born, is accepted and announced by fan naming: the child, freely individuated from birth (as marked in his given name), als belongs necessarily fro birth to his parents, not as a possession to be used but as a precious life to be nurtured. Couples may c whether to have a child, but they may not morally choose to deny familial responsibility for his care. shared and transmittable family name, given and accepted rather than invented or chosen, stands perf for this shared and transmittable moral reality.

The common name of parent-and-child stands not only for parental responsibilities, but also for the chil security, !lial regard, family loyalty, gratitude, and personal pride. We children are not sui generis, neith self-made nor self-reared; we begin as dependents, dependent upon the unmerited attention and lavished on us by our parents. To carry the family name is (on)-159(ca)14(rrybils)-41.t(ca)14(rrre:)-

The irony is that the clear personal identity to which they sel!shly cling (in tacit denial of their new soci identity) is in fact an identity they possess only because their parents were willing and able to create singular family identity for them. We are, of course, aware that massive numbers of our youth stem fr parents who divorce or remarry, and that the insecurity of identity already re"ected in their having dif#ent names from their birth parents may lead them to cling tenaciously to their very own surnames, lest they the little, painfully acquired identity they have left; yet if they truly understood their plight, they would /(e

necessity of renewal. A common name deliberately taken at the time of marriage-like the family perpetuation that the marriage anticipates and establishes-a$rms the special union of natural necessity human choice which the exogamous family itself embodies.

This is, perhaps, an appropriate place to observe that we are well aware that family or social identity is the whole of our identity, that professional or ÒcareerÓ identity is both psychically and socially important are civic and religious identity). The loving-and-generative aspects of our nature are far from being whole human story. Yet the familial is foundational, and it cannot without grave danger be subordinated assimilated to the professional. Our arguments for a common social name for the married couple however, perfectly compatible with having one partner or the other-or both-keeping a distinct profession name. Some have argued that in todayÕs world of rampant mobility and weakened family ties, and with husband and wife in the work place, much is lost and little is gained if professional identity is submerged common family name. But precisely to a$rm and protect the precious realm of private life from t distorting intrusion of public or purely economic preoccupations, a common social name makes emin sense-one might say especially under present conditions.

The argument advanced so far does not, of course, yet reach to the customary pattern of the bride taking groomÕs name. If anything, it might even call into question the wisdom of allowing either partner to keep surname of origin. To provide the same and new last name for the married couple, a name that procl their social unity and that will immediately confer social identity to their children, they could devise hyphenated compound that both partners then adopt or they could jointly invent a totally new surname th leaves no trace of either family of origin. But these alternatives are both defective. The!rst is simply impractical beyond one or at most two generctiveakened o atf gh a10(e)xat T* [(sense-i(y)19(on)10ge)-

family name that ties the new family of perpetuation to one old family of origin re''ects more faithfully th

Almost none of what they now believe they understand about the meanings and uses of names did authors know when, following custom, they first joined their lives together under the bridegroomÕs fam name. They had, at best, only tacit and partial knowledge when they deliberately gave their children bibl names. Had they been left, in their youth, to invent their own practices of naming, it is doubtful that the would have gotten it right. In place of their own knowledge, they were guided by the blessed example of strong, enduring, and admirable marriages and home-life of their parents, itself sustained by teach silently conveyed through custom and ritual. Wisdom in these matters, for individual thinkers, comes slow if at all. But custom, once wisely established, more than makes up for our deficiencies. It makes possible th full "ourishing of our humanity.

William Butler Yeats said it best, in ÒA Prayer for My DaughterÓ:

> And may her bridegroom bring her to a house
> Nr/o(W)58(w)-84(e)-29.6(r)10(.h)1 (r)10(.h)uomL(uman)10;10(y)]TJ TFor Mmaonthapapagsa

PREV ARTICLE

by the same author

THE THEATRE OF POLITICS

CARRY LIKE A WHALE
THE MAN WHO RODE AMPERSAND
THE CLIQUE

FERDINAND MOUNT

THE SUBVERSIVE FAMILY

An Alternative History of Love and Marriage

THE FREE PRESS
A Division of Macmillan, Inc.
New York

Maxwell Macmillan Canada
Toronto

Maxwell Macmillan International
New York Oxford Singapore Sydney

To Wi[illegible]am, Harry and Mary

The Free Press
A Division of Macmillan, Inc.
866 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

Maxwell Macmillan Canada, Inc.
1200 Eglinton Avenue East
Suite 200
Don Mills, Ontario M3C 3N1

Macmillan, Inc. is part of the Maxwell Communication Group of Companies.

First American Edition 1992

Printed in the United States of America

printing number

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mount, Ferdinand
The subversive family: an alternative history of love and marriage / Ferdinand Mount.
p. cm.
ISBN 0-02-921992-2
1. Family—History. 2. Love—History. 3. Marriage—History.
I. Title
HQ503.M68 1992
306.8—dc20 92-30779
CIP

The author and publisher are grateful to the editors of *Encounter* for permission to reprint extracts from 'The Dilution of Fraternity', first published in October 1976.

CONTENTS

points. If the hypothesis of primitive promiscuity cannot be supported, therefore, it is all the more important for Marxism as a whole that Engels should be shown to be right about his great transition from the extended to the nuclear family.

4

THE MYTH OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY

The damage to Engels's doctrin[illegible] could be limited if it were possible to show that its weaknesses were confined to the earlier stages. Unfortunately, there are equally boggy patches in the middle of his historical scheme, in the area surrounding the patriarchal family'. Engels quotes examples of the patriarchal family among the Southern Slavs and here and there in other parts of the world. But in North-Western Europe, the evidence for this kind of extended family, where several generations of brothers and sisters and their spouses live under the same roof, is coming more and more to be questioned. In one way or another, G. P. Murdock, Peter Laslett, Alan Macfarlane, Edmund Leach, Le Roy Ladurie and many other scholars have cast considerable doubt on whether these extended families were ever the norm in those parts of the world where the Industrial Revolution started – which are precisely the parts which must have gone through the extended-family stage if the Marx–Engels scheme is to be valid.

