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# The End of Men or the Rebirth of Class? How Hanna Rosin Leaves Out the 1% & Family Law Fails the Other 99%

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# THE END OF MEN OR THE REBIRTH OF CLASS? HOW HANNA ROSIN LEAVES OUT THE 1% AND FAMILY LAW FAILS THE OTHER 99%

June Carbone and Naomi Cahn\*

## ABSTRACT

This article argues that much of what has been described as “the end of men” is in fact the recreation of class. Greater inequality among men and among women has resurrected class differences and changed the way men and women relate to each other and channel resources to their children. While women have in fact gained ground in the workplace and acquired greater ability to live, work, play and raise children without men, a mere relative move towards sex equality only masks the more fundamental changes occurring in American society and the continuing existence of patriarchy..

First, the improved freedom women enjoy does not translate into greater power at the top. Greater societal inequality has instead offset these changes by increasing elite male dominance, marginalizing women in the in the executive ranks and the most prestigious professional circles, and ceding political power to a conservative elite that has removed women’s issues from the public agenda. At the height of the era that supposedly marks the “end of men,” the gendered wage gap has been increasing for college graduates even as it declines for everyone else. In a winner-takes-most world, the disproportionate rewards go to the alpha dogs who remain overwhelmingly male.

Second, the genuine decline of working class men does not necessarily benefit women. Instead, it means that an increasing number of women in middle American have little choice but to raise families on their own as the men in their lives become less reliable. As society become more unequal, it writes off a greater percentage of men to imprisonment, chronic unemployment, substance abuse and mental instability. The women left with low-paying but stable jobs at Walmart or Burger King have trouble finding partners who can either contribute enough to make the relationship worthwhile or who will assist the new female breadwinner who both brings home the bacon and cooks it. These women have independence but neither power nor help at home.

In short, over the past several decades, men have lost ground everywhere but the top, increasing male inequality; and, while women have gained in the middle and the bottom, they are not equal – anywhere -- because men retain “structural power” over women. Accordingly, we conclude that for the end of men to be a meaningful concept that describes a more egalitarian society, we must decrease economic inequality: the result would translate greater power for women into a better deal for men and greater investment in all children.

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## Introduction

Imagine a society in which women are known through the region for their outspokenness and wit. They have access to the same education as men. They can own, inherit and manage property. They enjoy a relatively greater degree of sexual freedom than in nearby societies. Would we celebrate the rise of women? Herald the “end of men”? If we learned that we had just read a description of Sparta, would we reinterpret the results?<sup>1</sup> The sad truth is that the dominance of elite men can create conditions that look like the emancipation of women – and the end of the men on the losing end of steeply graduated male hierarchies. It is nonetheless a mistake to conflate the relatively greater advantages women enjoy in such a society with female power. Men – and male power – remain alive and well where it counts most, and that is at the top.

In looking at the United States today, the big story is greater income inequality and the rise of a more dominant group of elite men. Greater societal inequality disproportionately affects men. In today’s society, it also interacts with economic changes – the rise of the information economy – that have changed women’s roles and remade family life. Women have benefited from these changes. The information economy rewards the more highly educated, and women now outnumber men at all levels of education. The remaking of the household has freed women from labor intensive washing, cooking and cleaning obligations and women have come to constitute almost one-half of the workforce. The combination of an expanding service sector and the contraction of manufacturing places greater emphasis on interpersonal skills, and modern businesses reap greater benefit from “softer” management styles. Some have heralded the overall effect as women power; or, in the words of a spate of books and articles, beginning in 2010, “the end of men.”<sup>2</sup> They point out that women appear to be closing the income gap and more women than ever out earn their husbands. The sexual revolution has eliminated much of the double standard. Women have become so free to have children on their own that over half of births to women under thirty are non-marital. Observers concluded that women are increasingly calling the shots and male power, influence, and earnings are in decline.

We think these conclusions are – at least partially -- misleading and cloak the construction of a new class-based form of patriarchy. Claims about the end of men are misleading for two interrelated reasons: first, while women’s roles are changing and more women than ever are in college and the workplace, nonetheless, in the public sphere, in the worlds of political power and managerial power, and in the executive suites, women are losing ground. Second, the change between men and women hides the greater inequality in society among men and among women. The greater inequality among men has upped the stakes underlying mating and dating and has created a new elite. The one percent receives deservedly disproportionate attention, but the men at the top -- at least ten percent -- have increased their

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<sup>1</sup> These descriptions come from MARCIA GUTTENTAG & PAUL F. SECORD, TOO MANY WOMEN?: THE SEX RATIO QUESTION 47 (1983).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Hanna Rosin, *The End of Men*, THE ATLANTIC, July/Aug. 2010, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-end-of-men/8135/>. See generally HANNA ROSIN, THE END OF MEN: AND THE RISE OF WOMEN (2012); LIZA MUNDY, THE RICHER SEX: HOW THE NEW MAJORITY OF FEMALE BREADWINNERS IS TRANSFORMING SEX, LOVE AND FAMILY (2012).

dominance as well. Greater inequality increases the dominance of elite men, cedes political power to a conservative elite that has removed women's issues from the agenda, worsens the income and status of non-elite men, and destabilizes families. In short, over the past several decades, men have lost ground everywhere but the top, increasing male inequality; and, while women have gained in the middle and the bottom, they are not equal – anywhere -- because men retain “structural power” over women.<sup>3</sup>

The result of these "winner take all" changes that handsomely reward a narrow, increasingly male, elite while the rest of the country stagnates, is to increase the consequences of family investment. For those who do not succeed in the new high stakes game -- the eighty percent, if not the 99 percent -- the result is likely to be downward mobility. The figures on the "end of men" largely describe the middle managers and working class men at the losing end of these changes.

The combination of the high stakes mating game at the top, family instability in the center, and female independence (with a fair amount of desperation) at the bottom is the recreation of the family as an engine driving class divergence. Marriage once served to promote greater equality as executives married their secretaries, the mothers of young children overwhelmingly tended the home<sup>4</sup>, and men of all social classes worked similar hours. Today, executives marry fellow executives, concentrating family investment in the elite of the next generation. In the meantime, the “end of men” means that women in other social classes are increasingly giving up on the men who are on the losing end of the social transformations. The consequence of the transformed marriage market has made marriage into an issue of class, so that only at higher incomes do traditional families thrive. Evolving family norms implement and reinforce the new system. At the top, the elite continues to raise their children within stable, planned two parent families, with women taking more responsibility for children and more likely to opt out of the highest career tracks.<sup>5</sup> Below that, divorce rates are at all-time highs and non-marital births are exploding. These women neither have the option of opting out of work nor the ability to find family friendly workplaces that make it possible to do justice to their families.

This is not the world that many people imagine when they fantasize about the end of men. Instead, this world ironically owes more to the return of hierarchy among men than genuine societal power by women. Accordingly, we conclude with recommendations for institutionalizing women's equality that depend on decreasing economic inequality – the result would translate greater power for women into a better deal for men and greater investment in all children.

