**Marriage: One of the Best Protections Against Poverty**

- **Married Couple**
  - Annual Median Income: $90K ($90,386)
  - Percent Below Poverty Line: 4.9%

- **Male Head of House, No Wife Present**
  - Annual Median Income: $61K ($60,843)
  - Percent Below Poverty Line: 12.4% (2.5x higher rate than married couple)

- **Female Head of House, No Husband Present**
  - Annual Median Income: $42K ($41,703)
  - Percent Below Poverty Line: 25.7% (5.2x higher rate than married couple)


**What about Equal Pay?**

“Equal Pay” doesn’t change these dynamics. The disparity in rates below the poverty line comparing a Female Head of House to a Married Couple were nearly identical: 5.3x higher in 1980 and 5.2x higher in 2017. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the difference in pay is mostly attributed to the fact that men work more hours & in higher paying & higher risk construction, production & transportation jobs.

Earnings of women (16 yrs and older) as a percentage of men’s for full-time wage & salary workers.

![Graph showing earnings comparison over decades]

*Data from Table 12: https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/womens-earnings/2017/home.htm*