The sceptics make two points: [illegible], the nuclear family *universals*. Wherever more complicated forms exist, the nuclear family is always present as well. Second, in England and North-Western Europe, the nuclear family was the *standard* situation – simple family living in its own house.

In *Household and Family in* [illegible] *Time* (1972) one of the most crushing and total refutations of any orthodox wisdom in recent history, Laslett writes:

In England and elsewhere in Northern and Western Europe the standard situation was one where each domestic group consisted of a simple family living in its own house, so that the conjugal family unit was identical with the household . . . in spite of the important differences which comparison reveals . . . this standard situation seems to have obtained to a remarkable extent everywhere else.[1]

Earlier scholars on both sides of the Atlantic had come to the same conclusion. G. P. Murdock: 'The nuclear family is a universal human grouping.' Marion Levy: 'Most of humanity must always have lived in small families.' But it is the statistical studies of household size pioneered by Dr Laslett and his colleagues at the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure which have finally demonstrated conclusively that the nuclear family was always the normal family. According to Marion Levy, 'The general outlines and nature of the *actual* family structure have been virtually identical in certain strategic respects (size, age, sex and generational composition) in all known societies in world history for well over 50 per cent of the members of these societies.'[2]

Sentiment or tradition or social morality might prescribe other types of household. For example, there might exist a tradition that married couples with children ought also to look after their parents by taking them into their homes as honoured guests; but in most societies, this was a tradition more honoured in the breach than the observance, for the simple reason that most married couples in traditional society could not afford to feed their parents. Most old people died alone in the workhouse or in wretched poverty.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, it is only *since* the Industrial Revolution and more eminently in industrial towns that married couples have started living with their parents in any great numbers. The extended family in Western Europe at least, is a *modern* development in as much as it exists at all. Michael Anderson in his studies of industrial Lancashire, the heart and of the Industrial Revolution, suggests that this startling increase in parents and grandparents living together occurred for strictly economic reasons. For the first time, parents who both worked at the mill were earning enough to feed the grandparents; in return, the grandparents could act as babyminders for them or their neighbours and perhaps perform a few odd jobs as well. Moreover, the children could remain at home longer than they

had in rural pre-industrial England because the earnings would contribute towards the household expenses – whereas in the country, there would be enough work on the farm for only a small minority to stay at home until they married. Despite its barbarities and deprivations one thing that the Industrial Revolution did not do was break up families.[3]

The rate of illegitimacy is one of the indicators most frequently taken by historians to show the quality of family life. In particular, the proportion of children born illegitimate is supposed to demonstrate how living in cities and working in factories tend to corrupt the morals of the young, destroy parental control and lead to a general sense of amlessness and lawlessness or 'anomie', which can only result in sexual licence.

Unfortunately, as Peter Laslett points out, 'It is simply not true, in fact, that living in towns or cities, or migrating to such population centres, has always been directly and positively correlated with illegitimacy, during the so-called sexual revolution, or at any other time.'

In Scotland, Germany and England at least, the rate of illegitimacy was always higher *in the country* – most remarkably so in some parts of rural Scotland, where the strict morality of the Kirk seems to have gone almost unheeded. And in many other European countries – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland – the rate of illegitimacy actually fell, often quite sharply throughout the period of maximum industrialisation, the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In 1845 when bastardy in England and Wales was at its highest point before the twentieth century, most London districts were among the least bastard-prone in the land; the highest rates of illegitimacy were often to be found in the remotest parts of Cumberland and Wales. Even the new industrial cities, so notorious in Victorian fiction for the looseness of moral behaviour, cities such as Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle, were well down the Registrar-General's list. Whitechapel and Bethnal Green, the direst of the East End slums were below the national average for illegitimacy throughout the nineteenth century. Up to 1930, rural districts had far higher bastardy rates than the cities. Thereafter the loss of rural population and the growth of suburbia make the comparisons less valuable.[5]

...ast there is no evidence for assuming that moving to ...ties weakened family life or sexual morality, contrary to ...the assumptions of novelists such as Dickens and Disraeli ...gists such as Marx and Engels. Marx may have had a child ...Engels may have seduced the girls in his father's mill but ...majority of urban courtships and pregnancies ended in ...between young people of equal social station.

...st, in pre-industrial society, the classic case of the unmar- ...was of the girl in domestic service, living away from ...pregnant by the young farmhand, also living away from ...service, the couple being prevented from marrying by ...perhaps also by their conditions of service. Wage labour ...ty, whatever its other horrors, did not suffer from those

...dom to marry was a genuine freedom and one which came ...ing people only after moving to the city. It was this new ...ich contemporary moralists, though not the most acute ...ch as Mrs Gaskell, were all too ready to confuse with ...suffering as they did from the naive illusion of the ...that physical squalor is bound to breed moral squalor. ..., it would be truer to say that such records as we have of life ...the mill-towns and the like bear witness to a moral tenacity ...continuous hardship which is as poignant as any record of ...war or captivity.[6] And the principal object of that tenacity ...the family together through thick and thin.

...the deepest myths about the past is that there was a time ...we all part of one harmonious community and, because we ...we were entirely open to and with each other. There was ...in this golden age. The wish to be private was then ...bad, anti-social.

...es this golden age is located in the South Seas, sometimes ...Europe in the Middle Ages. We are invited to look back to ...ancestors lived together in one great smoky room, and ...same bed and saw each other perform all the bodily ...without shame or embarrassment. This myth survives ...the pretence that everyone lived in the great halls of the ...fact, in most Western countries, the average family ...s been the cottage or hovel. Moreover, even where dwell- ...osely huddled together or were actually part of the same

structure – t... ...ican ... ...ggur... ...e m... ...n ...apartment block – we must not assume that the ...ense ...vac... ...is ...ny less sharp. Law in past time – ... ...mon ...aw ... ...lar... ...he German 'Mirrors' of Justice, the ... ...priva... ...law ...ern... ...ed by a strongly marked sense of private ... ...tory.