## I. The Rise of Women or the Recreation of Class?

The last half century has seen fundamental changes in the economy. These changes increased the demand for the type of labor women have historically performed (think nurses and waitresses), decreased the premium for physical labor and long serving middle managers (think

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<sup>3</sup> See GUTTENTAG *supra* note 1, at 26 (1983).

<sup>4</sup> This was the pervasive model, albeit one never obtained by black women or poor women.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Why Women Still Can't Have It All*, THE ATLANTIC, July/Aug. 2012, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/>.

men), and dramatically increased CEO pay, the wealth of the financial sector, and the value of executive stock options (think Jared Diamond, George Soros or Mitt Romney).<sup>6</sup> The consequences are dramatically greater inequality, more opportunities for women than in eras in which they were systemically excluded from the labor market, and much greater dominance of the overwhelmingly male one percent. These changes are having a dramatic effect on society and the family.

The question is why call these effects the “end of men?” We could just as well call them the rise of the elephant seals – economist Bob Franks’ description of what happens in a winner-take-all community when the alpha males compete to see who can develop the largest tusks or Cayman Island accounts at the expense of the community as a whole.<sup>7</sup> We believe that the rise of women needs to be placed in the context of increased male inequality. If women ran the world, we suspect that the men on the losing end of today’s economic changes would be better off and women’s gains in education and income would be less remarkable. Let’s give End of Men’s its due, however, and start with a picture of the changes in the status of women.

#### A. The Rise of Women?

Women have made enormous strides in gaining access to higher education and the workplace. Most of the change occurred during the seventies, the height of the women’s movement. The birth of the information economy – with greater demand for women’s market labor -- set the stage. The sex revolution and access to the pill and abortion helped. Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz emphasized that in a few short years legal changes that made abortion legal and contraception available on college campuses had an immediate impact on the average age of marriage, overall fertility, and women’s ability to attend professional and graduate schools.<sup>8</sup> Laws prohibiting sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and pregnancy discrimination helped secured women’s advances. These changes, together with parallel changes in the economy that increased the demand for women’s labor, had an enormous impact on women’s workforce participation and earnings. They were, however, largely complete by the mid-eighties. Let’s look at the numbers.

The percentage of college degrees awarded to women in 1970 was 42%; today it is 57%, a percentage that has been unchanged over the last decade.<sup>9</sup> Women are much more likely to participate in the workforce in 2010 than in 1970 (although less likely than in 1980 – 56.8% in 1970, 64.4% in 1980, and 63.3% in 2010).<sup>10</sup> The overall wage gap between men and women has narrowed substantially from 1970, when women earned 59% of what men earned; today,

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<sup>6</sup> Alexander Eichler, *Gender Wage Gap is Higher on Wall Street Than Anywhere Else*, March 19, 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/19/gender-wage-gap-wall-street\\_n\\_1362878.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/19/gender-wage-gap-wall-street_n_1362878.html).

<sup>7</sup> ROBERT H. FRANK, *THE DARWIN ECONOMY: LIBERTY, COMPETITION, AND THE COMMON GOOD* (2011).

<sup>8</sup> Goldin, Claudia & Katz, L. F. (2002). *The Power of the Pill: Oral Contraceptives and Women’s Career and Marriage Decisions*, 110 J.. POL. ECON.,730..

<sup>9</sup> Susan Aud et al., *THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION 2012* 259 tbl.A-38-1 (Thomas Nachazel et al. eds., 2012), available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012045.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE UNITED STATES: 2012* 384 tbl.597 (2012), available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/12statab/labor.pdf>.

women earn 77% of what men earn (although the biggest gains occurred before 1980).<sup>11</sup> And yes, while wives' earnings contributed 26.6% of total family income in 1970, they contribute 37.1% today, an increase of more than one-third.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the number of married couples in which both husband and wife are wage-earners has increased substantially as well, from 45.7% in 1970 to 55.3% ; the number of families in which the husband is the sole wage earner has decreased almost 50% (from 33.3% in 1970 to 18% today), while the number of families in which the wife is the sole wage-earner has more than tripled, albeit from an almost insignificant 1.9% in 1970 to a still small 6.6% today.<sup>13</sup> Women have in fact gained in education, income, and status. Before we celebrate too much, however, let's consider who the really big winners have been.

## B. Income Inequality and Elite Male Dominance

Over the last twenty years, the single biggest change in the U.S. economy has been the increase in income inequality. The inequality in wages is the highest it has been in a century.<sup>14</sup> Between 1980 and 2005, the United States enjoyed considerable growth and productivity gains, but 80 percent of the increase in income went to the top one percent of U. S. earners.<sup>15</sup> Those at the very top, the 99.99<sup>th</sup> percentile, increased their income between 1985 and 2005 by a factor of 5 (amounting to an increase of over \$4 million of year), while those below the 99.00<sup>th</sup> percentile showed relatively modest gains, and income stagnated for those below the top quintile.<sup>16</sup> Putting the overall picture together, Congressional budget office figures show that the highest fifth increased their after-tax earnings by 95 percent between 1979 and 2007 in comparison with a 25 percent increase in middle fifth of households and a sixteen percent increase for the bottom fifth.

Now, let's consider the gender breakdown underlying these figures, beginning with the professions. Women have dramatically increased their representations among doctors and lawyers, and the most highly paid professionals have increased their incomes substantially. Yet, women have also lost ground in recent years. Women constitute slightly less than one-third of all physicians and surgeons, and earn 71% of what men earn.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the gender gap has widened for starting salaries, rising from a difference of \$3,600 in 1999 to \$16,819 in 2008.<sup>18</sup> Researchers conclude that the gap cannot be explained by specialty choice, practice setting, work hours, or other characteristics. In law, the differences are smaller, but the percentage of women

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<sup>11</sup> Am. Ass'n of Univ. Women, *THE SIMPLE TRUTH ABOUT THE GENDER PAY GAP 2012 EDITION* 3 fig.1 (2012), available at <http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/simpletruthaboutpaygap1.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Labor, *WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE: A DATABOOK* 77 tbl.24 (2011), available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-databook-2011.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at 76 tbl.23.

