



## *Journal of Marriage and Family*

### **Women More Likely Than Men to Hold Positive View of Childlessness**

*Study Examines How Men and Women View Not Having Children*

**Gainesville, Fla. – October 10, 2007** - Although acceptance of childlessness has increased among Americans in general over the last thirty years, women tend to be more accepting than men. A new study published in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* examines this gender gap, highlighting important differences between male and female experiences of family, work and gender issues.

Drawing on data from two large-scale national surveys, the study finds that women are more likely to hold positive attitudes about childlessness. The research shows that attitudes towards marriage and gender play the most significant role in explaining the difference. In general, women are found to hold less traditional views about marriage and gender issues than men. Being young and middle-class also appears to predict greater acceptance of childlessness.

Positive attitudes towards childlessness are found to be most prevalent among white women, followed by black women, with men of all races holding the least favorable views. Among adults between the child-bearing ages of 25-39, the gender gap is most marked among whites and those with a college education.

The study used data from two national surveys that asked about the importance of childbearing and whether childless people are perceived as leading empty lives. On other questions dealing with the value of having children and parenthood more generally, both men and women were strongly supportive, the study notes.

“The results suggest that women may be more open to the possibility of remaining childless compared to men,” says lead author Tanya Koropecykj-Cox, Ph.D. “This openness may reflect their own experiences or the struggles of their sisters, friends, and co-workers in balancing the conflicting expectations and timelines of family and work.”

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**This study is published in the November issue of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* . Media wishing to receive a PDF of this article may contact [journalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net](mailto:journalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net). To view the abstract for this article, please [click here](#).**

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Journal of Marriage  
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