
ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

Other trends that do hold up in the long run may only *appear* to signal a weakened commitment to work, Hedges argues. For example, the fact that job turnover is higher today than it was in the 1950s may mean merely that information about job opportunities is being disseminated more efficiently to a better-educated work force.

Married men are now less inclined to hold more than one job—about six percent did in 1979, down by nearly a percentage point from 1973—but mostly because more wives are bringing home a second paycheck. During the same period, the percentage of *women* with two or more jobs grew from 2.7 to 3.5, as a rising divorce rate made more women their household's chief breadwinner.

Overall, leisure time has actually decreased. When domestic chores—shopping, house-cleaning, home repairs—are added to work-for-pay, both men and women work about 57 hours per week, compared with 56 in 1975.

Meanwhile, some five million part-time workers were looking for full-time jobs in 1981, and the number appears to be growing. "If the data show major cause for concern," Hedges concludes, "it is that the desire for hours of work seems greater than the hours available."

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Recycling the American Family

"The American Family in the Year 2000"
by Andrew Cherlin and Frank F. Furstenberg, Jr., in *The Futurist* (June 1983),
World Future Society, 4916 St. Elmo
Ave., Bethesda, Md. 20814.

During the past two decades, the American family changed so rapidly that its very future sometimes seemed in doubt.

From 1960 to 1980, the U.S. divorce rate doubled and the birthrate dropped from a 20th-century high to an all-time low. Cherlin and Furstenberg, sociologists at Johns Hopkins and the University of Pennsylvania, respectively, report, however, that the pace of change has now slowed; since the mid-1970s, the divorce rate has risen only modestly, and the birthrate has actually increased. The family will survive, they write, though "the 'traditional' family will no longer predominate."

The standard nuclear family—husband, wife, and kids—is no relic. But, thanks to high divorce rates, the typical Mom and Dad of the year 2000 will be almost as likely to be in their second marriage as their first. Half of all marriages beginning in the early 1980s probably will end in divorce—half of all today's children will live in single-parent families, at least for a time, before they reach 18. But 75 percent of all divorced people will remarry.

Most first marriages will yield only one or two children. Indeed, demographer Charles F. Westoff predicts that 25 percent of all women

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now in their childbearing years will remain childless, the highest proportion in U.S. history.

The recent changes in the family seem particularly radical because they followed an era when Americans married earlier and had more children than at any time during this century. But the Baby Boom of the 1950s was an aberration. Today's developments actually climax long-term trends: The birthrate has been dropping since the 1820s; divorce has been slowly rising since the Civil War.

Despite the travails of the past two decades, there is no evidence that Americans today are turning their backs on marriage per se. Of the children under age 18 today, the authors estimate, 90 percent will eventually marry; 50 percent will marry and divorce; and 33 percent will marry, divorce, and remarry.

Yet, as in the past, marital instability will impose social and family costs. For one thing, kinship responsibilities will be murkier. Who will have the first claim to Dad's paycheck: the child from the first marriage, the stepchild, or the offspring of the second marriage? And which of these dependents will eventually care for the aged parents?

Counting the Homeless

"The Homeless of New York" by Thomas J. Main, in *The Public Interest* (Summer 1983), 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

In most major American cities, it seems, homeless "bag people" are everywhere. The phenomenon is probably most acute in New York City. There, writes Main, managing editor of the *Public Interest*, the "street people" are a surprisingly diverse lot.

New York's homeless number up to 36,000, according to the Community Service Society of New York, but nightly attendance at the 19 city shelters averages 4,235 (and some clients remain for months at a time). City Hall now spends \$38 million annually to house, feed, clothe, and provide medical services to the homeless, up from only \$6.8 million in 1978. That, Main argues, is too much.

He believes that the "homeless" actually belong to at least three different groups. A 1982 survey of 173 long-term, male shelter residents by the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA), for example, classified 34 percent as psychiatric cases, eight percent as drug addicts or alcoholics, and 19 percent as "discouraged" workers—employable but jobless. (The remaining 39 percent fit in no single category.)

Main contends that few of these people actually belong in the shelters. Alcoholics and addicts, unless absolutely incorrigible, should be given treatment to enable them to live independently. The mentally ill, released from New York's mental hospitals during the "deinstitutionalization" movement of the 1970s, should be provided with the "half-way house" treatment that the state promised but never delivered.

The "discouraged" workers in the survey were young (median age: 32) and able-bodied. What draws them to the shelters, Main argues, is the relatively attractive conditions the city offers. On the street, all are