<sup>14</sup> Timothy Noah, *The United States of Inequality*, SLATE (Sept. 3, 2010, 3:06 PM), [http://www.slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/the\\_great\\_divergence/features/2010/the\\_united\\_states\\_of\\_inequality/introducing\\_the\\_great\\_divergence.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/the_great_divergence/features/2010/the_united_states_of_inequality/introducing_the_great_divergence.html).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> Bartels, *supra*, at 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 58.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony T. Lo Sasso, Michael R. Richards, Chiu-Fang Chou & Susan E. Gerber, *The \$16,819 Pay Gap for Newly Trained Physicians: The Unexplained Trend of Men Earning More Than Women*, 30 HEALTH AFF. 193 (2011).

in law school peaked in 2001 and has been declining since then. With the decline in graduates, the pipeline into law firms has been also been declining modestly over the last ten years. Women continue to hold about 15% of equity partnerships, the most lucrative positions in the legal profession and that figure has been largely unchanged for twenty years.<sup>19</sup> Firms, however, have also moved toward different compensation tiers, and women do not fare as well in the new systems as they did in firms with a single partnership level.<sup>20</sup>

Further exacerbating the exclusion of women from the top income ranks is the change in the financial sector – the sector of the economy whose income grew most rapidly over the last twenty years.<sup>21</sup> The six jobs with the largest gender gap in pay and at least 10,000 men and 10,000 women were in the Wall Street-heavy financial sector: insurance agents, managers, clerks, securities sales agents, personal advisers and other specialists.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, while the percentage of women in business schools has increased to almost half, the number of women on Wall Street has dropped off since 2000. In 2008 and 2009, the number of sexual harassment charges per woman in the financial industry grew higher.<sup>23</sup> Total compensation for executives tripled over the last fifteen years,<sup>24</sup> with the ratio of CEO compensation to average worker pay increasing by at least a factor of ten.<sup>25</sup> Yet, according to a 2010 report, women constitute only 2 percent of chief executive officers (CEOs), 14 percent of top executives, and 16 percent of directors at Fortune 500 companies<sup>26</sup> Women are losing out in the sectors of the economy where compensation was most rapidly increasing.

In the highly lucrative tech sector, the overall percentage of women has been falling. Ten years ago, women earned 28.1% of all computer and information sciences bachelor's degrees; today, they earn 18.1%.<sup>27</sup> Or take engineering, where 18.6% of the degrees were awarded to women a decade ago, but only 16.8% were awarded more recently<sup>28</sup> (a small decrease, but a

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<sup>19</sup> The Nat'l Ass'n of Women Lawyers & The Nat'l Ass'n of Women Lawyers Found., REPORT OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL NATIONAL SURVEY ON RETENTION AND PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN LAW FIRMS 3 (2011), *available at* <http://nawl.timberlakepublishing.com/files/NAWL%202011%20Annual%20Survey%20Report%20FINAL%20Publication-ready%2011-9-11.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>21</sup> FINANCIAL CRISIS INQUIRY COMMISSION, THE FINANCIAL CRISIS INQUIRY REPORT 62 (2011).

<sup>22</sup> Frank Bass, *Shining Shoes Best Way Wall Street Women Outearn Men*, BLOOMBERG (March 16, 2012), <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-16/shining-shoes-best-way-wall-street-women-outearn-men.html>.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Eichler, *Gender Wage Gap Is Higher On Wall Street Than Anywhere Else*, HUFFINGTON POST (Mar. 19, 2012), [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/19/gender-wage-gap-wall-street\\_n\\_1362878.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/19/gender-wage-gap-wall-street_n_1362878.html).

<sup>24</sup> Brian J. Hall & Kevin J. Murphy, *The Trouble with Stock Options*, 17 J. ECON. PERSP. 49, 49, 51 (2003) (reporting and discussing executive option grants).

<sup>25</sup> Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein & Sylvia Allegretto, THE STATE OF WORKING AMERICA 2006/2007, (2007), *available at* <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1027&context=books>; *see also* Carola Frydman & Raven E. Saks, *Executive Compensation: A New View From a Long-Term Perspective, 1936-2005*, Fed. Reserve Bd. Div. of Research & Statistics & Monetary Aff. Finance & Economics Discussion Series, Working Paper No. 2007-35, July 6, 2007), *available at* <http://federalreserve.gov/pubs/feds/2007/200735/200735abs.html> (growth of CEO pay relative to worker pay increased from 30:1 in 1970 to 120:1 by 2000).

<sup>26</sup> Rachel Soares, Jan Combopiano, Allyson Regis, Yelena Shur & Rosita Wong, 2010 CATALYST CENSUS: FORTUNE 500 WOMEN EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND TOP EARNERS, CATALYST.ORG (2010), [http://catalyst.org/file/412/2010\\_us\\_census\\_women\\_executive\\_officers\\_and\\_top\\_earners\\_final.pdf](http://catalyst.org/file/412/2010_us_census_women_executive_officers_and_top_earners_final.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> *Aud.*, *supra* note 9, at 259 tbl.A-38-1.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

decrease nonetheless). Even though women graduate from college in greater numbers than men, they have lost ground in gaining entry to the most remunerative degrees and positions.

### C. Gender and the Recreation of Class

In light of these changes, let's revisit the statistics that show women's gains vis-à-vis men. Like other statistics, they show dramatic variation by class and race. We start with college graduation rates, where women now outperform the men. Break down these figures by race and income, however, and we see a different story. Among whites with family incomes above \$70,000 per year, the percentage of males versus females attending college dropped from 52 to 49% from the mid-nineties to 2003-04. At 49-51, however, the number of men and women attending college is almost the same. The more significant drop in male college attendance came in the middle income ranks (\$30,000 to 70,000) where the percentage of men fell from 50 to 43% and the low income group where it fell to 42%. For African-Americans, the percentage of men in the top group *increased* during the same period, reaching 48%, almost indistinguishable from the white rate. Elite Latinos showed patterns similar to whites. Middle income African-Americans and Latinos, however, reported that only 42% of their college students in the middle income group were male, and for the low-income students in 2003-04, only 36% of the blacks and 39% of the Latinos were male. In other words, as the economy has weakened, the big fall off has been in the college attendance of low income men. The men from elite families, whatever their race, are still in college.<sup>29</sup>

Let's turn to the much heralded change in the wage gap. In the seventies and eighties, the gender wage gap narrowed and did so overwhelmingly because of increases in income to highly skilled women.<sup>30</sup> Comparing 1990 with 2007, however, the figures diverge strikingly by education. Looking at gross figures, that is, the percentage of men's median income earned by women without controlling for any characteristic other than education, the wage gap over the last twenty years narrowed the most for the least educated women while the gap between men and women *increased* for the most educated:

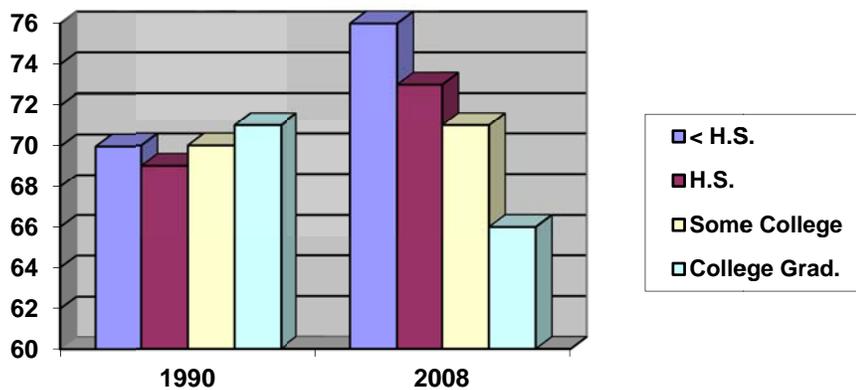
#### **Female Median Income as a Percentage of Male Median Income by Education<sup>31</sup>**

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<sup>29</sup> Mary Beth Marklein, *College Gender Gaps Widens: 57% are Women*, USA TODAY (Oct. 19, 2005, 11:41 p.m.), [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2005-10-19-male-college-cover\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2005-10-19-male-college-cover_x.htm)

<sup>30</sup> Francine Blau & Lawrence M. Kahn, *The U.S. Gender Pay Gap in the 1990s: Slowing Convergence* 17 (Princeton Univ. Indus. Relations Section, Working Paper No. 508, March 1, 2006), <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/dsp01gb19f581g> (finding that wage gains for married women in the 1970s and 1980s tended to be greatest for women married to middle and high wage men).