What are all these disput...es ab... ...edg... ...d walls, about wayleaves and easements, about d...ins ...ove... ...ging trees, even about ancient lights, ... they do not ... a ... ...cio... ...s sense that the full possession of property incl...uded ...igh... ...be private, secluded – so much so that ... ...he air ...nd ... ...ht a... ...e your garden were your own inalienable possessio...?

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I do not ... ...ving ... the ...ite ... ...en...e and try to argue that modern life ... ...ost re...pects ...ss p... ...ter than life 500 or 1,000 years ago. ... is true ... at n... ...f t... ...up...posed instances of the public, soc... ...we h... ...e lo... ...som... ...at ...shaky.

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And even in those societies in which the family appears to be more extended and the community more all-embracing, we should be wary of assuming that the basic family unit was a large one lacking any sense of privacy. Often the African village may be more like a friendly apartment block than the warm tribal community in which people live, eat and sleep together with no separation between families. Professor Goody warns:

> We have to be very careful about contrasting a so-called *zadruga* type of unit, which consists of, say, a fortress of 100 persons, with an 'extended family' that comprises a small farm, a conjugal family and a few attached relatives . . . the former is likely to be a multi-celled version of the latter, the cells coming together for protection, for administrative convenience, or simply because that was the way the house had been built in the first place; permanent stone dwellings structure family composition in much more radical ways than mud huts and bamboo shelters, for the latter constantly change their shape according to the number and nature of those who live there.[7]

These *zadrugas* were Balkan villages which seemed intensely tribal to the outsider and captured the imagination of Victorian anthropologists – and indeed of Engels – as representing the kind of intimate community which the modern 'isolated nuclear family' had lost, at great expense of happiness and psychic health. Modern research into these *zadrugas*[8] suggests that life inside them was more carefully and subtly compartmentalised than nostalgic outsiders had grasped and moreover that the *zadruga* was not and is not in decline, as nostalgia had suggested, but on the contrary cheerfully persists even in modern Yugoslavia. Professor Goody concludes that:

> It is not only for England that we need to abandon the myth of the 'extended family' – as the term is often understood. In one form or another this myth has haunted historical and comparative studies since the time of Maine and Fustel de Coulanges, whether the work has been undertaken by historians, sociologists or anthropologists. Whatever the shape of the kin groups of earlier societies, none were undifferentiated communes of the kind beloved by nineteenth century theorists, Marxist and non-Marxist alike. Units of production were everywhere relatively small, kin-based units.[9]

Rodney Hilton, in *Bondmen Made Free*, says that it is the inescapable conclusion from the examination of the abundant manorial documents of the thirteenth century that:

> By the thirteenth century or even earlier, the normal family in most parts of western Europe was not the extended family consisting of all the descendants of common great-grandparents – or beyond – with their wives and children living together. Instead, we often find grandparents, the married eldest son and heir with his wife and children, together with the unmarried members of the second generation. If the grandfather were active he might run the holding; or he might have made way for the heir, but still live on the holding. On the death of the grandparents, the family would become a two-generation nuclear family until the pattern repeated itself with the maturity and marriage of the heir.[10]

Hilton does say that extended families may have existed in earlier times, as the older school of medieval historians, most notably Marc Bloch, used to believe: 'In the badly documented era from the sixth to the tenth or eleventh century some peasant households might have been much bigger and more cohesive than they were in the central middle ages.'[11] 'Some' and 'might' are the crucial words, alas, in view of the documentation. Hilton quotes a ninth-century French family consisting of two brothers and their wives, two sisters and fourteen children, but he also says that the document from which this example comes suggests a predominance of nuclear families on the estate among the tenants.

It always seems to be the case that the more that historians know about a period in the history of Western Europe, the more they discover that the nuclear family is the normal way of living – then and now, of course, there are all sorts of exceptions and variations, involving adult brothers and sisters and grandparents; some of these variants may have arisen because the farmhouse happened to be large, or because there was no other dwelling available, or because the family was unusually close-knit and affectionate, or for agricultural or financial reasons, or for protection or because someone was old or bedridden. But 'the family' then seems to have been little different from the family now as far as numbers and residence go.

Laslett argues that:

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ince d[illegible]t evide[illegible] not exist.'[15] Besides, coming
own t[illegible] the la[illegible] empted to infer that it was the

[illegible] way about has not upper-class marriage become more openly affectionate and less dynastic and property-oriented, in other words, more like working-class marriage?

At all events, this scarcity of evidence does not seem to slow up Professor Stone. In no time at all, he is deducing that:

> Social relations from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries tended to be cool, even unfriendly . . . at all levels . . . Women were extremely short-tempered . . . Familial emotional ties were so weak that they did not generate the passions which lead to intra-familial murder and mayhem . . . What is being postulated for the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is a society in which a majority of the individuals who composed it found it very difficult to establish close emotional ties to any other person.

In which case, the audience at the Globe must have been alternately bored stiff and bewildered by *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*. 'At all levels'? 'A majority of the individuals'? How could he know?

Social relations cool? Familial emotive ties so weak that they did not generate the passions which lead to mayhem? Let us look back from 1527–8, near the very beginning of Professor Stone's period, just one of the famous series of letters from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn:

> Mine own sweetheart, this shall be to advertise you of the great elengeness [loneliness] that I find here since your departing; for I ensure you methinketh the time longer since your departing now last than I was wont to do a whole fortnight. I think your kindness and my fervency of love causeth it; for otherwise, I would not have thought it possible that for so little a while it should have grieved me. But now that I am coming towards you, methinketh my pains be half released, and also I am right well comforted insomuch that my book maketh substantially for my matter; in looking whereof I have spent above four hours this day, which caused me now to write the shorter letter to you at this time, because of some pain in my head; wishing myself (specially an evening) in my sweetheart's arms, whose pretty dukkys [breasts] I trust shortly to cusse [kiss].
>
> Written with the hand of him that was, is, and shall be yours by his will,
>
> H. R.

