

Midterm Paper

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SOC 345 - 001

In this paper, I will share my views on marriage and how I think my views are similar and different from others. I will also talk about how we all interpret marriage differently, then I will talk about what this means for the overall society, and how we will look as a society in 2035.

I am an oddball compared to most people in our class. My parents had me in high school; they were together for a few years after I was born, and then my mom took me and her out of that environment. To sum it up, I came from teenage parents who were never married, and they split when I was very young. My mom and I moved out, and she became a single mom. My dad wasn't super consistent in my life when I was young due to many reasons. Having gone through all of that has really impacted the way I feel about dating and how picky I need to be for a husband. My mom and dad dated different people as I grew up; some were nice, some were not so nice. Seeing my mom being treated in abusive ways made me realize what I did not want in a relationship or marriage. It made me feel as if marriage was going to be impossible for me, and I was going to end up alone with a hundred cats. Growing up, I never had an ideal marriage in my head, even in modern times, I don't because to me, families look different in so many ways. This class has really gotten me thinking lately about my future with my boyfriend. Personally, I want to have a husband and 2-3 kids. I want my husband and me to both have jobs that we love and are passionate about, and I want us to have a balanced chore list instead of it all relying on me. My boyfriend and I have been discussing marriage and how we feel like we are getting to that point. The only reason why my boyfriend and I would be able to get to that point is because he is in the military. Financially, we would be supported, and we could live on base, so there aren't as many barriers impacting us compared to others our age. I feel that currently there is a somewhat

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balance of people my age getting married and then people my age not wanting to get married. I really don't know where we are as a society when it comes to marriage and family because I see both sides being represented pretty equally. Some of my friends have been in a relationship for years, and they are at the point where they want to get engaged and married, but they also want to be financially stable before they take that step. Since divorce rates are higher, some people want to have a nice, stable job that pays them enough in case they need to support themselves after a divorce. I also have some friends who are not ready for marriage, but they live with their significant other. They figured that if they are always spending time at one place, then why both pay for expensive apartments and not split the costs. Throughout this class, I started to think about how the military might affect the statistics on marriage. I am around Marines a lot, and I have seen some of them get married really young so they can have that extra financial support of BAH. It makes me wonder if military marriages are affecting the statistics in any way. There are some people marrying their best friend in the military to get double BAH, and there are some people getting married to someone they barely know. I wonder if this could affect the statistics of how many same sex marriages are in the United States, and if this is making the divorce rate go up. I would really like to see research and the statistics on military marriages. Since, unfortunately, I am not able to predict the future due to my indecisiveness, I decided to look into what people are predicting the next few years will look like based on the research.

Looking at the Pew Research Center, I think the numbers will continue to decline. More people are cohabitating, not having kids, etc. I think part of the cause for this is due to the cost of everything. If a couple can barely survive working two full-time jobs, then why would they want to have kids? They would be in an even more financial burden with the cost of all of

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the crazy things that babies need, hospital bills, and so much more. People are barely able to stay afloat as is, so they're not going to want to bring someone else into this world. I believe this is another factor in why the divorce rates are increasing. People are supposed to be loving their partner, spending time with them, and being able to relax in their home. Instead, people are going from a stressful work environment to a stressful home environment, too. Their home environments could be stressful due to their partner not working, their home being a mess, or even because they simply can't pay their bills, even though they and their partner are working full-time jobs. Looking at the Pew Research Center, it shows the statistics of families declining but there are newer forms of families. For example, "in 1970 67% of Americans ages 25 to 49 were living with their spouse and one or more children younger than 18. Over the past five decades, that share has dropped to 37%" (Pew Research Center). The data also shows that 0.7% marriages in 2015 were for same sex couples, but in 2021, that percentage went to 1.1%. Through this center and their research also shows how the percentage of married with kids has declined, but the percentage for cohabitating with kids, unpartnered with kids, cohabitating no kids, and other family members has increased. All of these statistics show that even though marriages have declined, the different forms of families have expanded. The acceptance of interracial and same sex couples is becoming more accepted by people.

In conclusion, I think the decline of marriage will keep going down because of financial burdens. If somehow we can fix our economy, then I think there will be an increase in marriages, but for now, that number is still going to keep going down. In addition to that, I believe that the different forms of families are going to keep increasing. I believe this will keep increasing because some of those family types are easier financially. Like I said above, many people I know

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live with their significant other because rent and mortgages are very expensive nowadays. Other things like your other bills, groceries, and gas are also very expensive. When the cost of those things starts to decline, then in the future divorce rates will go back down and marriage rates will go back up. A huge factor in divorces is usually related to money and being burnt out. If prices go down, then it will create a less stressful home and work environment, which means that families will most likely stay together rather than be stressed and give up.

References

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