<sup>31</sup> Median Annual Income, by Level of Education, 1990-2008, INFOPLEASE (2007), <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0883617.html#ixzz1JFxpOxL9> (last visited Oct. 17, 2011).



In 1990, the wage gap did not vary greatly by education and to the extent it did, highly educated women earned a higher percentage of male income than less educated women. By 2008, the relationship between education and the wage gap changed direction, with the least educated women earning a much higher percentage of male income than the most educated. The greatest gaps occurred among the most highly paid.<sup>32</sup>

These developments do not necessarily involve discrimination against women. Some of the differences in compensation reflect different courses of study, hours worked or time out of the labor market.<sup>33</sup> Yet, these statistics show anything but the “end of men.” What they do show is the persistence of the gendered wage gap at the top and continuing inequality among the most elite dual earner families. What they also show is the increasing economic inequality for men.

#### D. The End of Blue Collar Men

If women have not gained as much ground at the top as overall figures on the economy show, they have gained in the middle and at the bottom. They have done so in large part because blue collar men have lost out. Males who did not finish college have been the biggest losers in the modern economy.

Between 1980 and the mid-2000’s, the only men whose earnings increased in real dollar terms were college graduates.<sup>34</sup> All other men lost ground. By the end of the nineties, less educated men’s income had fallen well below what they earned in real dollar terms in 1973. At the same time, every group of women except for high school dropouts saw their income increase. Families farther down the socio-economic ladder accordingly became much more dependent on women’s income simply to maintain the same standard of living.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Blau & Kahn, *supra* note 30, at 45 (showing that the wage gap has increased the most at the 90th percentile and above, and that the increase holds even after controlling for other factors such as education or type of job).

<sup>33</sup> See, e.g., Marianne Bertrand, Claudia Goldin & Lawrence F. Katz, *Dynamics of the Gender Gap for Young Professionals in the Financial & Corporate Sectors* (Sept. 30, 2008), <http://fairmodel.econ.yale.edu/ec483/katz.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> RICHARD FRY & D’VERA COHN, PEW RESEARCH CENTER, WOMEN, MEN & THE NEW ECONOMICS OF MARRIAGE 8 (Jan. 19, 2010), <http://pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/11/new-economics-of-marriage.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> That is, they became more dependent on women’s’ income to maintain the same standard of living. The less education a woman has, however, the lower the percentage of total family income the woman is likely to

Exacerbating the loss of blue collar male status was a change in employment stability. The length the average man or women stays in a particular job has diminished substantially over the last thirty years, but the impact has been substantially greater for the working class.<sup>36</sup> In the 1970's, the differences in job stability did not vary much by education. After 2000, the job instability figures for the most educated remained about the same as the figures for the seventies. But they increased by a third for the other males.<sup>37</sup>

The disappearance of “good jobs” with decent pay, increasing benefits over time, and employment stability has had a significant impact on blue collar men. At the height of the Great Compression, the period of relative income equality between 1945 and the mid-seventies, male leisure time did not vary much by class; today, it does.<sup>38</sup> Charles Murray documents the changes in employment since 1960 in a prototypical white upper class community (Belmont) and a prototypical white working class town (Fishtown). In the middle of the twentieth century, the number of men who worked less than forty hours a week was low – about 10 percent in Fishtown, the working class community, and 8 percent in Belmont, the more affluent area. By 2010, the percentage of men working less than forty hours a week had doubled in Fishtown to 20 percent while rising more modestly to about 12 percent in Belmont.<sup>39</sup> The figures are higher still in African-American communities and have been since good blue collar jobs began to disappear in the sixties.

Nor do the employment figures alone capture the impact on working class communities. A remarkable book, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, suggests that greater inequality itself makes matter worse. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett present a cross-cultural study that examines the impact of greater inequality across different countries and different states in the United States. Their 2009 study found that income inequality had a greater impact on societies than poverty rates and that greater inequality lowered levels of trust, educational achievement and social mobility and increased rates of mental illness (including substance abuse), obesity, teenage births, homicides and imprisonment rates.<sup>40</sup>

Greater inequality has had a disproportionate impact on the lives of low and middle income men and that, much more than women's gains, may account for much of the “end of men.”

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contribute. *Id.* at 16. In addition, the less education a woman has the less likely she is to be in the labor market. Sara McLanahan, *Diverging Destinies: How Children are Faring Under the Second Demographic Transition*, 41 *DEMOGRAPHY* 607, 608 (2004). When looking at a husband's education, however, the figures even out, with college educated men being the least likely to have a working spouse. Fry & Cohn, *supra* note 34, at 16.

<sup>36</sup> See Henry Farber, *Is the Company Man an Anachronism? Trends in Long Term Employment in the U.S., 1973-2006* (Princeton Univ. Indus. Relations Section, Working Paper No. 518, Sept. 11, 2007), <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/dsp01ft848q61h>.

<sup>37</sup> For a broader discussion of these trends, see Arne L. Kalleberg, *GOOD JOBS, BAD JOBS: THE RISE OF POLARIZED AND PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1970S-2000S* (2011). He observed that aggregate figures sometimes show relatively little change in job stability in the United States, but the averages cloak important differences as employment instability has increased for: men, but not women; high-school graduates and dropouts, but not the college-educated; blacks more than whites; and some age groups more than others. *Id.* at 93.

<sup>38</sup> Jerry A. Jacobs & Kathleen Gerson, *Who are the Overworked Americans?*, 56 *REV. SOC. ECON.* 442, 457 (1998).

<sup>39</sup> CHARLES MURRAY, *COMING APART: THE STATE OF WHITE AMERICA, 1960-2010* 176 (2012).

<sup>40</sup> RICHARD WILKINSON & KATE PICKETT, *THE SPIRIT LEVEL: WHY GREATER EQUALITY MAKES SOCIETIES STRONGER* 19 (2011).