Even amongst the upper classes, social relations were not always tepid. We may step three hundred years further back, to the account by Berthold the Chaplain of the life of St Elizabeth of Hungary who married Ludwig IV of Thuringia in the 1220s. 'They loved one another with an astonishing passion,' we are told; she kissed him a thousand times upon the mouth.' When he was away visiting his far-flung estates, she founded a soup kitchen and a hospital. When he died in 1227, just after he had joined the crusaders assembling in Southern Italy, she ran through the castle utterly crazed with grief, crying, 'Dead, now is the whole world dead to me.' The point of the story is not merely that we are expected to admire her for all her good works and for having remained faithful and loving, but that we are expected to admire him too for getting angry with his courtiers who urged him to take mistresses during his long absences from home and telling them: 'I have a wife and I keep troth with her.'[18]

It does not matter how much historical accuracy there is in Berthold's lives of St Elizabeth and Ludwig. For our purposes, what matters are the emotional attitudes which are depicted for our edification and admiration. And we are clearly instructed that at the beginning of the thirteenth century love within marriage, fully articulated, passionate sexual love, was a familiar and admired phenomenon in the nobility. Similarly, Henry's passionate letters to Anne Boleyn show that at the beginning of the sixteenth century an educated prince was far from reluctant to express his love on paper in terms both intensely erotic and sentimental. There is nothing frozen, topical or mechanical about the tone.

Professor Stone seems to be in no way unusual among historians of the family. Edward Shorter, a breezy American historian, prefaces his book *The Making of the Modern Family* (1977) by saying:

> I want to convey to the reader a massive modesty about its contents. We are talking here about the private lives of anonymous, ordinary people. Many were scarcely able to read. None wrote books about what they did or felt. Reconstructing the record of their family experience is bound to be a chancy business. Very little is certain, and the evidence, far from anchoring indisputably my proposition about sentiment and affection, trembles feebly in the wind.[19]

Quite so. Time and again, Professor Shorter confesses endearingly that he only has evidence from one or two countries (usually France),

and from a period rather too late for this ... ined to a century). Quite often he cheerfully ... dence presented in books which he ... s actual ... defines ... f almost all recent research, he ... 'Households in traditional Europe were ... somewhat ... more complex – in the sense of sheltering ... conjugal unit – than are modern households. ... knowledge, they were not.

Yet Professor Shorter is even less impeded by ... than Professor Stone. He discovers not one ... tions. And off he goes: 'Popular marriage ... usually affectionless, held together by consid ... lineage'.[20] 'The great surge of sentiment be ... that in the countryside, and sooner or later among th ... lower, but before this secular unfolding co ... women in the household seem ... less everywhere in France.'[21] 'In traditional ... the development and happiness of children ... indifference . . . Nor did these mothers often ... hem in fants as human beings with the same c ... as they themselves.'[22] The 'massive modesty ... orated.

I refer to these well-known works only in order to pick holes in their conclusions as t ... remarkable *impatience*. They cannot wait to c ... material the most emphatic demonstration o ... the 'extended family' of 'traditional society ... grasping attitudes, to the 'nuclear family,' c ... tion – and, crucially, on to a further transitio ... of relationship, in fact, to the end of marriage ...

It is not as if there were anything particularly o ... Professor Stone and his publishers refer to th ... in the terms quoted earlier, and his publishers ... work that challenges all conventional wisdom ... English society at that period'. On the contra ... tional views of those who wish to keep the ... historical accident.

The truly unconventional and subversive ... that the nuclear family is older than Jesus a ... burposes (usually the ... y sketches over the evi- ... real. For instance, in ... ntinues to insist that ... hat larger and certainly ... more than the simple, ... Well, to the best of our ... knowledge, the clearth of evidence ... but two 'sexual revo- ... former centuries was ... ations of property and ... as earlier in the cities ... middle classes than the ... mences, religions be- ... o have been affection- ... ciety', mothers viewed ... younger than we with ... some say "never") see ... acities for joy and pain ... seems to have evap- ...

esteemed scholars not ... draw attention to their ... w out from the scanty ... great transition from ... with its loveless and ... today based on affec- ... to a career, flowing type ... s we know it.

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iew would be to argue ... d Plato and Marx and

Engels, let alone older than the Industrial Revolution, and that the nuclear family – with all its drawbacks, difficulties and dangers – is a biologically derived way of living which comes naturally to us and which generates an emotional force of enduring and unquenchable power.

5

MATCHMAKING AND LOVEMAKING

'A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!' Almost everyone remembers Jane Austen's Mrs Bennet, desperate to marry off her daughters to the richest men who can be found, and her delight when a new prospect, Mr Bingley, takes the neighbouring estate of Netherfield. Most of us have at the back of our minds a general picture of the typical marriage in times past as an alliance arranged by the parents. The notions of marrying for love and of betrothal as an act of free choice between the betrothed seem essentially modern. The further back we go in history, the more we expect to find young people married off without their wishes being consulted, often against their will and sometimes as children too young to know their own minds.

In tracing the development of the modern attitude, we have to ask: when did the idea that it was right to marry for love begin to creep in? Obviously the old attitude must have sunk deep into the way people spoke and thought about marriage, so that it should not be too difficult to establish when the new idea – so central to modern notions of freedom, individuality and happiness – began gaining ground.

Clearly, in Jane Austen's day the new idea was already full-blown. Mrs Bennet is a silly woman, worldly, feather-headed, unable to understand the real best interests of her daughters; the attitude which Jane Austen expects readers of *Pride and Prejudice* to share with her heroine Elizabeth is that, while you must behave prudently and

Divided we stand: committed couples who live apart

An increasing number of couples in long-term relationships are choosing to live apart

Matthew and Philippa Field with their daughter, Sophie, in Bournemouth Photo: Victoria Birkinshaw

By Angela Neustatter

7:00AM BST 22 Apr 2013

Matthew Field, 32, talks touchingly of the love and commitment that he and his wife, Philippa, 29, share. She tells me how happy she is. Yet the Fields have not lived together since their 14-month-old daughter, Sophie, was born, choosing instead to base themselves in separate homes – she in Bournemouth, he in Crouch End, north London. Weekends are together time.

