

Local

Marriages made later in life, study says

WASHINGTON - Americans are tying the knot later in life than ever before. The typical age for a first marriage has climbed to 26.7 years for men and 24.5 for women, the Census Bureau reported Tuesday.

At the same time, people are showing less patience with problem marriages as growing numbers unravel the bond with divorce, according to the Census report, "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1994."

In 1890, when age at marriage was first collected, the median age to get hitched was 26.1 for men and 22.0 for women.

The marriage age declined slowly for 66 years, then started to climb toward the current record level, said Arlene Saluter, the study's author.

In years past, there was some kind of a magic date by which people had to be married, observed Stephanie Kenitzer of Odenton, Md., who said her own marriage at age 27 "just kind of happened when it happened."

"People aren't saying, 'I'm 20 or I'm 25, so I'm an old maid,' she said. 'It's no longer looked upon as a negative that you're not married at a certain age.'"

"They're more free to make decision on their own and so people are waiting longer. I waited longer ... There was no pressure."

In a recent study by the independent Population Reference Bureau, researcher Carol J. De Vita noted that "young adults are delaying entrance into marriage, although very few will forego it altogether."

This declined gradually over the years, bottoming at 22.5 for men and 20.1 for women in 1956, before beginning to rise again as young people increasingly pursued college and careers instead of each other. Median indicates that half were married by that age and half married later.

Increasing educational and employment opportunities for women have contributed to their postponing marriage, De Vita said. For men, she added, stagnating wages in the 1970s and 1980s made marriage less affordable.

Of course, postponing marriage means an increase in the number of people who have never wed, and that is reflected in the Census study.

From 1970 to 1994 the number of Americans aged 18 and over who had never married leaped from 21.4 million, or 16 percent, to 44.2 million, or 23 percent.

While they are slower to tie the knot, Americans are proving faster to unravel it. From 1970 to 1994 the number currently divorced climbed from 4.3 million, or 3 percent of the adult population, to 17.4 million, or 9 percent.

"The high levels of divorce and remarriage in the United States today suggest that Americans may be placing a high value on forming successful marriages and may be less tolerant of marital problems than were earlier generations," says De Vita.

The increasing economic independence of women today helps ease the financial pressure to remain in an unsatisfactory marriage, she added.



The People's Biographer

By Tammie Tolbert  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

An African proverb states, "When the elderly pass on, an entire library passes with them." "As African Americans we usually don't write our history down, we often rely on giving oral presentations of our family history to our children," says Jackson F. Bullock, author of "The People's Biographer."

In trying to promote his book, Bullock found that people rely heavily on oral presentation of their family history, which is why he decided to develop "The People's Biography."

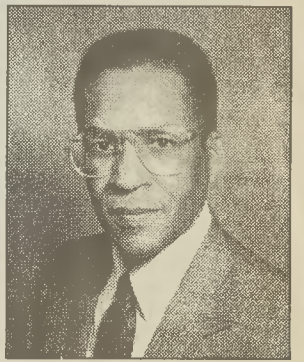
"I believe that everyone has a story to tell about their lives and I think that people, especially African American people, should record their history," Bullock said.

Bullock explained that he had planned on recording and writing down the facts about his grandmother and his grandfather, who was then 97 years old. But he was so busy with going to college and trying to get a job that time escaped him and both of his grandparents died.

"I regret not having taken the time to record my grandparents history," Bullock said.

In 1992 at a family reunion, Bullock and his aunt collaborated about the idea of writing a bibliography workbook for the ordinary person to record their history. "I reasoned that this book would help to educate and strengthen future generations so they would not repeat the mistakes of their ancestors," Bullock said.

According to Bullock, when parents spout words of wisdom, it has less of an effect on young adults as opposed to merely sharing the facts of their lives, their obstacles and their triumphs.