## II. The Family

The second, much more complicated, part of the “End of Men,” has been the impact on the family. Women have indubitably gained power in family matters and perhaps the most important component of their increased power is the ability to leave unhappy relationships.<sup>41</sup> Women’s greater economic independence means that they no longer need to rely on a breadwinning male to provide financial support, and divorce reform streamlined the ease of breakups, reinforcing equal parenting and economic sharing.<sup>42</sup> The result has increased women’s influence inside and outside of relationships. Economists Betsey Stephenson and Justin Wolfers report, for example, that divorce reform is associated with a thirty percent decline in domestic violence and a significant drop in women’s suicide rates.<sup>43</sup>

While the gain in women’s ability to make it on their own is substantial, women’s ability to enter into relationships of their choosing is far more mixed. In an influential book in the eighties, sociologists Marcia Guttentag and Paul Secord explored the relationship between what they termed “structural” or societal power and “dyadic” power or power to choose relationships.<sup>44</sup> Ordinarily, the ratio of men to women determines dyadic power. If men outnumber women in a community, for example, the women would gain greater ability to determine the terms of relationships. Yet, their ability to do so might depend on the power they held within society. In the United States in the nineteenth century, male Chinese immigrants outnumbered the females by 20-1 at a time when the states forbade interracial marriages.<sup>45</sup> The few Asian women in the country, if able to fend for themselves, could have had their choice of suitors. Yet, the women, who were immensely valuable to whoever controlled sexual access to them, had very little individual power. They were often forced into prostitution and forbidden to marry.<sup>46</sup> Their lack of societal power meant that the women could not realize the benefits from their increase in intimate or “dyadic” power.

In the United States, the relationship between structural power and dyadic power varies by class. At the top, high income men have increased their structural power, but still outnumber high income women. At the bottom, marriageable women substantially outnumber marriageable men and have since good blue collar jobs first began to disappear. Rosin’s stories are most persuasive in describing the change in the relationship between men and women in the middle. She describes women in a small town in Alabama who keep their families afloat after the town’s principal employer closed the factory that once employed a sizeable percentage of the town’s men. What she doesn’t say is that this is one of the groups who have seen the greatest increase in divorce rates. She also describes younger couples in a coastal Virginia community. The women are the go-getters, the men the slackers. Young couples have children without marrying, most often because the mothers see little point in tying family well-being too closely to unreliable men. Rosin opens one of the chapters with a description of Calvin and Bethany, who

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<sup>41</sup> See SUSAN MOLLER OKIN, *JUSTICE, GENDER AND THE FAMILY* (1989) (discussing the importance of the ability to exit).

<sup>42</sup> On the role of the law in supporting women’s equality and a new family model, See JUNE CARBONE & NAOMI CAHN, *FAMILY CLASSES* (forthcoming 2013).

<sup>43</sup> Betsey Stevenson & Justin Wolfers, *Bargaining in the Shadow of the Law: Divorce Laws and Family Distress*, 121 Q.J. ECON. 267-288 (2006).

<sup>44</sup> GUTTENTAG & SECORD, *supra* note 1, at 24-27.

<sup>45</sup> *Id.* at 29.

<sup>46</sup> *Id.* at 30.

have had a child together. Marriage is not part of the picture. Bethany explains, “But Calvin would just mean one less granola bar for the two of us.”<sup>47</sup> In these communities, women have gained in influence while the men’s income and status have fallen.

If we treat the search for the right mate as a market, women at the top have gained the most in terms of the changes in supply and demand. The supply of elite men has increased and with it the demand for women with high income and education. In another era, the best educated women were less likely to marry than the average women. Today, those with the most education and the highest incomes are the most likely to be married and to be married in stable relationships that include two incomes and flexible gender roles. Farther down the socio-economic ladder in contrast, marriage is rapidly disappearing in large part because the women have outpaced the men. And while Rosin paints a cheery picture of single mothers preferring to make it on their own, their children are falling farther behind the children in two-parent families whose combined resources offer greater advantages.<sup>48</sup> The class-based changes in family structure reinforce class-based inequality. Write off a high percentage of men as effectively unmarriageable, and women tend to give up on men – and marriage – more generally. The result once again may or may not be “the end of blue collar men,” but it is definitely the recreation of class.

#### A. Remade Marriages at the Top: The True Feminist Triumph

In the United States today, marriage and dating markets increasingly reflect class. We have argued elsewhere that the college educated middle class has adopted a new family strategy: invest in both men and women’s earning power and delay marriage until the point of emotional maturity and financial independence.<sup>49</sup> Both the delay in marriage and the increase in women’s earning capacity have made it more likely that the well-off will marry each other.<sup>50</sup> UCLA researchers specifically tested the effect of the age of marriage and found that the likelihood that similarly educated adults will marry each other increases with later marriage.<sup>51</sup>

In a more recent study, Christine Schwartz observed that as “women’s labor force participation has grown, men may have begun to compete for high-earning women just as women have traditionally competed for high-earning men.” She notes that as men and women both look for high earning mates, couples become more likely to marry others with similar earning power.<sup>52</sup> Men are increasingly looking for women who will “pull their own weight” in marriage. She shows further that the greatest changes occurred at the top; that is, the wives of the men with the greatest earnings showed the largest gains in overall income. This is partly

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<sup>47</sup> ROSIN, THE END OF MEN, *supra* note 2, at 2.

<sup>48</sup> See June Carbone & Naomi Cahn, *The Conservative War on Single Mothers Like Jessica Schairer*, Next New Deal (July 19, 2012), <http://www.nextnewdeal.net/conservative-war-single-mothers-jessica-schairer>.

<sup>49</sup> Naomi Cahn & June Carbone, RED FAMILIES V. BLUE FAMILIES: LEGAL POLARIZATION AND THE CREATION OF CULTURE (2010).

<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Valerie Kincaide Oppenheimer, *A Theory of Marriage Timing*, 94 AM. J. SOC. 563 (1988) (arguing that women’s increased labor market participation has increased the importance of finding not just partners who are mutually attractive, but compatible career paths, increasing search costs).

<sup>51</sup> Christine R. Schwartz & Robert D. Mare, *Trends in Educational Assortative Marriage from 1940 to 2003*, 42 Demography 621 (2005).

<sup>52</sup> Christine R. Schwartz, *Earnings Inequality and the Changing Association between Spouses’ Earnings*, 115 AM. J. SOC. 1524 (2010).

because high earning men have become more likely to marry high earning women and partly because the women have become less likely to drop out of the labor market after marriage.<sup>53</sup> In today's competitive world, high earning men feel they need high earning partners to afford the good life in cities like New York, San Francisco, Chicago or D.C.<sup>54</sup>

Completing the picture is a study from the Hamilton Project. It shows that marriage rates have decreased for almost everyone – except the women at the highest income levels. The chart showing the change is stunning. For all men between the ages of 30 and 50, the percentage married has declined. Even at the top, where income levels have increased substantially, the percentage of married men has fallen, albeit less than for other men.<sup>55</sup> For women in the top 5% of the income distribution, however, the percentage between the ages of 30 and 50 who are married has *increased* by over 10% while declining for every other group.<sup>56</sup> High earning (and presumably high powered) women used to be a turnoff; now they are the prime catches in the marriage market. And, because of competition within this narrow market, they are in the strongest of positions to “put a ring on it.”

