

Center for Demography and Ecology

University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Attitudes Toward Pre-Marital Sex,
Non-Marital Childbearing, Cohabitation, and Marriage
among Blacks and Whites**

Wendy Y. Carter

NSFH Working Paper No. 61



A National Survey of
FAMILIES
and
HOUSEHOLDS

Attitudes Toward Pre-Marital Sex,
Non-Marital Childbearing, Cohabitation, and Marriage
among Blacks and Whites

Wendy Y. Carter
Center for Demography and Ecology
University of Wisconsin-Madison

NSFH Working Paper No. 61

The National Survey of Families and Households was funded by Grant HD2109 from the Center for Population Research of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the analysis was supported under Grant HD22433, using facilities provided under Grant HD05876. This study was prepared while the author was supported by a research assistantship with Larry Bumpass at the Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Center for Demography & Ecology receives core support for Population Research from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (P30 HD05876).

Non-Marital Childbearing, Cohabitation, and Marriage
among Blacks and Whites

ABSTRACT

In light of the well-documented behavioral differences between blacks and whites, the present study uses the National Survey of Family and Households to examine racial differences in attitudes toward premarital sex, non-marital childbearing, cohabitation, and marriage. As marriage has become less associated with the transition to adulthood, it is important to study the social context in which alternative avenues to adulthood exist. This paper estimates the odds of approval for each area of interest, controlling for race, age, sex, income, education, and marital status. Despite the marked differences in behaviors between blacks and whites, racial differences in attitudes are small, with the exception of attitudes on non-marital childbearing.

More important than race in determining attitudes are age, gender, and marital status. The importance of each of these variables depends on the issue examined. Racial differences in attitudes toward premarital sex are substantially influenced by gender and age. While whites are more likely than blacks to approve of premarital sex, white men and women tend to differ considerably in their views. Whereas young white males are more likely to approve of premarital sex than any other group, older white females are least likely to approve. On the issue of non-marital childbearing, while most people do not approve, blacks are more likely to approve than whites. However, approval of non-marital childbearing depends on whether or not an individual is married.

Regarding cohabitation, we find that whites are more likely to approve of cohabitation than blacks when other socioeconomic factors are controlled for. Nevertheless, the gender gap proves to be more significant for attitudes on cohabitation than does the race difference. In addition, the source of the racial differences in attitudes on this issue and the preference for marriage stem from the differences in marital status. Whereas blacks are less tolerant of singleness as a preferred adult status than whites, men are more likely than women to agree that it is better to be married than to remain single. Blacks and whites who are not married are likely to share similar views on many family issues discussed here.

I. Introduction

Differences in marital and family behavior between blacks and whites are important in American society. The "transition to adulthood" continues to change, and it is important to study the social acceptance of alternative avenues to adulthood, especially if different social groups follow different avenues. If marriage is becoming less central to the process, it is still normative in the United States. We are particularly concerned with comparisons of society's attitudes by race on issues of premarital sex, non-marital childbearing, cohabitation, and marriage.

The sociological literature on attitudes follows two distinct theoretical lines of thought: structural or cultural. Structuralists theorize that persons who share the same relationship to the social structure and institutions often share similar attitudes because of their shared life experiences. In contrast, cultural theorists focus on the influence of group attitudes as an intervening mechanism on social outcomes. Cultural theory presumes that attitudes influence behavior.

Previous sociological attempts to explain differences in behaviors between blacks and whites have often centered on a culture-based theory that focuses on group differences in attitudes transmitted through socialization. While many have speculated on the pre-existing attitudes, few have actually studied the influence of prevailing social norms and individual preferences of blacks and whites empirically. This research examines the extent to which attitudes on marriage and family behavior conform to actual behaviors within black and white populations in the United States.

Much of the traditional research on racial differences in marriage and family behavior painstakingly highlights their divergent behaviors and infers cultural differences in attitudes

normative beliefs, and values. For example, Bernard (1966) and Furstenberg (1976) have suggested that the higher rates of illegitimacy among blacks relate to a lower stigma associated with non-marital childbearing.

In contrast, Staples (1985, p. 1006) writes that the "unconventional family arrangements and lifestyles easily can mislead outsiders to assume that blacks are strongly in accord with newly emerging alternative family lifestyles." He suggests that the "dominant force" that accounts for differences between black and white family structures can be found in the structural conditions of the black population. Similarly, Espenshade (1985) suggests that demographic factors such as delayed marriages, high rates of divorce and separation, and low remarriage rates contribute to the rise in the number of non-marital births for blacks. Structural theorists assume that similarity between groups stems from common life situations they encounter because of their relationship to the social structure and institutions (Kiecolt, 1988:383). Moreover, Kluegel and Smith (1986) maintain that attitudes are based on one's position in the social structure and are separate from one's behavior. If Kluegel and Smith are correct, then blacks and whites with similar socioeconomic and demographic characteristics should have similar attitudes on many issues in spite of the behavioral differences between the two groups.

As the transition to adulthood becomes less associated with marriage, issues of premarital sex, cohabitation, and non-marital childbearing complicate the transition for young people as they enter adulthood. We are particularly concerned with comparisons of attitudes by race on issues of premarital sex, non-marital childbearing, cohabitation, and marriage. We address each issue separately. To integrate behavior into our discussion of attitudes, we begin by providing an overview of the recent literature on each issue, followed by a synopsis of the current research

findings examining racial differences in these four specific behaviors.

Premarital Sex

The first issue is racial differences in attitudes on premarital sex. The debate in this field centers on either attitudes alone or on the ability of behavior to predict attitudes. Singh (1980) documents an increasing trend in the approval of premarital sex. Thornton (1989) suggests that increasing acceptance of premarital sex and cohabitation has lessened the importance of marriage as a "sanctioning institution for sex" (p. 889). The trend in premarital sexual permissiveness is concomitant with increased premarital sexual behavior.

In addition, Smith (1992) contends that a consequence of differential experiences in: (1) age of first intercourse, (2) teenage sexual activity, (3) non-marital childbearing, and (4) marital instability help to "predict" greater sexual permissiveness among blacks. Despite the differences in experience, Singh (1980) notes that the difference in premarital sexual permissiveness is less pronounced between blacks and whites than between men and women.

Similar to Singh (1980), this study examines attitudes of blacks and whites on the issue of premarital sex. Although Smith assumes that behavior is able to predict attitudes, this study questions this assumption and instead regards behaviors as the social setting in which these attitudes exist.

Non-marital Childbearing

The second issue is race differences in attitudes toward a possible outcome of premarital sexual intercourse, a non-marital birth. Bumpass and McLanahan (1989) show that blacks have higher rates of non-marital births than whites. They suggest that the weakened taboo against "illegitimacy" and the high rate of divorce contribute to the social acceptance of non-marital

fertility. Mare and Winship (1991) make a comparable argument by concluding that "separation of childbearing from marriage" is viewed not only as feasible but acceptable (p. 195). While these conclusions might be true, they provide little in the way of analytic insight into the relationship between attitudes and behavior. Beyond that, these conclusions are nothing more than speculation on the presumed coupling of behaviors and attitudes. The issue of whether non-marital childbearing is acceptable to either blacks or whites is explored in the following analysis, irrespective of the group's behavior.

Cohabitation

The third topic is attitudes about cohabitation between unmarried persons. Recent studies (Thornton, 1989; Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin, 1991) suggest that cohabitation among unmarried couples is a relatively new phenomenon with considerable impact on the decreasing marriage rates. Thornton (1989) shows that while marriage rates have been decreasing rapidly, cohabitation has emerged as a new alternative for young couples. Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin (1991) find that most of the decline of marriage and remarriage has been offset by the rise in cohabitation. They find that before age 25, cohabitation has compensated for the decline in marriage more among blacks than among whites (p. 917). Given the marked delay in marriage, which results in a higher prevalence in cohabitation among blacks, we might expect their attitudes to be more approving, regardless of whether cohabitation is a cause or consequence of prior behavior.

Two important studies by Thornton (1989) and Sweet and Bumpass (1990) specifically deal with attitudes regarding non-marital cohabitation. Both studies were consistent in finding that cohabitation without marriage is acceptable to a majority of young people. Moreover, Thornton

suggests that approval of non-marital cohabitation is increasing. Sweet and Bumpass find that "groups that are likely to be facing the greatest economic hardships (blacks and those with 12 years of education or less) are most likely to approve of cohabitation" under certain circumstances (p. 23).

Despite these findings, the lack of clarity about factors which account for racial differences in attitudes regarding cohabitation still remains. The present study not only accounts for differences in attitudes by race but simultaneously takes into account other factors such as age, marital status, income, and education. We suspect that the prevalence of non-marital cohabitation among blacks has less to do with a cultural acceptance of non-marital cohabitation and more to do with structural and demographic differences in the black and white populations.

Marriage

The last issue is the evaluation of marriage as a preferred adult status. Trends in marriage behavior and racial differences in marriage have been well documented. Studies on marriage consistently reveal: (1) a trend toward later marriage, (2) a decline in the proportion ever marrying, (3) a smaller fraction of total lifetime spent in the married state, and (4) a shorter duration of marriage (Espenshade, 1985; Goldscheider and Waite, 1986; Bumpass and Sweet, 1989). These four trends have been more pronounced for blacks (especially black females) than for whites (Espenshade, 1985).