Bullock

See BIOGRAPHER page 10A

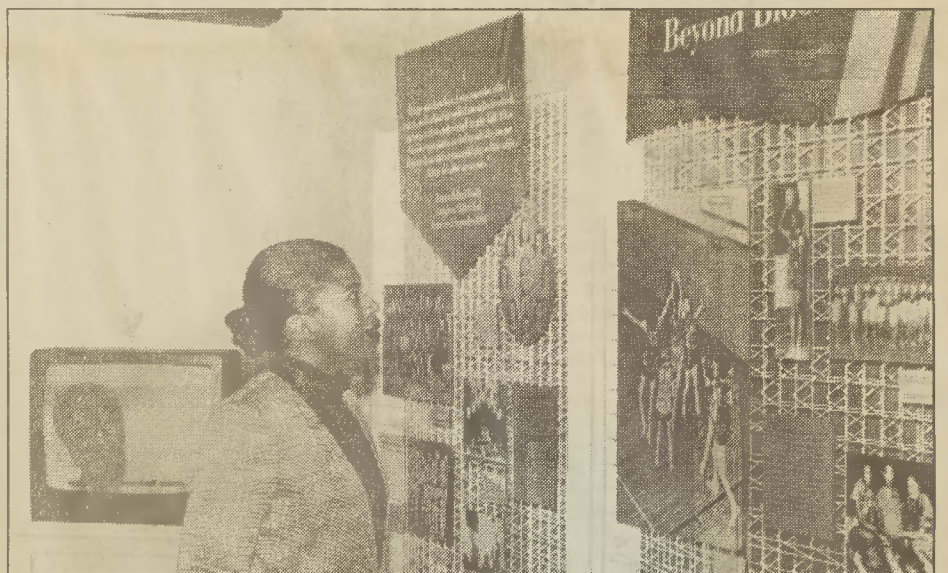
Hot shots: Women's basketball

The Museum of the New South is celebrating the contribution of women in basketball by having exhibits on display in the museum.

Women's basketball in the Piedmont Carolinas has an extensive history. The Museum will use photos, memorabilia and videos to allow visitors to explore the dynamic achievements that women have made in basketball from the late 1800s to the present.

The exhibit will last through Aug. 11. The show was scheduled to coincide with the NCAA Women's Final Four.

A female fan looks views the exhibit celebrating women's hoop dreams appearing at The Museum of the New South.



PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS, III

Horoscopes

**ARIES: (March 21-April 20)** You both look and feel good; your high energy and upbeat attitude is catching on with others. Take advantage of your appeal to make gains in your personal and professional life. It's a great time to improve relationships.

**TAURUS: (April 21 - May 21)** Make it a point of accomplishing those things that have been on your to-do list.



There will be great personal power for you. A certain amount of stress will no doubt accompany your busy schedule; lashing out at family members will get you nowhere.

**GEMINI: (May 22 - June 21)** Romance is in the air, and

that warm glow from you and your lover will get you through any unpleasant situations in the workplace. Get chores and errands out of the way, creating extra quality time to spend with family and friends.

**CANCER: (June 22 - July 23)** You might fall in love, so take extra care with who you shower your affections on. It's time to consult a financial planner on any long-term investments you've been considering. Your intuition about money is right on target. Avoid criticism.

**LEO: (July 24 - August 23)** This entire month will be quite busy for you, both at home and at work. You are getting closer and closer to personal and career goals, so remember those who have helped you achieve what you want. Be supportive



family members, especially children.

**VIRGO: (August 24 - September 23)** Help out wherever you can this week, but make sure to avoid any manipulators, all those efforts should go to a worthwhile cause. There may be an extra cash flow just in time for weekend fun you have planned. Enjoy any break from your usual routine and have fun.

**LIBRA: (September 24 - October 23)** You are ready to conquer all obstacles in your way, just make sure not to hurt anyone. You're likely to find kindred spirits to further career and social plans. Major home repairs may be very necessary. It isn't such a bad idea to spend some time alone.

**SCORPIO: (October 24 - November 22)** This week will both begin and end on a high note. You are in tune with your sweetheart and everything seems to be running smoothly. You can move closer to your goals, with a possible new business partnership in the offing. Sign that new contract.

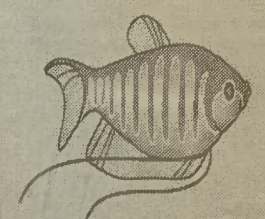
**SAGITTARIUS: (November 23 - December 21)** You may need to get away from your hectic routine and be alone with your thoughts. It's a great time to travel. Be confident of successes in any business dealings. Avoid unpleasant financial surprises by going over bank statements for any discrepancies.

**CAPRICORN: (December 22 - January 20)** A friend challenges you to break out of your shell and promote yourself for advancement. You've nothing to lose, and will be happier in the long run. Time spent with someone close can make your day. The world is filled with dreamers and doers, be a doer.

**AQUARIUS: (January 21 - February 19)** Very prominent people will want your opinion, so be very careful how you word any responses. It is hard to avoid confrontation with those around you, so it's better to remain silent than drawn into unnecessary arguments. Someone close may turn on you.

**PISCES: (February 20 - March 20)** Career advance-

ment is effortless, so pursue your cherished goals. Co-workers will welcome your ideas. Keep your cool in family situations which may be getting out of hand. There may be a difference of opinion,



causing distance between you and someone close to you. Be fair.

**IF THIS WEEK IS YOUR BIRTHDAY:** Let the lessons of your past experiences guide you to any practical applications of your ideas for the future. It's time to review your job, relationships and financial commitments, to see how they match up with your future life goals. Make plans to change whatever isn't working.