Who Killed the American Family?

by Phyllis Schlafly

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The British press just reported the result of a new study by academics from Oxford and the University of London that children raised in stable marital homes are better behaved than classmates brought up by unmarried parents. Children raised by married parents show lower levels of anti-social attitudes and hyperactivity.

Recent U.S. surveys show that the U.S. taxpayers' money appropriated to "close the gap" between higher-achieving and lower-achieving students has failed to achieve this goal. Contrary to conventional wisdom, poverty is not the principal cause of the gap, but whether or not children grow up in a family with their own mom and pop compared to kids who lack that advantage.

When the famous French commentator Alexis de Tocqueville traveled the U.S. in the mid-19th century, he wrote: "There is certainly no country in the world where the tie of marriage is more respected than in America, or where conjugal happiness is more highly or worthily appreciated." Our society of nuclear families produced a prosperous Middle Class that was the envy of the world.

Much has been written about the decline in the percentage of Americans who live in a traditional nuclear family. The scholar Charles Murray has pointed out that the shocking rate of illegitimate births (now 41 percent) is the most serious social and fiscal problem America faces because it is the factor that drives everything else.

It has caused the dramatic rise in government spending. The nuclear family doesn't need government busybodies to tell them how to raise their children or spend their money, but when mothers have no husband or father of their children to provide for them, they turn to Big Brother Government.

Who is responsible for killing the American family? My new book published by WorldNetDaily this month answers that fundamental question, and you may be surprised at the answer.

The perpetrators of this murder are not just the gays who have gotten so much publicity. Like the famous Agatha Christie mystery "Murder on the Orient Express," the solution was everybody on the train had a motive for killing the victim.

Many groups had a motive for wanting to abolish the American nuclear family. The feminists' rallying cry from the start was "liberation," and they meant liberation from husband, family, and care for children because, they said, taking care of small children is a demeaning occupation for an educated woman.

In the 1970s it became popular to say that the "village" should raise the child. The liberal establishment defines "village" to include all sorts of government busybodies such as public school officials, hired consultants, psychologists, custody evaluators, women's studies courses, and especially family court judges.

The New York Times reported that judges routinely decide where the children of divorced parents may attend school and even attend church, whether they may be homeschooled, what medical care they may receive, and even whether they play soccer or take piano lessons. The system of having family court judges make decisions about the raising of children has become so universal that, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Family Court judges now control the private living arrangements of 46 million Americans and have the power to transfer $40 billion between households.

The rule that decisions should be made in the best interest of a child came to us from English law and clearly meant that the biological parents of a child were authorized to make decisions in the best interest of their own children. Nobody ever made any convincing scientific argument against that policy.

But now "best interest" is decided by judges. In a court decision this year, a federal appeals court even ruled that the best interest of children requires approval of same-sex marriage.

The best interest rule is totally subjective. Whether the decision is big such as where to go church or school, or small such as whether to play baseball or soccer, there is no objective way to say which is best.

Judges call on so-called experts to advise them, but there is no scientific evidence to back up the advice that the so-called experts are well paid to give. There is nothing scientific about their advice; you would be better off listening to your grandparents.

Political strategists advise candidates to stick to fiscal issues and not talk about social issues, but taxpayers' money is spent on 78 types of taxpayer handouts to deal

with social problems, including 12 food programs, 12 social services, 12 educational assistance, 11 housing assistance, 9 vocational training, 3 energy and utility assistance, school lunch and even breakfast, and 3 child-care programs. Nothing but marriage can cut these costs.

We cannot accept what Abe Lincoln called “that eminent tribunal” to redefine our centuries-old marriage law. My book Who Killed the American Family? gives you all you need to expose the killers of the American family.

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