Traditional research that accounts for the marked differences in marriage between blacks and whites focuses on the high levels of non-marriage among blacks (Staples, 1985; Wilson and Neckerman, 1986; Farley and Bianchi, 1987). Researchers in this field commonly examine the economic and demographic factors that contribute to racial differences in the quantity and quality

of the "marriageable pool." For instance, Wilson and Neckerman (1986) point to demographic factors such as a shortage of black men, shortage of "suitable" marriage partners, or the employment status of black males as a basis for the racial differences in marriage rates. Schoen and Kluegel (1988) consider the desirability of marriage for blacks and whites by simply controlling for race, gender and education.

Values concerning marriage, in general, have been explored by Glick and Norton (1977), Thornton and Freedman (1982), Thornton (1989), and Sweet and Bumpass (1990). These studies are consistent in finding that most young people and their parents have lessened their disapproval of persons choosing singleness as an adult status. Specifically, Glick and Norton (1977) propose that the rise in the divorce rate and the large increase in the proportion of young women who prefer to remain childless have probably altered the way men and women view marriage.

While these studies have contributed to our understanding of differences in the way men and women view marriage, little is known about preferences of marriage as an adult status for either blacks or whites. Whereas the behavioral differences might be due to the unequal access to the resources necessary for forming and maintaining an independent household, these differences provide little insight into the desirability of marriage for blacks and whites. This study integrates gender and race into the discussion of attitudes toward marriage.

As marriage becomes less of a basis for intimate relationships, it is important to study the social acceptance of other possible avenues to adulthood such as premarital sex, cohabitation, and non-marital childbearing (Thornton, 1988). The marked racial differences in marriage and family behavior provide the context in which these behaviors are accepted in society. This research considers the differences in the structural composition of the two groups and offers a comparative

analysis of the attitudes of blacks and whites on premarital sex, cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, and the tolerance of singleness in relation to marriage as a preferred adult status using the National Survey of Families and Households.

This paper is organized as follows. In Section II, we briefly review the literature on each topic previously discussed. Section III provides the data source, the independent variables considered in the analysis, and statistical methods used. Section IV discusses the bivariate and multivariate results. The last section provides the conclusion and implications of this research.

II. Literature Review

Premarital Sex

Traditional research on sexual permissiveness links sexual attitudes with behaviors without reference to a particular causal order of this association. Many sociologists (Duberman, 1974; Robertson, 1987; Singh, 1980; Walsh, 1989; Caplow, 1991) note that sexual attitudes have become more permissive over time. Others (Duberman, 1974; Robertson, 1987; Thornton, 1989; Caplow, 1991) cite the widespread availability of oral contraceptives as the main antecedent for changes in behavior and attitudes because it separates procreation from sexual satisfaction. Particularly, Duberman (1974) concludes that because "sex no longer need result in the birth of children," society has relaxed its control over sexual behavior (p. 51). Hence, marriage is becoming less of a marker for the initiation of sexual exposure (Bumpass, 1990:487). Rindfuss and Parnell (1989) suggest that the sexual revolution has meant a fundamental change regarding sexual intercourse for many unmarried individuals.

Cuber (1972) examines the implications of the sexual revolution. He distinguishes between a revolution and a transgression of society's rules. He maintains that when past generation

violated the moral code such as experimenting with premarital sex, they were "cheating, trying to get away with something, simply trying to get something out of their system . . . they did not question tradition in any rigorous way" (p. 117). In sharp contrast, today's younger generation actually regards the rules as no longer relevant. Cuber suggests that the young are truly revolutionary because they lack guilt. He proposes that instead of "the" moral code, the future holds "a" moral code that is one of many.

Much of the empirical research on premarital sex is somewhat antiquated and focuses primarily on adolescents and young adults. Moreover, few studies examine racial differences in premarital sexuality. Those that do, find substantial racial differences in the prevalence and timing in premarital sexual behavior (Zelnick and Kanter, 1980). Zelnick and Kanter find an increase in both the rate for females and the percentage of adolescents and young adults engaging in premarital sex. In the early 1970s, black females were twice as likely as white females to engage in coitus before marriage. The disparity between black and white sexually active teens narrowed because of a substantial increase among whites teens. The rates for males and females converged as well. However, racial comparisons still show that the occurrence of premarital sexual intercourse is considerably higher among blacks than whites. As of 1979, the average age at first intercourse for black females was 15.5 compared to 16.4 for white females. For black and white males the figures were 14.4 and 15.9 respectively (Zelnick and Shah, 1983). Nearly a decade later, most eighteen-year-old females had experienced coitus, as had one of four by age fifteen. A majority of males had experienced sex by age seventeen. By age nineteen, nearly all blacks have had sex, compared to 85 percent of all non-blacks (Moore and Stief, 1991:365). More recent studies contribute to our understanding of premarital sexual attitudes among blacks

and whites in terms of premarital sexual permissiveness (Singh, 1980; Brown, 1985). Brown (1985) finds that church attendance is an important factor in influencing black female sexual permissiveness. Her results also show that sexual standards are not uniform among all blacks. Hogan and Kitagawa (1985) suggest that the social environment is an important aspect of teen sexual behavior. One study in particular which looks at premarital sexual permissiveness among adults finds that the differences in premarital sexual permissiveness between blacks and whites were less pronounced than the differences between the sexes (Singh, 1980).

Similar to Singh, this study will examine the variation in attitudes between blacks and whites considering the marked differences in premarital sexual behavior. Unlike the previous studies, this study examines the premarital sexual attitudes of black and white adults. This research should help to determine whether the differences in behavior can be attributed to the differences in attitudes about premarital sex. Because of the risk associated with premarital sexual intercourse (e.g., AIDS, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases), it is important to understand the extent to which current patterns of premarital sexual behavior are in keeping with the attitudes and values of the society in which people live (Moore and Stief, 1991:362).

Non-marital Childbearing

Some research on non-marital childbearing suggests that it is more prevalent and perhaps even more acceptable today than in prior decades (Bumpass and McLanahan, 1989; Mare and Winship, 1991; Farley and Bianchi, 1987). The rate of childbearing among unmarried women has more than doubled since 1970 and is becoming a part of the life experience of a significant proportion of women (Bumpass, 1990:488). The question of the underlying causes for the substantial increase in non-marital fertility has been unresolved by the current debate in the

literature.

Some of the major arguments center on the decline in marriage and the reduced stigma associated with evidence of non-marital sex. Bumpass and McLanahan (1989) write that "several decades ago, a non-marital pregnancy would have been stigmatizing evidence of sexual intercourse outside marriage" (p. 279). They suggest that the "component of stigma associated with unmarried motherhood is much less relevant today" (p. 279). In addition, Bumpass (1990) suggests that the changing orientation toward marriage and the reduced stigma of non-marital childbearing drives the trends in non-marital childbearing more than the desire to have children "out-of-wedlock." The issue of cohabitation among unmarried persons of the opposite sex encompasses the two ideas. Whereas non-marital cohabitation is considered a relatively new phenomenon in relation to the decline of marriage, its impact on non-marital childbearing has received little attention in the literature. Two studies (Tanfer and Horn, 1985; Bachrach, 1987) address cohabitation as evidence of a non-marital sexual relationship by focusing on the frequency of sexual intercourse and the increased risk of non-marital pregnancy among cohabiting couples. Bachrach (1987) finds that cohabiting couples have sex more frequently than non-cohabiting couples. She suggests that the frequency of intercourse is influenced by the living arrangement, not by the couple's marital status (p. 635). Therefore, she predicts that the dramatic rise in cohabitation will increase the proportion of cohabiting couples with children. Her evidence for this prediction is the sharp increase in non-marital births (32%) to young cohabiting women (age 20-29), versus 13 percent for single women who have never cohabited (Tanfer and Horn, 1985).

Other explanations suggest that the increase in the number of non-marital births could

possibly be attributed to the economic independence of women, the availability of income transfer payments, or social acceptance of this practice (Farley and Bianchi, 1987).

Numerous studies consistently find considerable racial differences in the rates and prevalence of non-marital childbearing among blacks and whites (Mare and Winship, 1991; Bumpass and McLanahan, 1989; Wilson and Neckerman, 1986). While the rate of out-of-wedlock childbearing has been decreasing among blacks and increasing among whites, the racial gap is still quite large (Espenshade, 1985; Bumpass and McLanahan, 1989). Bennett, Bloom, and Craig (1989) report that in 1982 the rate of non-marital births for black women was 85.5 per 1000 women age 25-29, while the corresponding rate was 22.2 for white women.

The major arguments used to explain these differences incorporate not only the economic barriers to marriage for blacks, but also the changing demographic composition of the population as a consequence of delayed marriage. Comparisons by race show that the decline in marriage has been more pronounced for blacks than for whites (Espenshade, 1985). Mare and Winship (1991) find that "the main cause for the tripling in the number of black families headed by women since 1940" has been the increasing number of women at risk of having a child out of wedlock (p. 175).