These figures bear out Guttentag and Secord's prediction that as the ratio of men to women increases, so do women's marriage rates. As we indicated above, the gendered wage gap for college graduates has grown, and as it has, the number of high income men continues to outnumber the number of high income women, particularly among whites. This group has held the line on non-marital births, seen its divorce rates fall, and the likelihood that a fourteen-year-old will be living with both biological parents increase.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the group as a whole reports high rates of marital happiness and satisfaction.<sup>58</sup> Paul Amato concludes that “[e]conomic security combined with gender equality appears to be a good recipe for ensuring marital success.”<sup>59</sup> The highly sought after women with high incomes may not have gained as much as

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<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> Steve Sailer, *Value Voters*, AM. CONSERVATIVE (Feb. 11, 2008), available at <http://www.amconmag.com/article/2008/feb/11/00016>; see ANDREW GELMAN, RED STATE, BLUE STATE, RICH STATE, POOR STATE: WHY AMERICANS VOTE THE WAY THEY DO 170 (2008) (“Republicans do better among married voters, who are more likely to end up in more affordable states that also happen to be more culturally conservative”).

<sup>55</sup> In 1970, 95% of men ages 30-50 in the top 10 percent of annual earnings were married, compared to 83% today. By contrast, for the median male worker, 91% were married in 1970, compared to 64% today. In the bottom 25th percentile of earnings, where earnings have fallen by 60 percent, 86% of men were married in 1970, compared to 50% today. Michael Greenstone & Adam Looney, *The Marriage Gap: The Impact of Economic and Technological Change on Marriage Rates*, BROOKINGS (Feb. 3, 2012, 9:04 a.m.), <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/jobs/posts/2012/02/03-jobs-greenstone-looney>.

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> McLanahan, *supra* note 32, at 608

<sup>58</sup> Murray observes that in 1970 about seventy-three percent of the top income group and 67% of the Fishtown group said that their marriages were “very happy.” Between 1970 and the mid-eighties, those figures steadily declined for both groups as gender roles changed and marital tensions increased. Beginning in 1990, however, marital happiness rose for the affluent and by 2010, the Belmont couples who reported their marriages to be very happy was back up above seventy percent. In Fishtown, on the other hand, marital happiness continued to decline steadily, with only slightly more than fifty percent of white working class couples reporting their marriages to be “very happy.” MURRAY, *supra* note 36, at 157.

<sup>59</sup> PAUL R. AMATO, ALAN BOOTH, DAVID R. JOHNSON & STACY J. ROGERS, ALONE TOGETHER: HOW MARRIAGE IN AMERICA IS CHANGING 232 (2007).

the men in elite corporate boardrooms, but they have gained the most power of any group in setting the terms of continuing access to the bedroom.

## B. The Disappearance of Marriage at the Bottom: Gender Distrust Magnified

Rosin's description of the women going it alone – rejecting marriage to the fathers of their children even if the men are willing – is a story of tough, competent women taking charge of their own lives.<sup>60</sup> Rosin's story is also one of male failure, of the men who will never be able to “drive up in a Chevy and take [their] rightful place at the head of the table.”<sup>61</sup> The combination of the two, however, does not typically end with an adjustment of male and female roles into more flexible family arrangements. The number of male full-time homemakers is still tiny. Studies further indicate that as women earn more money, they do less housework, but only until the point where they contribute 51% of the family income – then they do more, perhaps to shore up their husbands' fragile egos.<sup>62</sup> The statisticians tell us that the husband's loss of a high paying job together with the homemaker mom's entry into the workplace to compensate is a prescription for divorce rather than the transformation of men into “mediocre house dudes.”<sup>63</sup> We have seen this story before and, in the end, it becomes a story of gender distrust rather than remade terms for companionship.<sup>64</sup>

In these terms, the most dramatic story in the United States is the story of the African-American underclass. Rosin doesn't mention Daniel Patrick Moynihan, whose infamous report on the black family touched off a firestorm in 1965. She does, however, repeat his claim that poor inner-city communities have become “matriarchies,” with “women making all the decisions and dictating what the men should and should not do.”<sup>65</sup> We agree with Rosin that women's power in society has increased with greater income. Even the poorest women have seen an increase in income over the last thirty years compared to the men in their lives.<sup>66</sup> And women are more independent, with greater ability to have children on their own and manage their own lives.<sup>67</sup> This greater independence and societal power does give women greater ability to refuse to enter into or stay in relationships. It does not, however, necessarily translate into the ability to dictate “what the men should and should not do” within relationships.

Again, Guttentag and Secord provide an alternative perspective. They argue that, given a particular level of societal power, gender ratios have a critical impact on the terms of

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<sup>60</sup> ROSIN, THE END OF MEN, *supra* note 2, at 2 (describing a single mother as “queen of her castle.”)

<sup>61</sup> *Id.* at 3, 4.

<sup>62</sup> See, e.g., Daniel Schneider, *Market Earnings and Household Work: New Tests of Gender Performance Theory*, 73 *J. Marriage & Fam.* 845 (2011).

<sup>63</sup> ROSIN, THE END OF MEN, *supra* note 2, at 71.

<sup>64</sup> Tony Dokoupil, *Men Will Be Men*, NEWSWEEK (Feb. 20, 2009), <http://www.newsweek.com/2009/02/20/men-will-be-men.html>. *Newsweek* reported that the American Time Use Survey showed that “laid-off men tend to do less—not more—housework, eating up their extra hours snacking, sleeping and channel surfing (which might be why the Cartoon Network, whose audience has grown by 10 percent during the downturn, is now running more ads for refrigerator repair school).” According to the same study, unemployed women spend twice as much time taking care of children and doing chores as men. Unemployed men are also right behind alcoholics and drug addicts as the group most likely to beat their female partners.

<sup>65</sup> ROSIN, THE END OF MEN, *supra* note 2, at 92.

<sup>66</sup> Fry & Cohn, *supra* note 34, at 8.

<sup>67</sup> See ROSIN, THE END OF MEN, *supra* note 2, at 92 (quoting Edin, “I think something feminists have missed is how much power women have when they're not bound by marriage.”).

relationships and that when the number of attractive men declines, the ability of women to enter into relationships on terms of their choosing declines. To the extent men can easily enter into relationships with other women, women's increased independence means more singles, not better (or at least more amenable) male behavior. Guttentag and Secord examined, for example, the impact of sex ratios on African-American family patterns as a key chapter in their book. They looked at a variety of studies including one that linked family patterns to male availability and found that African-American single parent families varied from 2.9 percent in North Dakota where the sex ratio was 160 to 33 percent in New York where the sex ratio was 86. They concluded that:

. . . it is clear that the stability of black families has nothing to do with matriarchy or with any other social/cultural properties distinctive to blacks. Instead, it is a function of the sex ratio and of economic factors. In high sex ratio states where black men are abundant and black women relatively scarce, family stability is marked. Under these circumstances, black men make a long-term parental investment in their children, and illegitimate births, divorce and separation, and single-parent families headed by women are relatively low.<sup>68</sup>

The studies on which Guttentag and Secord relied in the eighties were limited. Since then, more sophisticated studies have found that the number of employed men had a more statistically significant effect than aggregate sex ratios. The employment figures also explained more of the racial differences in marriage patterns than welfare availability or women's employment (which at the margin had a positive effect on marriage rates.)<sup>69</sup> In other words, women's independence, through greater employment, did not depress marriage rates. What did was the unavailability of "good" men.