Emerging from the kitchen of the house they recently bought in Bournemouth, Sophie tucked cosily against his shoulder, Matthew talks of how his daughter will grow up with the beach and the New Forest close by. Although they say they may consider living together in London when Sophie is grown up and independent, this 'controlled absence' is, the Fields agree, a permanent arrangement.

Choosing separate homes is generally seen as an eccentricity of the rich and famous. Think of Helena Bonham Carter and Tim Burton, Margaret Drabble and Michael Holroyd, Clive James and Prue Shaw, and, of course, Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre.

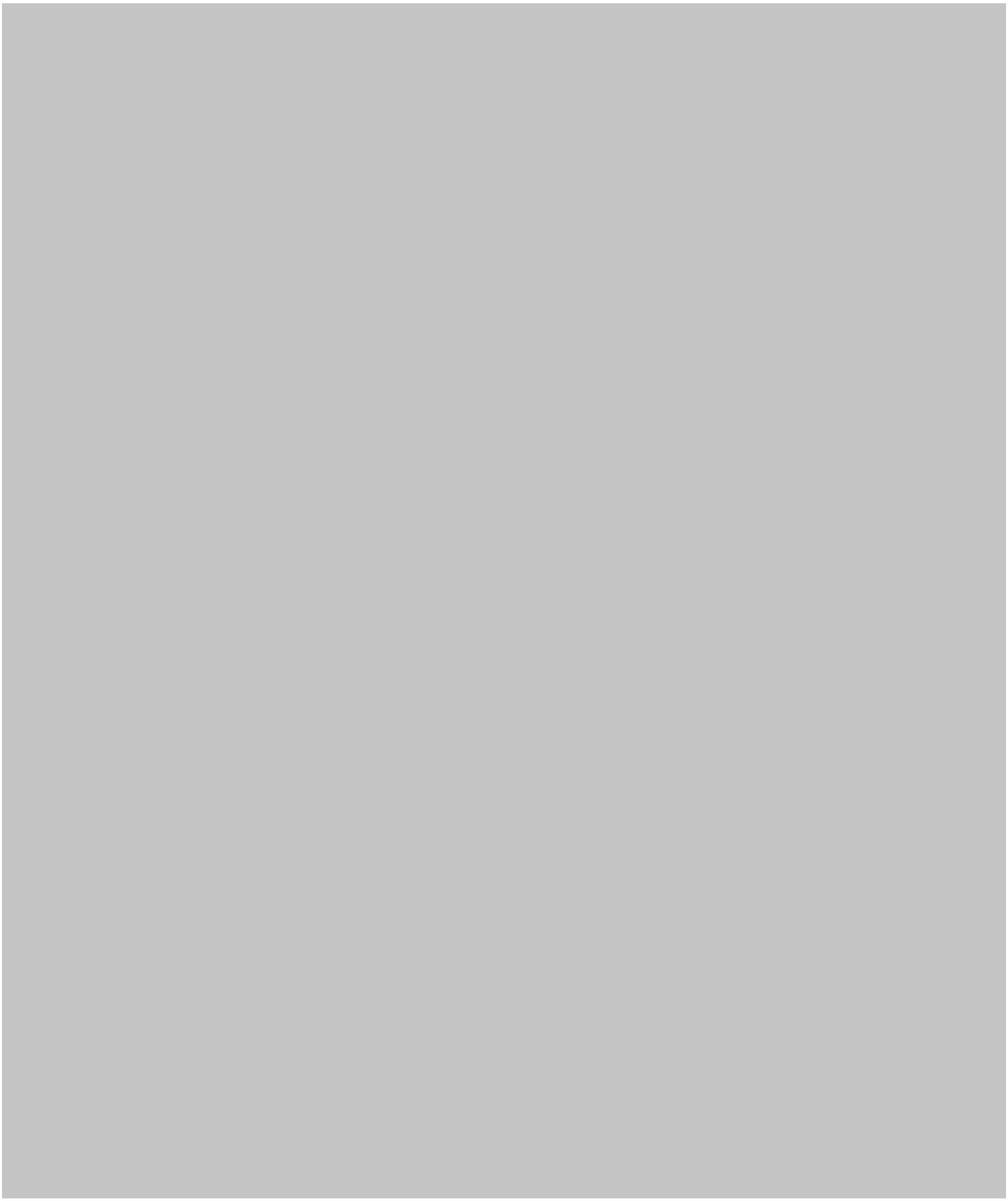
But one in 10 people in Britain today has made what is seen as a growing, and increasingly acceptable, lifestyle choice, a phenomenon that has been identified as LAT ('living apart together'), whereby couples who regard themselves as firmly committed have separate homes through choice or circumstance. This trend is echoed throughout Western Europe, America and Australasia.

At a time when nearly half of all marriages end in divorce, and long-term co-habitees, often with children, are at least as likely to separate, isn't it encouraging to see people trying different ways of arranging their emotional and domestic lives?

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) regarded the trend as important enough for it to have funded a substantial piece of research into whether LAT can offer a way of sustaining intimate relationships in the 21st century. The report, Living Apart Together, which will be published tomorrow (April 23), analyses who Britain's 10 per cent of LATs are, why they live this way, how they organise it, and how intimacy is affected. The results were drawn from a representative national survey of 572 people who don't live with their partners, including 50 face-to-face interviews and 16 in-depth case studies.