Whereas demographers have traditionally taken this coupling of marriage and childbearing for granted, Rindfuss and Parnell (1989) question the restriction of childbearing to marriage in the United States and find that the "effects of marriage vary considerably across education and parity groups" (p. 452). They suggest that the higher a woman's education, the more options available to her and thus the greater the cost of having a child outside of marriage. They examine racial differences in fertility rates of unmarried mothers and married mothers, and find that the

racial differences in childbearing among married couples who are poorly-educated and well educated are relatively non-existent. On the other hand, for high school dropouts of both races, not being married has only a weak inhibiting effect. Thus, they conclude that traditional methods of examining fertility should be concentrated on the unmarried rather than the married.

Bumpass and McLanahan (1989) looked at the marked differences in non-marital fertility between blacks and whites and wondered "whether there is a different orientation toward marriage and childbearing in the black community" (p. 280). They find similar rates of premarital births by race depending on whether the individual comes from a high-risk or low-risk background. Hogan and Kitagawa (1985) find that differences in parents' socioeconomic backgrounds, family structure, and residential characteristics explain part of the race differential in premarital births. Similarly, Rindfuss and Parnell (1989) and Bennett et al. (1989) contend that non-marital childbearing is often closely related to class and is disproportionately prevalent among women with less education. Also, Bennett et al. (1989) suggest that non-marital childbearing is more prevalent among black women than white women, but even more common "among the poorest black women than those in higher classes" (p. 708). Wilson and Neckerman (1986) suggest that poverty is a major contributor to the formation of black single-parent families in that "male joblessness" could be the most important factor in determining this family structure.

These studies look at the differences in behavior or consequences of some behavior and speculate on the cultural differences in attitudes between blacks and whites. Examining directly the attitudes of blacks and whites toward non-marital childbearing should help to determine whether "social acceptance" accounts for the differences in behavior.

Cohabitation

Cohabitation is often discussed in relation to the decline of marriage. Thornton (1988) documents the emergence of cohabitation as a new alternative for young couples, while marriage rates have been decreasing rapidly. Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin (1991) maintain that most of the decline of marriage and remarriage has been offset by the rise in cohabitation. In addition, they find that education is negatively correlated with cohabitation. That is, the least educated in society show the highest rates of cohabitation. Bumpass and Sweet (1989) find that by their late 20s or early 30s "nearly half of all young American adults has cohabited at some point in their lives" (p. 619). The duration of cohabiting unions is often relatively short and often ends by separation (Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin, 1991; Schoen and Owens, 1992). Schoen and Owens (1992) find while the differential is not large, cohabitation is not only more frequent but also lasts longer for blacks than whites. However, Bumpass and Sweet (1989) find that when education and family background are taken into account, the rate of cohabitation among never-married persons is 26 percent lower among blacks than among non-Hispanic whites.

Schoen and Owens (1992) also maintain that women who cohabit have a lower probability of marriage than women who do not. If a woman does not marry her first cohabiting partner, her chances of marriage decrease even further. For black women, the probability of marrying their first cohabiting partner is lower than for white women. Correspondingly, the likelihood of cohabitation progressing toward marriage is lower for black women than for whites (London 1991). The differences in behaviors between blacks and whites could be attributed to either differences in attitudes toward cohabitation or structural differences between blacks and whites, or both.

If cohabitation is only a phase, it is likely that these views are temporarily correlated with

their behavior. Perhaps a more important comparison is not between cohabitators and non cohabitators, but between married couples who previously cohabited and those who did not. Cohabitation might be a temporary alternative to marriage for some, but it is not a deterrent to marriage for most. That most women eventually marry might suggest that their temporary behavior does not fully explain their overall attitudes toward marriage, cohabitation, or being single.

Whether cohabitation is a cause or a consequence of delayed marriage, measuring society's attitudes toward this alternative lifestyle might provide some further insight into marriage, the acceptance of non-marriage, marital disruption, and cohabitation. If blacks have lower rates of marriage and higher rates of marital disruption, we expect that blacks should have higher rates of approval of cohabitation than whites.

Marriage

The recent literature on marriage documents a marked decline in marriage rates (Becker 1981; Espenshade, 1985; Schoen, 1985; Goldscheider and Waite, 1986; Thornton 1988; Sweet and Bumpass, 1990; Mare and Winship, 1991). Espenshade (1985) reports that between 1975 and 1982 the median age of first marriage for men and women increased to 25.2 and 22.5 respectively. In addition, the proportion of never-married at age 20-24 increased from 54 percent (1970) to 72 percent (1980) for men. For women, the proportion increased from 36 percent to 53 percent. He notes that "the fading centrality of marriage in the lives of American men and women is more noticeable for blacks than for whites and within the black population, black females exhibit the weakest attachment to marriage" (p. 209).

Focusing on the historical experience of marriage among blacks and whites, Espenshade (1985) shows that before 1950, blacks and whites shared similar marriage patterns. Nonetheless, Preston, Lim, and Morgan (1992) suggest that marriage stability among blacks in 1910 was overestimated and overreported in the census. They find that in spite of the high mortality of black men at the turn of the century, widowhood was still overreported by young black women (p. 12). The bulk of research on contemporary variation in black and white marriage patterns concentrates on the divergent pattern which has emerged since 1950 (Espenshade, 1985). These studies typically find that the decline in marriage has been more pronounced and has occurred earlier for blacks than for whites (Espenshade, 1985; Bumpass and Sweet, 1989; Bennett et al., 1989).

The high prevalence of nonmarriage is treated as a "problem" to be explored in terms of examining the obstacles to marriage. Traditional studies (Spanier and Glick, 1980; Schoen and Kluegel, 1988; Bennett et al., 1989; Mare and Winship, 1991), which involve comparisons by race, often examine the demographic compositional factors which contribute to nonmarriage rather than considering singleness as a separate distinct possibility. This body of research examines the differences in demographic composition of both populations and encompasses a broad view of marriage that involves (1) the availability of suitable partners, and (2) the propensity to marry. According to Spanier and Glick (1980), the "marriage squeeze" is forcing black women to marry older men, men who have been previously married, or men with less education, or to forego marriage. Bennett et al. (1989) examine the differences in attainment of higher degrees between black men and black women and attribute the variation in marriage rates among highly educated black women to the scarcity in "suitable" partners. Wilson and

Neckerman (1986) have argued that the "marriageable pool" for black women is quite small and its size is a result of black "male joblessness." Mare and Winship (1991) suggest that the size of the marriageable pool decreases for women as education increases. Nonetheless, Bennett et al. (1989) find that for black women the proportion marrying is positively associated with education. Among highly educated white women the proportion evermarrying is negatively associated with education (p. 698).

They acknowledge the divergence in black and white marriage patterns, especially among women with less education, and comment on the positive correlation between the erosion of economic opportunity among less educated blacks and the sharply declining marriage rates that they observed. For blacks, a woman's current employment status is as important as a man's in determining subsequent marital status. These findings are consistent with Oppenheimer's (1992) finding that a woman's employment status makes her more attractive in the marriage market and thus more likely to marry.

Most of the empirical work on the propensity to marry is motivated by Becker's (1973) theory of the gains to marriage. Becker suggests that black women have less to gain from marriage than white women because of the relatively smaller gap between black male and female labor market earnings. Guttentag and Secord (1983) show that black women held higher prestige jobs than black men. Thus the smaller status differential between black men and women reduces the economic gains to marriage for black women (Espenshade, 1985:233).

After a review of the literature on blacks in the ghetto, Schoen and Kluegel (1988) write that "rather than entering a marriage from which little is expected and which holds the promise of exploitation, many black women prefer to remain unmarried . . . and are more skeptical of the

value of marriage than whites" (p. 896). In addition, South (1991) finds that men and women differ in terms of the characteristics they look for in a potential mate. While women are inclined to prefer a man who is a good provider, men are more likely to prefer physical attractiveness in a mate (South, 1991).

These findings vary across different time periods and give little insight into the differences in attitudes about marriage for black and whites. The conclusions made by Schoen and Kluegel (1988) lack empirical evidence and only considered education as the distinguishing factor between blacks and whites as a measure of the individual's propensity to marry. This study seeks to incorporate education as well as other socioeconomic factors to ascertain racial differences in attitudes toward marriage in comparison to singleness as preferred adult status. While the findings in these studies have shown that blacks have a lower marriage rate than whites, these findings have not yet shown whether the paths were taken by choice or were involuntarily imposed (Bennett et al., 1989).

III. Data and Methods

The data for these analyses are from the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), a national survey of 13,017 adults living in the continental United States between March, 1987 and May, 1988. The main cross section sample consists of 9,643 households, in addition to an oversample of blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, single parents, families with stepchildren, recently married couples, and cohabitators. In each household a randomly selected adult was interviewed. The response rate for the main sample was .77 and the total response rate was .74. The data for this paper are restricted to black and white respondents aged

20 to 59, a total of 9,014 persons of whom 1,910 are black and 7,104 are white.

The independent variables considered are race, gender, marital status, household income, and education. Household income is measured relative to the U.S. government poverty standard. This needs standard takes into account the size of the household and number of related children under 18. The poverty line is computed by adjusting the published poverty thresholds in 1984 to the 1986 dollars [adjusting for the increase in the Consumer Price Index (adjustment factor = 1.0554)] (NSFH code book, pg. R-45). The four dichotomous dependent variables are measures of attitudes toward (1) pre-marital sex, (2) non-marital childbearing, (3) cohabitation, and (4) being married versus staying single.