More recently, the Fragile Families Project has looked at the effect of mate availability on both the transition to marriage and relationship quality outside of marriage. The Project studies unmarried women at the time they give birth and tracks the progress of their relationship with the father of the child afterwards. The majority of the women in these studies have a relationship with the father at the time of the birth and many of the couples hope to marry eventually, although the majority will break up without doing so. In 2004, Kristin Hartnett and Sara McLanahan concluded that their "most striking finding" was that the supply of alternative partners has "a large influence on the parents' decision whether to marry after a non-marital birth or not." In addition, given the significantly lesser availability of African-American men than men of other races, it also explained a large part of the racial differences in marriage rates.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, the supply of alternative partners was a more powerful predictor of the likelihood of marriage than individual factors such as attitudes towards marriage or gender roles. In addition, higher sex ratios correlate not just with marriage, but with relationship quality among cohabiting couples, measured by

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<sup>68</sup> GUTTENTAG, *supra* note 1, at 221.

<sup>69</sup> Daniel T. Lichter, Diane K. McLaughlin, George Kephart & David J. Landry, *Race and the Retreat from Marriage: A Shortage of Marriageable Men?*, 57 Am. Soc. Rev. 781, 796 (1992). See also Kristen Harknett & Sara S. McLanahan, *Racial and Ethnic Differences in Marriage after the Birth of a Child*, 69 Am. Soc. Rev. 790, 792 (2004).

<sup>70</sup> *Id.* at 807-88.

factors such as the degree of conflict, paternal support for the mother and involvement with the children, and the likelihood that the man had fathered additional children with other women.<sup>71</sup>

The change in the ratio of marriageable men to marriageable women does not just depress the marriage rates of the unemployed. It is a rippling effect that affects the norms for everyone in a given relationship market. As the number of black men whom black women were willing to marry, for example, declined in poor communities, the more desirable men found that they could play the field.<sup>72</sup> They did not need to commit to a relationship to gain sexual access to a woman or to have children with her. The more attractive the man to a particular woman, often because of higher income or better employment prospects, the greater became his negotiating power. And the fewer similar alternatives she had, the more “attractive” the employed man became. So if greater unemployment reduces the number of men women regard as worthy partners, the greater the advantage of those men who are employed. And, as Rick Banks has acknowledged,<sup>73</sup> the ratio between African-American men with college degrees and female African-American college graduates is lower than the ratio for high school graduates,<sup>74</sup> increasing the bargaining power of male college graduates even more than for high school graduates. The result is not an inevitable product of race or class differences. Instead, it is the result of a change in the terms on which relationships are available, depressing the attractiveness of committed relationships – and exacerbating gender distrust.

This analysis draws sharp distinctions between women’s societal power and independence versus women’s control of the relationships available to them. Studies of marriage indicate that both women at the top and the bottom of society are more independent than they once were. Indeed, in an absolute sense, wealthier women have greater ability than poor women to forego marriage and raise children on their own. Nonetheless, the women with the highest socioeconomic status also have the ability to participate in relationship markets where the supply of attractive men exceeds the supply of women. Given the choice, they choose to marry and to marry men with relatively egalitarian attitudes about gender.<sup>75</sup> Poorer women, in contrast, face a declining supply of attractive men, which increases the ability of the successful men in their communities to enjoy their access to multiple women without commitment and the ability of the less successful to enter into relationships with fewer contributions to the family’s well-being. The women in these communities exercise their greater societal power and independence to forego committed relationships altogether.

### C. The Fate of the Middle: The Remade Terms of Family Life

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<sup>71</sup> Kristen Harknett & Arielle Kuperberg, *Education, Labor Markets and the Retreat from Marriage*, 90 SOC. FORCES 41 (2011).

<sup>73</sup> RALPH RICHARD BANKS, IS MARRIAGE FOR WHITE PEOPLE?: HOW THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MARRIAGE DECLINE AFFECTS EVERYONE 41 (2011) (noting that twice as many African-American women as men graduate from college).

<sup>74</sup> 47 percent of African-American boys graduated from high school in comparison with 69 percent of the girls. See Sterling C. Lloyd, *Gender Gap in Graduation*, EDUCATION WEEK (July 6, 2007), <http://www.edweek.org/rc/articles/2007/07/05/sow0705.h26.html>.

<sup>75</sup> AMATO ET AL., ALONE TOGETHER, *supra* note 59.

Growing inequality in American society – and the disappearance of “good jobs” for blue collar men -- suggests that the middle of the socio-economic spectrum will increasingly resemble the bottom in terms of the ability of women to manage satisfying relationships. Indeed, Rosin reports today that “[b]y nearly every important social measure, Middle America is starting to look like high-school-dropout America.”<sup>76</sup> As we mentioned above, divorce rates for high school graduates resemble those of high school drops, while the divorce rates of college grads have plummeted.<sup>77</sup> Non-marital birth rates for the middle have skyrocketed while they have held steady at 2 percent for white college graduates.<sup>78</sup> And as Guttentag and Secord would predict, as the percentage of employed men on the marriage market shrinks, norms shift away from committed relationships.

When asked whether “marriage has not worked out for the people they know,” only seventeen percent of college graduates agreed, compared with forty percentage of those with only high school degrees and over half of high school dropouts.<sup>79</sup> In the meantime, the percentage of women between the ages of 25 and 44 who report having had three or more sex partners over their lifetimes also changed. It was about the same for all educational groups in 1995. Since then the number has declined to fifty-seven percent for the most educated and risen to seventy percent for those in the middle.<sup>80</sup>

While the studies of the white working class are not as detailed as the studies of poor minority communities, those studies that do exist refer to the same factors Rosin describes: the disappearance of stable male employment that pays a family wage and women’s increased workforce participation.<sup>81</sup> These accounts are not nearly as triumphal, however, about the role of women. They describe women struggling to hang onto family unfriendly positions when they would prefer to be home with their children.<sup>82</sup> They describe laid-off men, who do not take up the slack at home, but engage in much greater rates of substance abuse and violence. And they describe children falling farther behind their upper class peers.

Paul Amato and his colleagues provide one of the best accounts. Like Rosin, they examine the impact of women’s greater workforce participation, focusing in particular on married couples. For most, the results are sanguine: women’s employment increases family financial security without disrupting marital stability.<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, the researchers found two distinct groups among working women. The first were career women. These women fit Rosin’s model well. They expected to be in the labor market, held high-paying satisfying jobs, and associated employment with feelings of accomplishment.<sup>84</sup> A second group of working wives, however, had entered the labor market to make ends meet. They were more likely to be married to working class men, whose income had stagnated or whose job instability had increased. These women were much more likely to experience low job satisfaction, to feel that the jobs

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<sup>76</sup> ROSIN, *THE END OF MEN*, *supra* note 1, at 94.

<sup>77</sup> *Id.* at 94-95. See McLanahan, *supra* note 32.

<sup>78</sup> THE NATIONAL MARRIAGE PROJECT, *WHEN MARRIAGE DISAPPEARS: THE NEW MIDDLE AMERICA* (W. Bradford Wilcox et al., eds., 2010).

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*

<sup>80</sup> *Id.* at Figure 11.