The survey shows that LATs are predominantly young – of the 572, 61 per cent were under 35, 28 per cent were between 36 and 55, and 11 per cent were older (although some, such as Wendy Hollway, 63, and Tony Jefferson, 67, may have been LAT from a younger age). Only five per cent were married couples, and Simon Duncan, a lead researcher for ESRC, makes the point that 'up to a quarter of people documented as "single" in fact have a partner living elsewhere, which is important for social care policies such as child care and care for the elderly.'

Those surveyed spanned the social scale, with 85 per cent white and 14 per cent of ethnic origin, similar to the general population. The same was true for occupation, with managerial and professional jobs accounting for 29 per cent, and 33 per cent blue-collar workers, for example.



The couple recently bought a three-bedroom house in Bournemouth. Matthew moved out of the London flat they had done up together, and into a shared rented one. 'I couldn't afford the mortgage on two places, but nor do we want to sell the London flat – so I rent that out and pay the mortgage and my rent from this.' Philippa sees that having time to live in her own rhythm and get domestic chores done leaves weekends for pure 'fun family time', and Matthew is grateful. 'I love being in London, the stimulus of it, and I need completely peaceful time, and Philippa allows me to have that.'

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, LATs are often viewed critically by outsiders. Matthew has been told sharply by some of his colleagues that he should have his wife and child with him, and he knows some male friends assume he is revelling in his freedom as a lad about town. Tony and Wendy have fielded the odd comment, but she says she loves the fact her mother refers to Tony as her 'son-in-sin'. Very few in the study saw their choice of LAT as consciously building an alternative lifestyle, although some clearly felt that it was the best way for them. For those who identified themselves strongly as a couple, sexual

exclusivity was important, with 89 per cent thinking a transgression would be 'always or mostly wrong'.

Tony and Wendy have discussed the 'emotional shape' of their relationship from the start. Monogamy became particularly significant when, six years ago, work took Tony to New York for a year. 'I said to Tony that we needed to start the conversation several months before he actually went,' Wendy says. 'We did that,' Tony adds, 'and got through in a way that did not destabilise our relationship.'

Matthew and Philippa, who speak three times a day on the telephone, see honest communication as essential. Monogamy is an assumption, and Matthew says if one of them strayed, it would be the end of their relationship. So how lucky, he says, smiling, that 'living this way has made our time together very special and sex more exciting.' Missing daily contact and cuddles were cited as a price of LAT in the survey, but overall there was a high level of satisfaction and a feeling of relationships being strengthened, of absence making the heart grow fonder, of a willingness to put in the emotional work necessary to protect love.

When it came to caring for children either from their previous relationships or from their own partnership, some wanted to be very involved, others chose not to be. Wendy and Tony came up against this after she had assumed, early in their relationship, that Tony 'might take on some child care', but quickly learnt he 'had no intention of being a surrogate parent', having brought up three children of his own. Yet he has forged a very warm friendship with Wendy's daughter.

When it is a question of whom to turn to with a problem such as illness, relationships, money or work, 34 per cent of LATs would go to their partner; 34 per cent to a family member, and 27 per cent to a friend or neighbour. For many of us, not feeling able to turn first to our life partner in a crisis would seem to be a serious flaw in LAT, but for the couples surveyed it was simply how it had to be.

The researchers recognised that a key question was how far LATs would care for each other if one of them were ill. The majority of LATs did not assume they would be cared for by each other if, for example, they became bedridden. A little more than half said a family member would take care of them, close to a quarter suggested a friend or neighbour, and only 20 per cent said their partner would step in. This compares with the 92 per cent of married or cohabiting couples who assume that their partner will care for them, according to a 2001 survey.

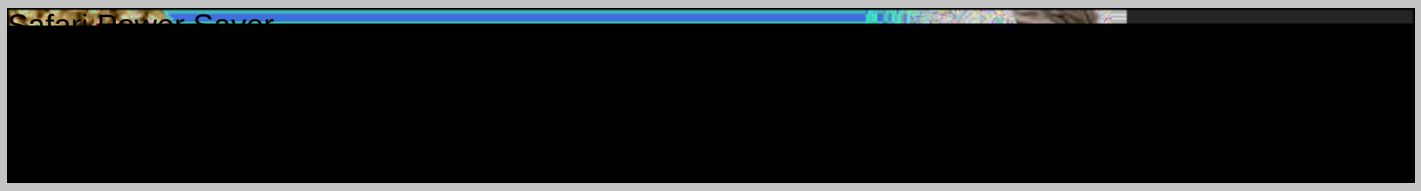
Wendy and Tony see themselves as being together when they reach 'zimmer frames and beyond', Tony says, and the tenderness between them is evident as they talk of assuming they will live in the same home

and care for each other if that becomes necessary. 'When you have lived without rituals you have to recognise that things have added up to a significant state of affairs,' Wendy says. 'We would not desert each other.'

So might LAT become a lifestyle we see more frequently? Prof Sasha Roseneil, a lead researcher on the study, believes that increasingly we will choose LAT during the 21st century, pointing to declining cultural pressure on people to marry, and women's increased economic and social independence, as two factors. 'Living apart is not always straightforward,' Roseneil says, 'but it is appealing to many people because of the flexibility and the possibility of autonomy it gives.'

The Living Apart Together study was conducted by Birkbeck University of London, University of Bradford and the National Centre for Social Research. Angela Neustatter is the author of A Home for the Heart – Home as the Key to Happiness (Gibson Square)

How we moderate



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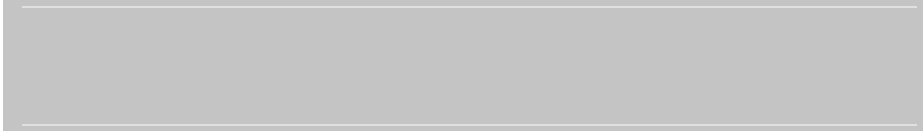
Julia Shaw hit traffic pay dirt earlier this week when she took to Slate to argue that twenty-somethings should follow her lead and get married now. Shaw got married at 23, and it seems to have worked out well for her. Amanda Marcotte responded by throwing some cold hard data on that argument, noting that women who marry later are less likely to get divorced and earn more, on average, than their earlier-marrying counterparts.