Five questions on attitudes were examined to analyze attitudes toward cohabitation, marriage, premarital sex, and non-marital childbearing. All of the respondents were asked if they agreed with the following four statements:

	Agree Responses
[E1359B] It's better for a person to get married than to go through life being single.	1-2
[E1360B] It is all right for unmarried 18-year-olds to have sexual relations if they have strong affections for each other.	1-3
[E1359H] It is all right for an unmarried couple to live together even if they have no interest in considering marriage.	1-3
[E1360K] It is all right for an unmarried couple to live together as long as they have plans to marry.	1-3

The measurement scale for the questions listed above consists of the following set of ordinal categories:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
7. Refused
8. Don't know
9. No Answer

The response variables were transformed into the dichotomy approve or disapprove, or agree or disagree. Refusals, "don't know," and "no answer" responses were deleted. For E1360B responses less than four were coded as agree. To get an overall sense of an attitude toward cohabitation irrespective of whether or not marriage is intended, questions E1359H and E1360K were combined and measured in the same fashion. Responses less than four were coded agree; if either E1359H or E1360K were equal to 4 or 5, the response was coded disagree. It is quite possible that some agreed with cohabitation only in special circumstances; however, that issue is not addressed here. The "marriage question" [E1359B], asking whether it is better to get married or go through life single, was coded differently. Because the researchers were interested in the non-normative attitudes toward marriage, only responses less than 3 were coded agree otherwise disagree.

The scale for the last question is quite different from the previous set of questions. Respondents were asked to answer the question below based on a seven-point scale ranging from strongly approve to strongly disapprove. The respondents were asked to respond to the following:

Here are some questions about your views on some other topics. Please circle the number that best represents how much you approve or disapprove of the behaviors described.:

[E1354D]

Women Who Have a Child Without Getting Married

1. Strongly approve
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Strongly disapprove
8. Don't know/Refused
9. No answer

Response categories (1,2,3) were coded approve. "Don't know, refusals, and no answers" were eliminated from the analysis. The descriptive results in the following analysis are based on weighted responses of the individual.¹ The multivariate analysis is based on unweighted grouped data. We obtained a bivariate and multivariate cross-classification of the data with the categorical independent variables listed above. The categories are as follows:

Race:(Black, White) Sex:(Men, Women)
Education:[EDUC](0-11, 12, 13-15, 16-20)
Age:(20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59)
Marital Status:[STAT] Currently Married, Previously Married, Never Married
Ratio of household income to Poverty Line:[INCOME] (< .75), (.75 - 1.49), (1.5 - 2.49)
(2.5x)

We used the logistic regression model to predict the dichotomous dependent variable. The response variable predicts the log odds of agreement or approval.

¹ This weighting scheme takes into account the differential probability of selection depending on whether the case is in the main or over sample; differential probability of selection depending on adults in the household differential response rates; and post stratification to replicate the distribution of the population by age, race, and sex in the Current Population Survey.

We assume that the relationship between the independent variables and the logit transformation of the dependent dichotomous variable is a linear one. However, the probabilities and the odds are nonlinear with respect to the logits estimated. One benefit of this model is that the predicted probabilities are based on multivariate controls, which can be used to adjust for bias when comparing two groups such as blacks and whites. The odds of a particular attitude are defined as the ratio of the chance of the outcome to the chance of the alternate outcome. The parameter estimates are the average effects of unit changes in the independent variables included in the model on the log odds of agreement. A positive coefficient indicates that a positive change on an independent variable increases the probability/odds of approval or agreement.

We compare models using likelihood ratio tests. The larger the goodness-of-fit statistic (scaled deviance), the poorer the fit of the model to the data. The goodness-of-fit test allows us to see if a model generates expected values that are close in some sense to the observed values. The best logit model is the model that gives the best fit of the data with the fewest parameters. Differences in scaled deviances follow a chi-squared distribution. The degrees of freedom are determined by the differences in the number of parameters of the models being compared. The degrees of freedom for a model are the number of logits minus the number of linearly independent parameters in the model (Agresti, 1990:95).

Compositional Differences by Race

To the extent that attitudes vary between blacks and whites because of their differences in composition on other variables, it is important to note the marked differences in composition between the two groups.

Blacks and whites differ considerably in terms of marital status and income. A rising age

of first marriage and higher marital dissolution among blacks contribute to less total lifetime spent married. Black females spend about 22 percent of their life expectancy married compared to 43 percent for white females. Men are more likely to be either never-married or currently married (Espenshade, 1985). According to Espenshade, "white males are the only population subgroup for whom marriage comprises more than half (52.9 percent) of total life expectancy at birth" (p. 203). With regard to income, part of the differences in household income can be attributed to the variation in marital status. The marked differences in family composition have pronounced effects on family income. Families headed by women have lower incomes than those headed by men. The greater propensity for black families to be headed by women accounts for an estimated 30 percent of the poverty rates between blacks and whites (J. Smith, 1988).

Table 1 shows that 27 percent of blacks have less than 12 years of schooling, compared to 11 percent of whites. At the other extreme, 24 percent of whites have over 16 years of schooling compared to 10 percent of blacks. The pattern is the same for the distribution of income. While 29 percent of the blacks in the sample have needs adjusted incomes less than 75 percent of the poverty line, just 11 percent of whites are in the same position. The majority of whites (66%) have incomes 2.5 times the poverty line compared to 40 percent of blacks.

More striking are the compositional differences between blacks and whites by marital status. Compared to blacks, whites are more likely to be currently married (68% vs. 41%) and are less likely to be previously married (13% vs. 24%) or never married (20% vs. 35%), respectively.

IV. Findings

Premarital Sex

In Table 2 we present approval of premarital sex by blacks and whites. A majority of both

blacks (58%) and whites (53%) approve of premarital sex. A greater percentage of men (60%) approve than women (49%). As well, a greater percentage of those less than forty years old approve of premarital sex than do persons age forty and older.

Clearly, the difference between blacks and whites is substantially less than the difference between men and women. When marital status is accounted for, whites who are not currently married approve of premarital sex more than blacks in the same category. Those who are not currently married approve of premarital sex more than those who are currently married. Table 2 shows that 51 percent of men and 41 percent of women who are currently married approve of premarital sex. Nearly 70 percent of all individuals who have never married approve of premarital sex. Men approve of premarital sex at a higher percentage (79%) than women (69%). Among never-married persons the race difference in approval is smaller than the sex difference. Eighty percent of white males approve of premarital sex. Smith (1992) argues that the never-married and the previously-married are more permissive because it is in their self-interest to be so. An analogous argument made by Kluegel and Smith (1986) is that attitudes are able to predict relevant behaviors when the attitudes matter to the individual. Because those who are currently married have little interest in the issue of premarital sex, it is not surprising that respondents in this category show some of the lowest percentages of approval.

To evaluate the impact of race, gender, income, age, and marital status on a particular attitude, the logit model was used. A simple example examining attitudes of blacks and whites on premarital sex facilitates the discussion of the logit model and the results of this study. Table 3 shows the fit statistics for several models. The additive model (Model A) produced a scaled deviance of 625.10 with 490 degrees of freedom. The likelihood-ratio statistic for comparing this

model with the baseline model is 278.6 with 13 d.f. Since under the null hypothesis that all coefficients are zero, the probability of getting a greater chi-square value with 13 d.f. is considerably less than .005, the null hypothesis is rejected. We use the additive model as the baseline. By comparing all of the models in Table 3 to the Model A, the model chosen for the analysis of premarital sex is Model K. It is quite similar to the additive model, except that it includes both a race and sex as well as a race and age interaction term. When compared to Model A, the likelihood-ratio statistic is 16.46 with 4 d.f. Comparing Model M to the baseline model, Model M might appear to be a better model because its scaled deviance is reduced by a factor of 21.15 with 10 d.f compared to Model A. Nevertheless, when compared to the model chosen (Model K), the scaled deviance is reduced by only 4.69 with 6 d.f. The likelihood-ratio test at the 5 percent significance level suggests that the model with a three-way interaction term does not fit significantly better than Model K. In other words, since Model M is not sufficiently different from Model K, the simpler model was chosen. The equation for Model K is as follows:

Model K.

$$\text{Log} \frac{\text{Prob}(\text{approve})}{1-\text{Prob}(\text{approve})} = a + b_1\text{INCOME} + b_2\text{EDUC} + b_3\text{AGE} + b_4\text{STAT} + b_5\text{RACE} + b_6\text{SEX} + b_7\text{RACE}*\text{SEX} + b_8\text{RACE}* \text{AGE}$$

Table 4 suggests that the odds of approval of premarital sex are affected by race, marital status, and age. The t-ratios indicate that the coefficients for the race and sex and the race and age interaction terms, marital status and age, are statistically significant. Having been previously married and being married increase the odds by $e^{.670} = 1.95$ and $e^{.892} = 2.44$, respectively.

