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Although men remain in the lead as breadwinners in heterosexual marriages in the United States, the earnings gap is decreasing at a record pace.

According to new research from Pew, the “share of women who earn as much as or significantly more than their husband has roughly tripled over the past 50 years.” Today, that means that in 29% of marriages, both spouses are earning the same amount of money, while 16% of marriages have women outearning their husbands.

It's perhaps most notable when you put it like this: In total, men are breadwinners in

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Even in marriages where both spouses earn similar incomes, “women pick up a heavier load when it comes to household chores and caregiving responsibilities, while men spend more time on work and leisure,” notes Pew. Similar incomes or income situations in which the husband is outearning his wife yield the same result when it comes to duties at home.

However, the only situation in which men spend more time doing housework and caregiving is when “the wife is the sole breadwinner,” says Pew. But even in the case where the wife is the sole breadwinner, household chores hit equal numbers; the men do not outperform their wives on household chores.

## What does this research indicate?

According to Pew, it's clear that “a majority of Americans say that society values men's contributions at work more than their contributions at home.” When polled by Pew, only 7% of Americans agreed that society valued men's contributions at home more than those at work, while 35% said the contributions are valued equally. Notably, half (49%) of adults polled said that contributions women make at home and at work are valued equally.

It's also important to note that the wives' education, race, and ethnicity play a factor in the likelihood that she'll outearn her husband. In marriages in which wives are the sole or primary breadwinner, 19% have at least a bachelor's degree. In 25% of the women-led breadwinner marriages, the wife had received more education than her husband. Pew concluded that education is a key factor in the growing number of women who are breadwinners in their marriages.

When it comes to race and ethnicity, “Black wives are significantly more likely than wives from other racial or ethnic groups to be the breadwinner in their marriage.”

Today, one in four wives who are Black make more money than their husbands. On

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last two decades.

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