So should you wait to tie the knot? As tends to be the case

and that the earnings differential between the groups just reflects other differences between their members.

But you go to war with the data you have, not the data you wish you had. So here's what the admittedly limited information we have on the effects of marriage tells us.

As Marcotte says, the evidence is pretty persuasive that waiting to get married actually causes women's earnings to go up. For one thing, the difference holds up if you control for education level, as this chart from "Knot Yet" that Ezra posted indicates:



The asterisks and circumflexes indicate varying levels of statistical significance, but generally, the differences are statistically significant for high school graduates, those with some college, and college graduates. But they aren't for high school dropouts. There, you don't see any significant difference in earnings based on age at time of marriage.

What's more, the magnitudes involved are a bit smaller for high school graduates and those with only some college than for college graduates. That suggests that the benefits to waiting increase the more educated you are. And again, we don't have any evidence suggesting that

waiting actually causes these differentials, and when they're as small as they are for the high school graduate and some college cohort, it could just be a quirk of demography. So it's not as simple as just "waiting makes you earn more." That seems to be true for college graduates, but the farther you go down the education ladder, the less clear the relationship looks.

The effects also decline the longer one waits. Getting married at 25 rather than 19 makes a big difference. At 30 rather than 25? Less so.

But what we do know is that there is no such relationship for men:

No matter their education level, men who wait until they're 30 or older to marry earn a statistically smaller amount than men who marry earlier. This is interesting in light of research from the Urban Institute's Robert Lerman, among others, suggesting that men earn a "marriage premium." Lerman and his co-author, Avner Ahituv, found that marriage increases men's earnings by about 20 percent. But as Wilcox tells me, there's less evidence of a premium among women. Some studies find one, while others actually find a penalty, and there's a

pretty consistent wage penalty for women who have children vs. those who don't.

That might partly explain the results you see in the above chart. If men make more money because they get married, then speeding up marriage could reap some economic dividends, enough to offset the disadvantages in terms of reduced flexibility when it comes to place and type of work.

So does waiting to get married increase your earnings? Probably, if you're a college-educated woman. For everyone else, it's less clear.

Measuring happiness is a tricky business, and we've known for a while now that although life satisfaction constantly increases with income, its effect slows as one climbs the income ladder. Going from $100,000 to $120,000 a year creates a lot less happiness than going from $20,000 a year to $40,000 a year. Combine that with the murky economic data seen above, and you've got one messy picture.

"Knot Yet", the study Wilcox helped lead, has some interesting findings in this regard. He finds that self-reported happiness with one's marriage is highest for those who marry in their mid-20s, compared to those who do it in their late teens or early 20s or who wait until their

late 20s or early 30s:

And it's not just feelings about the marriage. Among 24-to 29-year-olds, those who got married are less likely to

people as much as any happiness effects bestowed by marriage itself. Obviously you're going to be having more sex after getting married if you're religiously opposed to sex before marriage.

But the differences are still striking. It's uncontroversial at

on to

depends. "If your goal is to maximize your professional and financial accomplishment, then there's no question that getting married later is the answer for you," he says. "But if you have a more traditional orientation in terms of having kids or being religious, then getting married and having kids in your 20s is a good bet."

UCLA Newsroom

SCIENCE + TECHNOLOGY

Poor people value marriage as much as the middle class and rich, study shows

The battle over the value of marriage "has been won," UCLA psychologists report

Stuart Wolpert | July 16, 2012

Poor people hold more traditional values toward marriage and divorce than people with moderate and higher incomes, UCLA psychologists report in the current issue of the Journal of Marriage and Family.

The !ndings are based on a large survey about marriage, relationships and values, analyzed across income groups. They raise questions about how effectively some $1billion in government spending to promote the value of marriage among the poor is being spent.

"A lot of government policy is based on the assumption that low-income people hold less traditional views about marriage," said Benjamin Karney, a UCLA professor of psychology and senior author of the study. "However, the different income groups do not hold dramatically different views about marriage and divorce Ñ and when the views are different, they are different in the opposite direction from what is commonly assumed. People of low income hold values that are at least as traditional toward marriage and divorce, if not more so."

Karney, who is co-director of the Relationship Institute at UCLA, added: "The United States is spending money teaching people about the value of marriage and family, and we are saying, congratulations, the battle has been won.".

The study consisted of 6,012 people, 29.4 percent of low income, 26 percent of moderate income and 34.7 percent of high income. In the sample, 4,508 people lived in Florida, 500 in California, 502 in New York and 502 in Texas. The results from the four states were very comparable. The research was based on phone surveys that lasted an average of 27 minutes each. The participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements.

Lower income people held slightly more traditional values on the following statements than people with higher

income:

"Divorce can be a reasonable solution to an unhappy marriage."

"When there are children in the family, parents should stay married even if they no longer love each other."

"ItÕs better for a family if the man earns a living and the woman takes care of the family."

"A husband and wife should be of the same race or ethnic group."

The values among all groups were equally traditional on the following statements:

"A happy, healthy marriage is one of the most important things in life."

"Children do better when their parents are married."

"People who have children together should be married."

Low-income people hold much more traditional attitudes about divorce and are less likely to see divorce as a reasonable solution to an unhappy marriage, Karney said. One area where low-income groups are less traditional, he said, is on the acceptability of single parenting.

These !ndings raise an obvious question: If poor people hold traditional values about marriage and divorce, why are their marriage rates lower and their out-of-wedlock births much higher than those of higher incomes? The answer, Karney said, is that values often do not predict behavior, and they donÕt in these areas. He noted that most people do not consider lying to be a good value, yet large numbers of people lie nevertheless.

"Why are low-income women postponing marriage but having babies?" Karney asked. "Because they donÕt want to get divorced. They think if they marry their current partner, they are likely to get divorced Ñ and couples that have !nancial strain are much more likely to have marital di"culties. ItÕs like these women have been reading the scienti!c journals about marriage; their intuition is absolutely correct.