Figures 1 and 2 facilitate the discussion of the results of this model from Table 5. Whereas Smith (1992) argues that blacks are more permissive than non-blacks because of their lower age

at first intercourse and the prevalence of non-marital childbearing among blacks, the results show that, irrespective of race and gender, younger people are more likely to approve of premarital sex than are older people. The generational differences are notably larger among whites than blacks. Consistent with the earlier results, the group most likely to approve is young white males. A substantial difference in attitudes exists between white men and white women at all ages. In contrast, black men and women share similar views on this issue. The divergence of white females from the other groups does not appear until after age 30. Comparisons of the gross and net effects bear out the same results about young white males. Net of income, education, and marital status the gross patterns remain unchanged. Therefore, these factors apparently cannot account for the racial differences in approval of premarital sex despite the large race differences in marital status, income, and education.

Non-marital Childbearing

Espenshade (1985) finds that white non-marital births increased at a faster rate than black non-marital births. Whereas non-marital fertility rates have been falling for blacks, these rates have been increasing rapidly for whites. Cutright and Smith (1988) suggest that racial differences in sexual activity, contraceptive use, abortion, and legitimation account for the higher black than white non-marital fertility rates. They suggest that even if black women and white women had equivalent levels of contraceptive use, sexual activity, and recourse to abortion, there would still be a substantial difference in non-marital fertility because of the greater propensity among whites to legitimate premarital pregnancies. The high propensity for whites to legitimate premarital pregnancies might suggest that whites disapprove more of non-marital childbearing. However, the lower tendency of legitimization among blacks does not imply that blacks approve of non-

marital childbearing. The results in Table 6 show that neither blacks (26%) nor whites (16%) approve of a woman having a child without getting married. Less than 35 percent of blacks approve of non-marital childbearing. Blacks and women show a slightly higher percentage of approval than whites and men. While black women at all levels approve more than white women, the highest percentage of approval is 43 percent for never married black women compared to 30 percent for white women in the corresponding category. Whereas 35 percent of blacks compared to 22 percent of whites who have never married approve of non-marital childbearing, the percentage difference between men (18%) and women (34%) is slightly higher.

Since the data show that both groups tend to disapprove of non-marital childbearing, the notion that illegitimacy is acceptable to either group cannot be explained by cultural theory. While the simple bivariate analysis does show that blacks are more approving than whites, the subsequent multivariate analysis should help to ascertain the influence of compositional factors on the approval of non-marital childbearing among blacks and whites.

After experimenting with several model specifications in Table 7, we chose the baseline additive model predicting approval of non-marital childbearing. Despite the lower scaled deviance for the multiplicative Model M, the improvements in fit by the more complex model only reduced the scaled deviance by 9.87 with 10 d.f. The chi-squared test at a 5 percent significance level for 10 d.f. revealed that the more complex model failed to significantly improve the fit of the model. Thus, Model A with the scaled deviance of 556.01 with 488 d.f. was selected.

Evidently race, age, and marital status have a great impact on attitudes toward non-marital childbearing. The t-ratios in Table 8 show that these effects are statistically significant in

predicting the odds of approval. The last column in the table from the selected model shows that the odds of approval among whites are 65% percent of those among blacks. In other words whites are less likely than blacks to approve of a woman having a child outside marriage. In addition, non-marital childbearing is least likely to be sanctioned by people age 50-59. The model indicates that the odds of approval of non-marital childbearing exceed those of currently married persons by 1.69 for people who have been previously married and 2.10 for those who have never married. Having never been married increases the odds of approval more than race does. Also, examining gross (1.066) and net (0.744) marital status coefficients in Table 9 reveals that the differences between the currently-married and the never-married are significantly reduced by the presence of the other variables in the model.

Further inspection of the gross-net comparisons in Table 9 shows that the observed differences by income reflect the marked compositional differences on the other independent variables (see Table 1). The highest percentage of approval (37%) is seen among blacks in the lowest income category in Table 6. Gross comparisons by income confirm this earlier finding that those with higher incomes are less likely to approve than those with lower incomes. Specifically, the model reveals that respondents with needs adjusted incomes 2.5 times the poverty line are substantially (-.61) less likely to approve of non-marital childbearing. However, when the other variables are taken into account, this coefficient (-.19) plays less of a role in determining the likelihood of approval of non-marital childbearing. The differences by income are much smaller net of the other variables considered.

Gross (.673) and net (.438) comparisons in Table 9 show that the racial differences are reduced by about one-third when other variables are accounted for in the model. About two

thirds of the much smaller sex difference is attributable to composition on the other variables. The relatively low gender coefficient (.051) reflects that males' and females' attitudes on this issue are not significantly different from one another.

Cohabitation

Table 10 shows no differences by race in approval of cohabitation except that, among previously married women, 59 percent of whites but only 42 percent of blacks approve of cohabitation. More men (54%) than women (46%) approve of cohabitation. Some researchers (Schoen and Owens, 1992) suggest that cohabitation minimizes long-term responsibilities for men and requires fewer expectations for them to share economic and household responsibilities equally. Furthermore, in these relationships as well as in marriage men often have more economic resources than women, and thus tend to have more power. Perhaps the combination of autonomy, economic independence, and lack of commitment makes cohabitation more attractive for men than for women.

Older and less educated persons are least likely to approve of cohabitation. While Bumpass and Sweet (1989, p. 624) conclude that "cohabitation is most likely among those who did not complete high school," clearly a majority of respondents in this category does not approve of cohabitation. Table 10 shows that 46 percent of blacks and 43 percent of whites with less than a high school education approve of cohabitation. The prevalence of cohabitation might be a consequence of economic necessity rather than a preferred lifestyle for the least educated.

Several models were specified to analyze the odds of approval of cohabitation by blacks and whites. Comparisons of the scaled deviances and the degrees of freedom shown in Table 11 indicate that the simplest model (Model A) fits the data best. The t-ratios in Table 12 of the

selected model (Model A) show that race, gender, age, and marital status are statistically significant. The odds of approval for women are 71 percent of those for men. The odds of approval are 29 percent greater for whites than for blacks.

The effect of marital status on the odds of approval is also substantial. Compared to those who are currently married, having never been married increases the odds by 1.78 and having been previously married increases the odds by 1.87. Apparently, those who have been previously married are more tolerant of unmarried persons living together than those who are currently married. Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin (1991) note that cohabitation is more common among separated and divorce persons than among never-married persons. Between 1980-1987, 6 percent of remarried couples have cohabited with a partner before marriage (Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin, 1991:219).

Gross and net comparisons in Table 13 show that when race, marital status, and gender are included in the model, most of the coefficients increase. While the never-married coefficient decreased by .08, the previously-married coefficient almost doubled, which suggests that prior experience of marriage increases the odds of approval of cohabitation. Still being *single* has a profound impact on the odds of approval. Respondents in the oldest age categories (-.945) are less likely than younger respondents to approve of cohabitation. Comparisons of the gross and net effects show that the race coefficients more than double when other variables are considered. Racial differences in attitudes do not occur because of the composition of factors included in the model. Whites are more likely to approve of cohabitation than blacks. Similarly, the gender coefficient did increase but not considerably. Women are still less likely than men to agree that it is alright for an unmarried couple to live together.

Table 13 confirms that the simple bivariate analysis fails to account for the racial differences in age and marital status. The logit increases by 26 percent for previously married people. The estimates from the bivariate analysis are misleading in that they predict that the odds of approval would be higher for the never-married than the previously-married. Because blacks and whites differ in other aspects in addition to marital status, it is important to take these differences into account when comparing these two groups in detail. Therefore, the positive coefficients in the logit model indicate that previously-married people are more likely to approve of cohabitation at about the same rate as those who have never married. Furthermore, the educational differences mentioned earlier become smaller once other factors are considered. For example, the "college+" coefficient declines from .312 to .085. Blacks are not more tolerant of cohabitation despite their well documented patterns of the delayed marriage patterns and the lower remarriage. Whites are even more likely than blacks to approve of cohabitation when background characteristics are considered.

Marriage

Wilson and Neckerman's (1986:256) theory of marriage hinges on the lack of employment of black males. They suggest that the increasing delay in first marriage and the low rate of remarriage is a consequence of the increasing difficulty black women have finding a suitable spouse, a result of the lack of stable employment for black men. Surprisingly, Table 14 suggests that a majority of both blacks and whites are accepting of singleness as an adult status. Wilson and Neckerman's theory of marriage behavior for black men falls short of addressing why only 41 percent of black men in the high income and education categories agree that it is better to be married. Evidently, those most "suitable" for marriage are most tolerant of those who choose to

remain single.

In addition, Wilson and Neckerman (1986) do not consider the possibility that women might prefer to remain single rather than get married. Men (51%) are less willing to accept singleness as a legitimate status than women (66%). These results are consistent with the earlier finding by Bumpass and Sweet (1990) that men are more likely than women to agree that it is better to be married. Most white males (62%) and 52 percent of black males with a need adjusted income less than 75 percent of the poverty line approve of marriage over singleness. In addition, Table 14 shows that highly educated black men (43%) are less likely than highly educated white men (53%) to agree that it is better to be married.

In contrast, most women in all categories do not agree that it is better to be married than to be single. Compared to men, women at all education levels are more tolerant of singleness as a preferred status. Furthermore, 38 percent of currently married women agree compared to 4 percent for currently married men. While one might speculate that these women are probably not happy in their current marriage, one only has to look at the similar patterns of agreement by all women including those who have been previously married and never married. Although men are financially better off being single, the value of household services provided by their wives cannot be measured in strict economic terms. Perhaps men recognize the tradeoff between earnings and household services to be more favorable in their behalf.