<sup>81</sup> See, e.g., AMATO ET AL., *ALONE TOGETHER*, *supra* note 59.

<sup>82</sup> *Id.*

<sup>83</sup> *Id.* at 129.

<sup>84</sup> *Id.* at 123.

interfered with their home life, and to prefer to work fewer hours.<sup>85</sup> The working class women were also less likely to work in flexible positions or to be able to afford additional domestic help.<sup>86</sup> For these women, their husband's diminished prospects decreased their overall happiness, even if the additional income made them more independent.

These accounts are consistent with Rosin's. The men suffer reverses and can't cope. The women, who now have the independence to kick the disappointing blokes out of the house, manage as best they can. These women, however, are scrapping by rather than thriving. And if the trends Rosin identifies persist, the women will face diminished opportunities for new relationships. Passive underperforming men are one thing; alcoholic, abusive, unfaithful and unreliable men are another. Guttentag and Secord suggest that as the number of marriageable men declines, women may gain greater independence, but not greater commitment.

### III. Reconstructing Community

Rosin's account ends with more women finding ways into the corner office and the slacker dude with whom she opened the book applying to nursing school. She writes, "a new kind of alpha female has appeared, stirring up anxiety and, occasionally, fear . . . In fact, the more women dominate, the more they behave, fittingly, like the dominant sex." We suspect, however, that if women were in fact to gain greater societal power, they would want more than individual success or more supportive domestic partners. We believe that what they would want is a more equal society. Wary of the traps of essentialization, we nonetheless note that while some women certainly want money and power and others want independence, women as a group are more likely than men as a group to prefer healthier and more egalitarian communities.

In this account, we have emphasized the relationship between the growth of class-based inequality, and particularly greater income variance among men, and the so-called "rise of women." The rise in power of the overwhelmingly male one percent has set the terms for women's rise, and we suspect on terms women would not choose if they enjoyed greater political and societal decision-making power.

This rise in inequality in the United States has come with much greater emphasis on values women as a group do not share, such as hierarchy, lesser support for government generally, and, in particular, for regulations that promote health and safety, and for assistance for children, the poor, and the unfortunate. An agenda that truly reflected the rise of women would accordingly start with a more equal and just society.

Consider women's political loyalties. If only women voted, Democrats would run the country and President Obama would win re-election in a landslide. A recent Fox News poll, for example, found Obama leading Romney 53 to 39 percent among women while losing among men, 48 to 42 percent.<sup>87</sup> Women are also significantly more likely to be Democrats than men

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<sup>85</sup> *Id.*

<sup>86</sup> *Id.* at 123-24.

<sup>87</sup> Markos Moulitsas, *Women's Support for Obama Grows*, DAILY KOS (Sept. 14, 2012, 6:30 a.m.), <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/09/14/1131657/-Women-support-for-Obama-grows>.

(53 to 42%), a gender gap that dates back to at least 1990.<sup>88</sup> For more than a decade, women have had a more favorable view of government action than men (45 to 36% in 2011). Recent surveys find that higher percentages of women than men support greater government assistance for the poor (61% of women in comparison with 52% of men say that the government does not do enough), children (62 to 52%), and the elderly (65 to 54%).<sup>89</sup> Women also favored stronger government regulation of food production and packaging (61 to 45%), workplace safety and health (by 13 points) and in environmental protection (by nine points).<sup>90</sup>

Political scientists indicate that, in fact, women's worldviews differ substantially from men's. Men, for example, are likely to justify the existing system and to embrace a social dominance orientation that supports competition and hierarchy.<sup>91</sup> Women in contrast tend to have more egalitarian attitudes, and egalitarians are more likely to favor support for disadvantaged groups, social welfare programs, and gun control.<sup>92</sup> A woman's agenda, that is, one supported more by women than men, would cut defense spending, increase taxes, provide more for the bottom, and strengthen communities and families.

Instead, contemporary politics reflects the rise of the 1%, and the increasing political dominance of "angry white males."<sup>93</sup> The ensuing policies, which block further economic equality for women and blue collar men,<sup>94</sup> in turn increase women's dependence on access to male income at the top (even if higher female income is the way to get there) and marginalize the women in the middle and the bottom who are making it on their own. The major threat to working class men is other men. Middle class women have lost ground vis-à-vis more powerful men in terms of having their interests heard: they have not gained in their ability to secure resources for their children, fashion family flexible work environments or good schools. Indeed, the lack of paid family leave and related benefits disproportionately disadvantages single parents – who remain overwhelmingly women.

A true women's agenda would therefore constrain hierarchy and limit the ability of the one percent to dictate national priorities. It would focus on rebuilding community, and providing for those who would otherwise lose out. We expect that such an agenda would devote greater

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<sup>88</sup> *The Gender Gap: Three Decades Old, as Wide as Ever*, PEW RESEARCH CENTER (March 29, 2012), <http://www.people-press.org/2012/03/29/the-gender-gap-three-decades-old-as-wide-as-ever/>.

<sup>89</sup> *Id.*

<sup>90</sup> *Id.*

<sup>91</sup> See, e.g., Michael T. Schmitt & James H. Wirth, *Evidence that Gender Differences in Social Dominance Orientation Result from Gendered Self-Stereotyping and Group-Interested Responses to Patriarchy*, 33 PSYCHOL. WOMEN Q. 429, 436 (2009).

<sup>92</sup> See Felicia Pratto, Lisa M. Stallworth & James Sidanius, *The Gender Gap: Differences in Political Attitudes & Social Dominance Orientation*, 36 BRIT. J. OF SOC. PSYCHOL. 49 (1997).

<sup>93</sup> Dante Atkins, *We're Not Generating Enough Angry White Guys*, DAILY KOS (Sept. 2, 2012, 6:45 p.m.), <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/09/02/1125989/--We-re-not-generating-enough-angry-white-guys> (quoting Sen. Lindsay Graham).

<sup>94</sup> See, e.g., THINKPROGRESS, *Next Battle in the War on Women: Paycheck Fairness*, (May 24, 2012, 5:56 p.m.), <http://thinkprogress.org/progress-report/next-battle-in-the-war-on-women-paycheck-fairness/>. In June 2012, all Senate Republicans voted against the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would have, among other provisions, required employers to justify payments that differed to men and women doing the same job. See Jennifer Bendery, *Paycheck Fairness Act Fails Senate Vote*, HUFFINGTON POST (June 5, 2012, 2:45 p.m.), [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/05/paycheck-fairness-act-senate-vote\\_n\\_1571413.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/05/paycheck-fairness-act-senate-vote_n_1571413.html).

resources to education and children, focusing on ethical decisionmaking and obligation towards children, not promoting marriage as an end in itself or as a substitute for real solutions to poverty. It would make workplaces more family friendly and families more central to national policy. It would seek to include all of those who can contribute in the productive life of the nation. It would create jobs, with particular attention to job stability, acknowledging the need for a social safety net that provides adequate health care and retirement security.

Perhaps most of all, such policies, in their efforts to limit the effects of greater inequality, would mark the rebirth of marginalized men.