He said many of these low-income women have no models for a successful marriage, and the marriages they see are in trouble. Also, they do not trust their !nancial and family future with the men they know. "However, they know they can raise a child," he said. "They may have been raised by a single mother, and people all around them were raised by single mothers. They see single-parent families that succeed, and they see the role of mother is valued."

Karney said that an a#uent 18-year-old girl does not want to get pregnant because that would interfere with her plans for college, her career and a future husband. A poor 18-year-old looks at what awaits her; she doesnÕt see herself becoming a lawyer or even a college graduate. "But if she becomes a mother, she gets respect, purpose and someone to love her Ñ and she doesnÕt need to be married to do that," he said. "She knows she can be a mom; she doesnÕt know if she can be married forever."

Why are low-income women willing to have babies before they are willing to get married?

"ItÕs not because they donÕt care about marriage," Karney said. "They care about marriage so much that they are unwilling to do it the wrong way. In their communities, motherhood and marriage are two separate things. Girls who think they have somewhere to go in life donÕt get pregnant; girls who think they have nowhere to go are less careful about contraception."

Thomas Trail, UCLA postdoctoral fellow is psychology and lead author of the study said that lower income partners are no more likely to struggle with relationship issues than are higher income partners. "They have no more problems with communication, sex, parental roles or division of household chores than do higher income couples," he said.

Do low-income people have unrealistically high standards toward marriage? Karney and Trail found no evidence of that.

"TheyÕre more realistic," Karney said.

Sustaining a marriage or long-term relationship depends on how well you are able to manage the daily tasks of life, he noted.

"For some people, those tasks are more challenging because of what they have to contend with," Karney said. "A marriage is part and parcel with the rest of your life. Your values turn out to be a pretty small factor in the success of a marriage. Even if you love marriage and are deeply committed to the institution of marriage, practical issues that are making your life di"cult matter more.

"Low-income couples are practical and realistic in their views on marriage. We should listen to what they are telling us, rather than imposing ÔsolutionsÕ that do not match what they really need."

The best way to lower teen pregnancy rates, he said, is to increase social mobility. Government money would be better spent helping low-income people with the day-to-day challenges in their lives, he said.

"There is a lot you can do with a billion dollars to promote marriage, including helping people with child care and transportation; that is not where the money has been spent," Karney said. "Almost all of that money has been spent on educational curricula, which is a narrow approach, based on false assumptions. Communication and emotional connection are the same among low-income people as in more a#uent group. Their unique needs are not about relationship education. None of the data support the current policy of teaching relationships values and skills. Low-income people have concrete, practical problems making ends meet."

The study, titled "WhatÕs (Not) Wrong With Low-Income Marriages," is based on data collected in 2003, after the federal government (under President George W. Bush) began a "healthy marriage initiative" that still exists. The data predate the recession, but Karney suspects the !ndings would apply to an even larger extent today than when he collected the data.

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turn these problems around.

The prerequisite for any eventual policy solution consists of a simple cultural change: It must once again be taken for granted that a male in the prime of life who isn't even looking for work is behaving badly. There can be exceptions for those who are genuinely unable to work or are house husbands. But reasonably healthy working-age males who aren't working or even looking for work, who live off their girlfriends, families or the state, must once again be openly regarded by their fellow citizens as lazy, irresponsible and unmanly. Whatever their social class, they are, for want of a better word, bums.

To bring about this cultural change, we must change the language that we use whenever the topic of feckless men comes up. Don't call them "demoralized." Call them whatever derogatory word you prefer. Equally important: Start treating the men who aren't feckless with respect. Recognize that the guy who works on your lawn every week is morally superior in this regard to your neighbor's college-educated son who won't take a "demeaning" job. Be willing to say so.

This shouldn't be such a hard thing to do. Most of us already believe that one of life's central moral obligations is to be a productive adult. The cultural shift that I advocate doesn't demand that we change our minds about anything; we just need to drop our nonjudgmentalism.

It is condescending to treat people who have less education or money as less morally accountable than we are. We should stop making excuses for them that we wouldn't make for ourselves. Respect those who deserve respect, and look down on those who deserve looking down on.

ÑMr. Murray is the author of "Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960-2010" and the W.H. Brady Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

the churchÕs image on social issues. During his return trip from World Youth Day in Brazil in July 2013, for example, the pope said he would not condemn Ñ or judge Ñ priests because of their sexual orientation.

ÒCohabitation is a big issue, and how it is dealt with at the parish level is a big concern, so the pope is sending a signal,Ó said John Thavis, a veteran Vatican reporter.

He said that the couples chosen for the ceremony Òseem to be normal people and not necessarily handpicked. ItÕs one more indication that the pope looks at things the way they really are; heÕs a realist.

ÒItÕs a pope willing to say that if you want to be married in the church, weÕll find a way to do it. ItÕs the Ôwho am I to judge?Õ pope, who doesnÕt want to turn people away and instead wants to find a way to bring people in,Ó Mr. Thavis said.

In defending the sacrament of marriage, the pope acknowledged that it could become a challenge, that spouses could stray, or become discouraged and Òdaily life becomes burdensome, even nauseating.Ó

ÒThe path is not always a smooth one, free of disagreements, otherwise it would not be human. It is a demanding journey, at times difficult, and at times turbulent, but such is life,Ó Francis said.

Francis is not the first pope to celebrate a public wedding, but SundayÕs ceremony Òassumes particular significance, coming ahead of the Synod of Bishops on the family,Ó Bishop Filippo Iannone, vice regent of the Diocese of Rome, said in a statement on the diocesan website.

Many Catholics hope the synod will address issues like allowing divorced members who remarry to receive Communion.

A version of this article appears in print on September 15, 2014, on page A4 of the New York edition with the headline: In Weddings, Pope Looks Past Tradition.