Moreover, education appears to be a distinguishing factor in the levels of tolerance of singleness. Those with less education are more willing to accept marriage as a preferred state. Whereas 54 percent of less educated blacks and 51 percent of less educated whites prefer marriage, both blacks and whites with higher levels of education are more tolerant of

nonmarriage. White college educated men (53%) proved to be the exception to the rule. These men are most likely married. Table 14 shows that married men are less tolerant of singleness.

While the higher tolerance of singleness among women might shed some light on the delayed marriage phenomenon it does not fully explain the divergent racial patterns. To the extent that marriage requires a consensus between a man and woman and marital homogamy still exists, finding a "suitable" spouse requires finding one who is both suitable and willing to get married. Although most of the research on marriage assumes that it is women in the market place looking for a husband, the alternative perspective should be considered.

After examining several models in Table 15 we chose Model K, the multiplicative model with three two-way interactions among race, sex, and education. This model requires us to compare the odds of approval of marriage for all groups at each education level. Table 16 and Figure 2 confirm the original bivariate findings.

The gross and net estimates in Table 17 require a somewhat more complex interpretation than the three earlier models. The graphs in Figures 3 and 4 help to make the interpretations of the gross and net effects more intuitive. The omitted categories of the variables are currently married young adults aged 20-29 with incomes less than 75 percent of the poverty level. The U-shape patterns of agreement for men in both graphs are quite similar; however, their distinctions are quite subtle. Both graphs support the earlier finding that among the least educated, both black and white men have higher probabilities of agreement than women that it is better to be married. At the other extreme of the education continuum, white males tend to favor marriage more than singleness. In particular, men at all educational levels are less tolerant of singleness than women are.

Figure 3 shows the net effects of the other variables - income, age, and marital status- included in the model. The gender lines are farther apart than the lines between blacks and whites, which suggests that the differences between men and women are larger than the differences between blacks and whites. Tolerance for singleness as a legitimate state increases with education. However, a substantial discrepancy exists between persons with college education and those without. Persons who have not gone to college are more likely to view marriage as a preferred state. The differences in opinions between blacks and whites and men and women increase with education as well. Although Bennett et al. (1989) find that education is negatively correlated with marriage for white women, the graph shows that as education increases white women are more likely to agree that it is better to be married than to remain single. In spite of this finding, the graphs also exhibit a substantial difference in opinions regarding marriage between white men and women. The similarity between Figures 3 and 4 suggests that the other variables in the model do not account for the race, sex and education differences.

IV. Conclusion

When the attitudes of blacks and whites are analyzed comparatively in a format that controls for demographic compositional factors, we find that race is not *the* strongest determinant of attitudes about marriage and family behavior. Gender, age, and marital status have stronger effects than race in predicting attitudes. Thus, it is unlikely that the racial differences in behavior are attributable to racial differences in attitudes. For example, while blacks are more likely to cohabit, whites are more likely to approve of cohabitation. Similarly, whereas blacks have lower marriage rates than whites, blacks are more likely to agree that it is better to be married than to

remain single.

Despite the small racial differences, we find substantial differences by gender. Men's and women's opinions on marital and family behavior vary significantly. Men are more likely to agree that it is better to be married than to remain single. Perhaps as the division of labor in the household becomes more equitable the differences between men's and women's opinions about marriage might converge.

The major factor in determining differences in attitudes appears to be marital status. Marital status has considerable effect on approval of premarital sex, cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, and marriage. Those who were either previously married or never married were more likely to approve of premarital sex, cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, and marriage.

In addition, we were unable to substantiate the assertion in the literature of the "social acceptance" of non-marital childbearing. We find that while race is a significant factor in the approval of non-marital childbearing, a majority of both blacks and whites do not approve of women who have a child without getting married. Whereas blacks were more approving of non-marital childbearing, the age structure and the marital distribution of the black and white populations account for some of important racial differences in attitudes toward this issue.

In sum, the racial differences in behavior have less to do with differences in cultural norms than differences in the way society is structured. Moreover, although the link between attitudes and behavior was not fully addressed in this research, these findings shed some light on the social acceptance of these behaviors.

References

- Agresti, Alan. 1990. **Categorical Data Analysis**. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bachrach, Christine. 1987. "Cohabitation and Reproductive Behavior in the United States" *Demography* 24(4):623-637.
- Becker, Gary S. 1973. "A Theory of Marriage: Part I." *Journal of Political Economy* 81:813-847.
- Becker, Gary S. 1981. **A Treatise on the Family**. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Becker, Gary S., Elizabeth Landes, and Robert Michael. 1977. "An Economic Analysis of Marital Instability." *Journal of Political Economy* 85:114-118.
- Bennett, Neil G., David E. Bloom, and Patricia H. Craig. 1989. "The Divergence of Black and White Marriage Patterns." *American Journal of Sociology* 95(3):692-722.
- Bernard, Jessie. 1966. **Marriage and Family Among Negroes**. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Brown, S.V. 1985. "Premarital Sexual Permissiveness among Black Adolescent Females" *Social Psychology Quarterly* 48:381-387.
- Bumpass, Larry L. 1979. "The Changing Linkage of Nuptiality and Fertility in the United States." Pp. 195-209 in L.T. Ruzicka (ed.), **Nuptiality and Fertility**. Liege, Belgium: IUSSP
- Bumpass, Larry L. 1990. "What's Happening to the Family? Interactions Between Demographic and Institutional Change." *Demography* 27(4):483-498.
- Bumpass, Larry L. and Sara McLanahan. 1989. "Unmarried Motherhood: Recent Trends in Composition, and Black-Whites Differences." *Demography* 26(2):(279-286).

- Bumpass, Larry L. and James A. Sweet. 1989. "National Estimates of Cohabitation." *Demography* 26(4):615-625.
- Bumpass, Larry L., James A. Sweet, and Andrew Cherlin. 1991. "The Role of Cohabitation in Declining Rates of Marriage." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53:913-927.
- Caplow, Theodore. 1991. Pp. 144-157 in **American Social Trends**. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Cuber, John F. 1972. "How New Ideas About Sex Are Changing Our Lives." In Joann S Delora and Jack R. Delora (eds.), **Intimate Lifestyles**. Pacific Palisades, CA.: Goodyear.
- Cutright, Phillips and Herbert L. Smith. 1988. "Intermediate Determinants of Racial Differences in 1980 U.S. Nonmarital Fertility Rates." *Family Planning Perspectives* 20(3):119-123.
- Duberman, Lucile. 1974. Pp. 41-68 in **Marriage and Its Alternatives**. New York: Praeger.
- EGgebeen, David J. and Daniel T. Lichter. 1991. "Race, Family Structure, and Changing Poverty Among American Children." *American Sociological Review* 56(Dec):801-817.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara. 1983. **Hearts of Men: American Dreams and Flight from Commitment**. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Ellwood, David T. and Mary Jo Bane. 1984. "The Impact of AFDC on Family Structure and Living Arrangements." Report to DHHS Grant No. 92-A-82. Cambridge: Harvard University.
- Espenshade, Thomas J. 1985. "Marriage Trends in American: Estimates, Implications, and Underlying Causes." *Population and Development Review* 11:193-245.
- Farley, Reynolds and Suzanne M. Bianchi. 1987. "The Growing Racial Difference in Marriage and Family Patterns." University of Michigan, Population Studies Center, Research Report

No. 87-107.

Feinberg, Stephen E. 1978. **The Analysis of Cross-Classified Categorical Data**. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Furstenberg, Frank F., Jr. 1976. **Unplanned Parenthood**. New York: Free Press.

Glick, Paul C. and Arthur J. Norton. 1977. "Marrying, Divorcing and Living Together in the U.S.A. Today." *Population Bulletin* vol. 32. Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau.

Goldscheider, Frances K. and Linda J. Waite. 1986. "Sex Differences in the Entry into Marriage." *American Journal of Sociology* 92(1):91-109.

Gove, Walter R. and Michael Hughes. 1979. "Possible Causes of the Apparent Sex Differences and Physical Health." *American Sociological Review* 44:126-46.

Guttentag, Marcia and Paul F. Secord. 1983. **Too Many Women? The Sex Ratio Question**. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hamilton, Lawrence C. 1992. Pp. 217-249 in **Regression with Graphics: A Second Course in Applied Statistics**. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Hanushek, Eric A. and John E. Jackson. 1977. **Statistical Methods for Social Scientists**. Orlando: Academic Press, Inc.

Hoffman, Saul D., Greg J. Duncan, and Ronald Mincy. 1991. "Marriage and Welfare Use Among Young Women: Do Labor Market, Welfare and Neighborhood Factors Account for Declining Rates of Marriage Among Black and White Women?" Paper presented at a University of Wisconsin Conference on Poverty, June 1991.

