

Unmarried Men Not Commitmentphobes, Contrary To Stereotype

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The Alternatives to Marriage Project (AtMP), a national nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for unmarried people, today questioned the conclusions of the latest report from the National Marriage Project.

"Young men are hardly the commitmentphobes that the National Marriage Project paints them to be," says Dorian Solot, who co-founded AtMP and co-authored the forthcoming book "Unmarried To Each Other: The Essential Guide To Living Together as an Unmarried Couple" (Marlowe & Company, November 2002) with her longtime partner, Marshall Miller.

"The title of their report, 'Why Men Won't Commit' misrepresents what's really happening," Solot says. "Most 25 to 33 year old men, the age group studied, have already gotten married. Others are in long-term, committed, unmarried relationships. Still others want to marry but haven't yet found a partner, or are gay and can't legally marry." The Census projects that more than 85% of today's young men will marry in their lives -- 75% have done so by the time they're 35.

Miller points out that a large body of research finds that, to the contrary of the National Marriage Project's conclusions, men actually tend to be *more* interested in marriage than women. For instance:

- A 1996 Gallup poll found that 39% of unmarried men said they would prefer to be married right now, compared with 29% of unmarried women.

- A 1995 Roper poll found that 83% of men said being married was their ideal lifestyle, compared with 77% of women.

- The 1994 National Survey of Families and Households found that 59% of unmarried men ages 18-35 said they would like to get married someday, compared with 48% of women the same age.

- As cited later in the National Marriage Project report, the 1996-2000 Monitoring the Future survey finds that 38% of high school senior boys believe people will lead fuller and happier lives if they get married, compared to 29% of senior girls.

Miller and Solot's own research confirms these statistics. When writing "Unmarried To Each Other," the pair conducted in-depth interviews with 100 people in cohabiting, male-female relationships across the country. "For the vast majority of couples, it was the woman who expressed less interest in walking down the aisle than the man," says Solot.

"To understand the changing world of marriage and family life, we need to look beyond stereotypes about men," says Miller. In his own work, he says, he hears from thousands of unmarried couples. "They are committed to each other already," he says. "Their only hesitation is whether to commit to the institution of marriage. Love, commitment, and family life aren't going out of style -- in fact, they're as popular as ever."

For interviews or more information, contact Dorian Solot or Marshall Miller here or at 781-793-0296.