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DIVERSITY IS THE NORM

The traditional family is not rebounding as the census bureau clams

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LOS ANGELES, CA -- The American Association for Single People takes exception to the title of a press release issued today by the Census Bureau. On closer examination, the government's media spin that "the nuclear family rebounds" turns out to be a distortion.

The Census Bureau issued a new report today which examines the living arrangements of children in the United States in 1996. The official government report was announced by a press release from the Commerce Department which declares "The 'Nuclear Family' Rebounds, Census Bureau Reports."

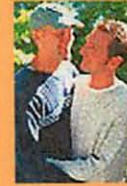
In fact, more recent data from the Census Bureau shows that the percent of children living with a single parent has continued to increase each decade since 1960 when only 9.1 percent of children resided in single parent families. As of 1998, the Census Bureau's annual report showed that nearly 20 million children, more than 27% of all youth in the nation, lived with a single parent. One million more minors lived with a single parent in 1998 than in 1995.

"Nuclear family rebounds" turns out to be even more inaccurate when one looks at other census data from the perspective of the nation's households.

The percent of American households which contain a married couple has steadily declined since a peak in 1950 when 78 percent of our households included married couples. An annual survey done by the Census Bureau in 2000 of 50,000 households found that married couple households had declined to 52.8 percent.

When children are thrown into the mix, the decline in the percent of married-with-children households has dropped even further. For example, census reports show that in 1970, more than 40 percent of the nation's households were comprised of married couples with children. That percent has been steadily dropping, to 31 percent in 1980, 26 percent in 1990, and 24 percent in 1999.

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American Association for Single People

Promoting the well being and human rights of unmarried adults, couples, parents and families.

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"Since married-with-children households have dropped that dramatically in 30 years, and with the percent of children living with single parents continuing to increase each year, it is amazing that the Census Bureau would issue a press release that claims the 'nuclear family' of married couples raising children is rebounding," said Thomas F. Coleman, Executive Director of the American Association for Single People. "This type of a media spin on facts such as these looks as though it could have political underpinnings," he added.

"AASP is not for or against marriage or traditional families," Coleman explained. "We want society to respect the personal decisions that Americans make as to whether they choose to marry or not, and whether they choose to have children or not."

This new census report is being released at a time when tax reform proposals are a major topic of debate in Washington. Some of the proposals focus on married taxpayers with children at home. But lawmakers should remember that many of their constituents have different types of living arrangements.

"It's time for Congress to focus on tax relief for ALL Americans, including unmarried wage-earners and taxpayers," Coleman stressed. "After all, we make up 40 percent of the nation's full-time workforce." AASP is a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization promoting the well being of all of America's 82 million unmarried adults, whether they live alone, with a roommate or domestic partner, or whether they are a single parent or live with other relatives. AASP uses educational means to insure that the concerns of unmarried Americans are considered by elected representatives, corporate executives, political party officials, and the general public.

"Unmarried Americans, whether they have children or not, deserve to be treated fairly," Coleman said. "And as it stands now, we are not."

Marital status discrimination is pervasive in our tax codes, such as in the federal death tax. While a married person may leave an unlimited amount of wealth to a surviving spouse without being taxed at all by the federal government, unmarried people are treated differently. Why should a single parent not be able to leave tax-free assets to a surviving child?" Coleman asked. "If taxation is going to be 'marriage neutral' as Senator Joe Lieberman and others in Congress say it should be, then an unmarried adult should be able to leave assets to a relative or domestic partner tax free," he added.

"Removing marital status discrimination from the tax codes either requires eliminating the tax, or taxing married people the same as

unmarried people -- whether we are talking about the death tax or about the 'marriage bonus' that most married couples get when they file a joint return," Coleman said. "What's fair for one should be fair for all."

One thing is certain. Marital status discrimination will not stop until unmarried Americans begin to speak out and to organize.

The squeaky wheel gets oiled," Coleman observed. "Single people need to take a page out of the book of older Americans. In 1950, seniors were relatively powerless, but today AARP has 34 million members and politicians pay attention to the needs of our seniors."

The American Association for Single People wants to provide a collective voice for the 82 million unmarried Americans -- whether they have children or not, whether they are gay or heterosexual, whether they are men or women, or whether they are young or old. Any adult may join AASP by making a tax deductible donation of \$10 or more.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR SINGLE PEOPLE



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