Hogan, D.P. and E.M. Kitagawa. 1985. "The Impact of Social Status, Family Structure, and

- Neighborhood on the Fertility of Black Adolescents." *American Journal of Sociology* 90:825-855.
- Kiecolt, K. Jill. 1988. "Recent Developments in Attitudes and Social Structure." *Annual Review of Sociology* 14:381-403.
- Kluegel, James R. and Eliot R. Smith. 1986. **Beliefs about Inequality: America's Views of What is and What Ought to Be**. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Lichter, Daniel T., Felicia B. LeClere, and Diane K. McLaughlin. 1989. "Local Marriage Market Conditions and the Marital Behavior of Black and White Women." Population Issues Research Center, Working Paper Series No. 1989-11.
- Lichter, Daniel T., Diane K. McLaughlin, George Kephart, and David J. Landry. 1992. "Race and the Retreat from Marriage: A Shortage of Marriageable Men?" *American Sociological Review* 57(6):781-799.
- London, Kathryn A. 1991. "Cohabitation, Marriage, Marital Dissolution, and Remarriage United States, 1988." *Advance Data* 194:1-8.
- Mare, Robert D. and Christopher Winship. 1991. "Socioeconomic Change and the Decline of Marriage for Blacks and Whites." Pp 175-202 in Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Petersen (eds.), **The Urban Underclass**. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Moore, Kristin A. and Thomas M. Stief. 1991. "Changes in Marriage and Fertility Behavior: Behavior Versus Attitudes of Young Adults." *Youth and Society* 22(3):362-386.
- O'Connell, Martin and Kristin Moore. 1980. "The Legitimacy Status of First Births to US Women Age 15-24: 1939-1978." *Family Planning Perspectives* 12:15-25.
- Oppenheimer, Valarie K. 1992. "American Marriage Formation in the Eighties: How Important

- Was Women's Economic Independence?" Presented at Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America held in Denver, Colorado, April 30 - May 2.
- Parnell, Alan M. 1989. "Nonmarital Pregnancy and Marriage in the United States." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Population Association of America.
- Preston, Samuel H., Suet Lim, and S. Philip Morgan. 1992. "African-American Marriage in 1910: Beneath the Surface of Census Data." *Demography* 29(1):1-15.
- Rindfuss, Ronald R. and Audrey VandenHeuvel. 1990. "Cohabitation: A Precursor to Marriage or an Alternative to Being Single?" *Population and Development Review* 16(4):703-726.
- Rindfuss, Ronald R. and Allen Parnell. 1989. "The Varying Connection Between Marital Status and Childbearing in the United States." *Population and Development Review* 15(3):447-470.
- Rindfuss, Ronald R. and Jo Ann Jones. 1991. "One Parent or Two? The Intertwining of American Marriage and Fertility Patterns." *Sociological Forum* 6(2):311-326.
- Robertson, Ian. 1987. Pp. 225-233 in **Sociology**. New York: Worth Publishers, Inc.
- Schoen, Robert. 1985. "Marriage and Divorce in Twentieth Century American Cohorts." *Demography* 22(1):101-114.
- Schoen, Robert and James R. Kluegel. 1988. "The Widening Gap in Black and White Marriage Rates: The Impact of Population Composition and Differential Marriage Propensities." *American Sociological Review* 53(December):895-907.
- Schoen, Robert and Dawn Owens. 1992. "A Further Look at First Unions and First Marriages" in Scott J. South and Stewart E. Tolnay. Pp. 109-117 in **The Changing American Family**. Boulder: Westview Press.

- Schuman, Howard and Michael P. Johnson. 1976. "Attitudes and Behavior." *Annual Review of Sociology* 2:161-207.
- Singh, B.K. 1980. "Trends in Attitudes Toward Premarital Sexual Relations." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 42:387-393.
- Smith, James P. 1988. "Poverty and the Family." Pp. 141-172 in Gary D. Sandefur and Marta Tienda (eds.), **Divided Opportunities**. New York: Plenum.
- Smith, Tom W. 1992. "Attitudes Towards Sexual Permissiveness: Trends and Correlates". National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago. General Social Survey Change Report No. 35.
- South, Scott J. 1991. "Sociodemographic Differential in Mate Selection Preferences." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53:928-940.
- Spanier, Graham B. and Paul C. Glick. 1980. "Mate Selection Differentials between Whites and Blacks in the United States." *Social Forces* 58:707-727.
- Staples, Robert. 1985. "Changes in Black Family Structure: The Conflict Between Family Ideology and Structural Conditions." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 47(4):1005-1013.
- Sweet, James A. and Larry L. Bumpass. 1990. "Young Adults' Views of Marriage Cohabitation, and Family." NSFH Working Paper No. 33, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Sweet, James A., Larry L. Bumpass, and Vaughn R.A. Call. 1988. "The Design and Content of the National Survey of Families and Households." NSFH Working Paper No. 1, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Tanfer, Koray. 1987. "Patterns of Premarital Cohabitation Among NeverMarried Women in the United States." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 49(3):483-98.

- Tanfer, Koray and M.C. Horn. 1985. "Nonmarital Cohabitation Among Young Women Findings from a National Survey." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the Population Association of America, Boston, March 18.
- Thornton, Arland. 1988. "Cohabitation and Marriage in the 1980's." *Demography* 25(4):497-509.
- Thornton, Arland. 1989. "Changing Attitudes Toward Family Issues in the United States." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 51:873-893.
- Thornton, Arland and Deborah S. Freedman. 1982. "Changing Attitudes Toward Marriage and Single Life." *Family Planning Perspectives* 14:297-303.
- Waite, Linda J., Frances K. Goldscheider, and Christina Witsberger. 1986. "Nonfamily Living and the Erosion of Traditional Family Orientations Among Young Adults." *American Sociological Review* 51(4):541-54.
- Walsh, Robert H. 1989. "Premarital Sex Among Teenagers and Young Adults." Pp. 162-186 in K. McKinney and S. Sprecher (eds.), **Human Sexuality: The Societal and Interpersonal Context**. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Wilson, William Julius and Kathryn M. Neckerman. 1986. "Poverty and Family Structure: The Widening Gap between Evidence and Public Policy Issues." Pp. 232-259 in S. Danziger and D.H. Weinberg (eds.), **Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't**. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Zelnick, M. and J. Kanter. 1980. "Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use and Pregnancy among Metropolitan-Area Teenagers: 1971-1979." *Family Planning Perspectives* 12:230-237.
- Zelnick, M. and T. Shah. 1983. "First Intercourse among Young Americans." *Family Planning Perspectives* 15:67-70.

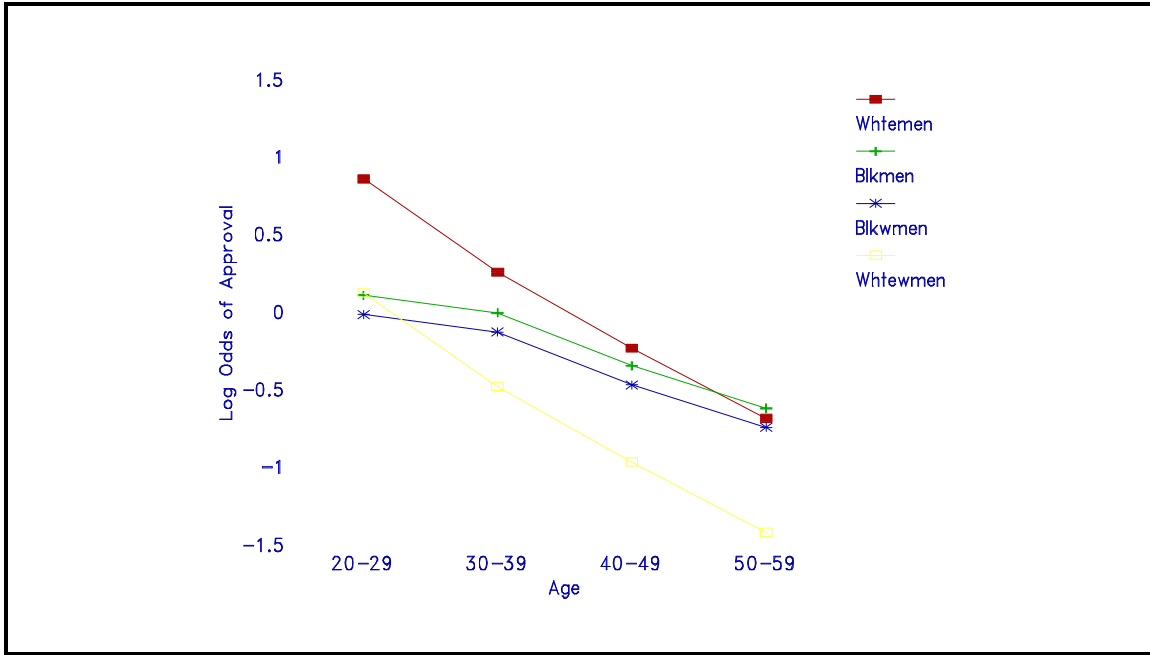


Figure 2. Net Effects of Race, Gender and Age on the Log Odds of Approval of Premarital Sex (based on Model K).

