

Study: Many women out-earn husbands

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A Saint Louis University study finds up to 20 percent of U.S. wives earn more money than their husbands.

"We had become so used to the 'Leave It to Beaver' household, and not all households fit into that," said Timothy McBride, director of health policy at Saint Louis University School of Public Health and a study author.

Researchers years ago noted some women were out-earning their husbands, but had speculated the phenomenon was a seasonal and temporary one -- such as teachers taking the summer off or construction workers who could not work because of inclement weather.

"We found it was more permanent than that," McBride said. "About 60 percent of the time, women who out-earned men did so for at least the three-year period we studied."

The researchers examined U.S. Census Bureau data gathered between 1996 and 2000 that included a sample of nearly 4,000 families. The study examined couples that remained married throughout the three-year study period and were of prime earning age -- between 25 and 54.

The findings appeared in the August issue of the journal *Demography*.

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