



It Pays to Get Married... *married people are happier, richer and live longer.*

Poster Discussion Guide
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The Myth – Marriage is a drag: it’s a ball and chain, it’s boring, detrimental to progress, and negative. This myth is embedded in our culture and has crept into our speech and even our jokes.

The Facts

- Married people are happier.
- Married people are healthier.
- Married people live longer.
- Married people are better off financially and accumulate more wealth.
- Married people are less depressed and have less mental illness and suicide.
- Married people have more and better sex.

The best information we have comes from the in-depth research of Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher in their book *The Case for Marriage*. In summarizing over 200 research studies, they found the following:

- Married people report being “very happy” twice as often as do unmarried people.
- Non-married men have a mortality rate 250% higher than married men. Non-married women have a mortality rate 50% higher than non-married women.
- Married couples accumulate 12-30% more wealth.
- Cohabiting women are 3 times more likely to experience domestic violence than married women.
- Married people have more and better sex. For example, 48% of married men say sex is extremely emotionally satisfying, compared with 37% of cohabitating men.
- Children from married families are more likely to do well in school, be emotionally stable and take on leadership roles.

More Resources

Waite, L. J. & Gallagher, M. (2000). *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better off Financially*. New York: Doubleday.

Waite, L. (1995). Does marriage matter? *Demography*, 32, 483-507.

Institute for American Values (2005). *Why Marriage Matters, Second Edition, Twenty-Six Conclusions from the Social Sciences*.