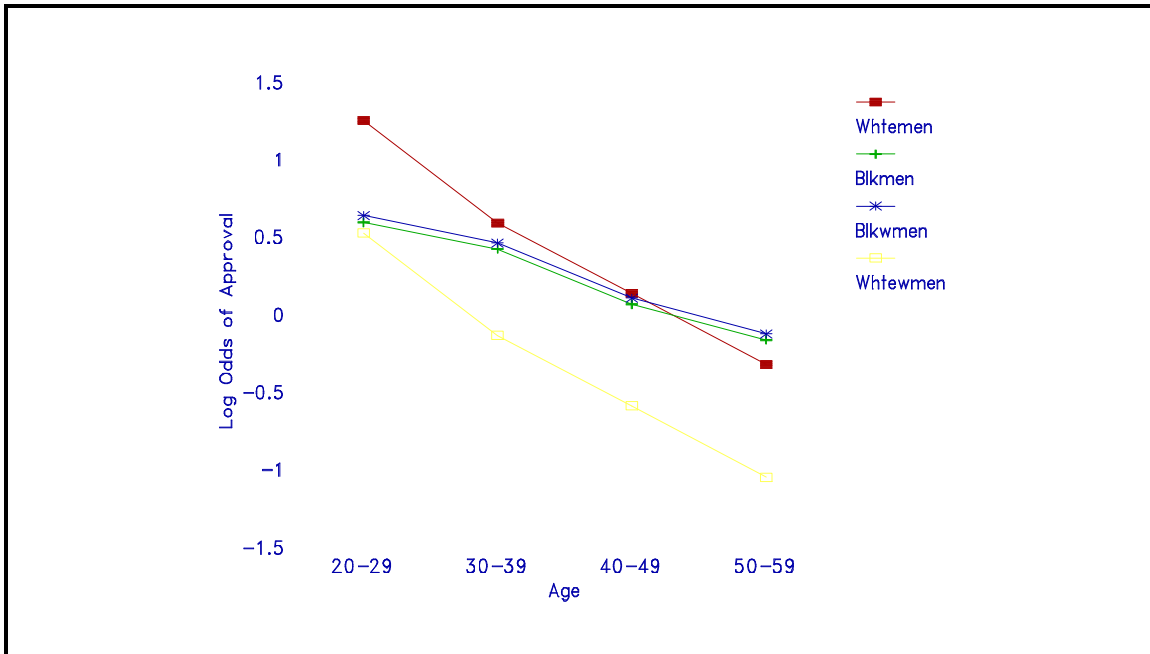


Figure 2. Gross Effects of Race, Gender and Age on the Log Odds of Approval of Premarital Sex.

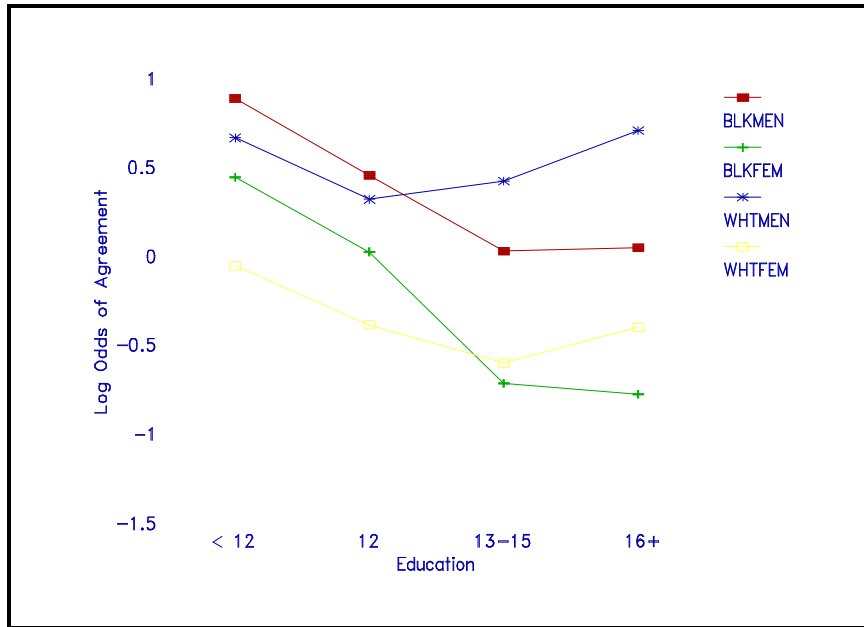


Figure 3. Net Effects on the Log Odds of Agreeing that "It is Better to Get Married than to Remain Single" by Education, Gender and Race (based on Model K).

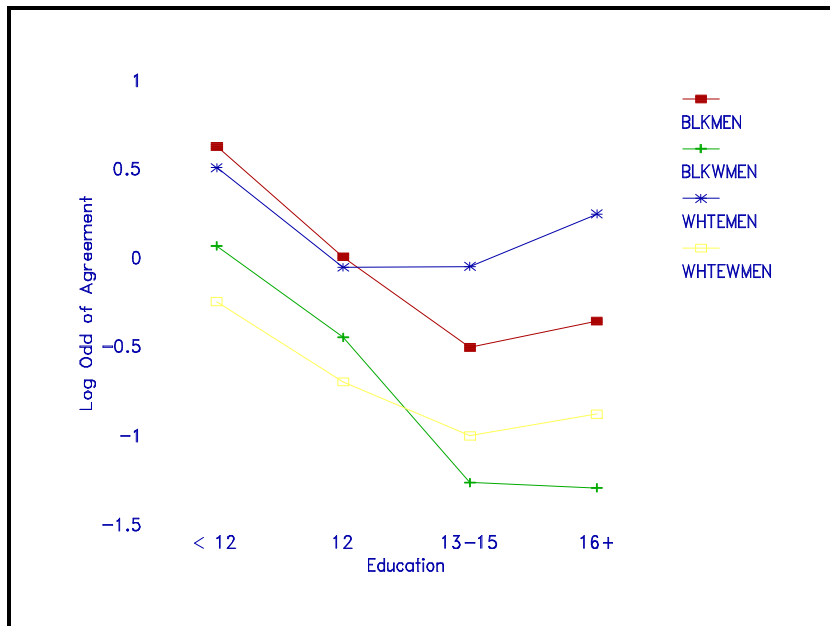


Figure 4. Gross Effects on the Log Odds of Agreeing that "It is Better to Get Married than to Remain Single" by Education, Gender and Race.

Table 1. Percent of NSFH Respondents in Selected Social Categories by Race and Sex (20-59 year olds in 1988).

	Men		Women		Black	White	Men	Women
	Black	White	Black	White				
N	506	3641	631	3863	1138	7505	4148	4495
Education								
<12	30%	10%	24%	12%	27%	11%	13%	14%
12	37	35	40	44	39	40	36	43
13-15	22	26	25	24	24	25	26	24
16+	11	28	10	20	10	24	26	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Age in Years								
20-29	35	30	34	29	34	29	30	30
30-39	29	31	31	30	30	31	31	30
40-49	20	23	18	22	19	22	22	21
50-59	16	16	17	19	17	18	16	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Marital Status								
Never Mar	35	24	35	15	35	20	26	18
Currently Mar	48	66	35	69	41	68	64	64
Previously Mar	17	10	29	16	24	13	10	18
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Income/Poverty line								
< .75	19	9	36	13	29	11	10	15
.75-1.49	10	8	15	9	13	8	8	9
1.5-2.49	21	14	18	15	19	15	15	16
2.5x	50	69	32	64	40	66	67	60
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 2. Percent Agreeing that "It is All Right For Unmarried 18 Year Olds to Have Sexual Relations if They have Strong Affection For Each Other":
NSFH 1987-1988.

	Men		Women				Men	Women
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White		
Total	59%	60%	57%	47%	58%	53%	60%	49%
Education								
<12	60	55	49	45	54	49	56	46
12	56	60	59	47	58	53	60	49
13-15	68	65	60	52	63	58	65	53
16+	55	57	60	44	58	51	57	45
Age in Years								
20-29	70	78	71	67	71	72	77	68
30-39	58	63	56	49	57	56	63	50
40-49	55	49	45	34	49	42	50	36
50-59	44	36	43	29	44	32	37	31
Marital Status								
Never Mar	71	80	72	68	72	76	79	69
Currently Mar	48	51	46	41	47	46	51	41
Previously Mar	69	67	51	56	57	67	67	55
Income/Poverty line								
< .75	48	56	61	44	57	48	54	49
.75-1.49	45	61	56	49	52	55	59	51
1.5-2.49	58	60	50	47	54	53	60	47
2.5x	55	57	48	44	51	51	57	45

Table 3. Logistic Model Specifications Predicting the Odds of Approval of Premarital Sex.

MODE		G2	D.F.
L	Baseline (no regressors)	903.70	503
A	RACE+SEX+INCOME+AGE+EDUC+STAT	625.1	490
B	A+RACE+STAT	625.03	488
C	A+SEX+EDUC	624.71	487
D	A+RACE+EDUC	623.46	487
E	A+RACE+EDUC+SEX+EDUC	623.15	484
F	A+RACE+AGE	617.80	487
G	A+RACE+SEX	617.26	489
H	A+RACE+SEX+SEX+EDUC	616.2	486
I	A+RACE+SEX+RACE+EDUC	615.21	486
J	A+RACE+SEX+RACE+EDUC+SEX+EDUC	614.18	483
K	A+RACE+SEX+RACE+AGE	608.64	486
L	J+RACE+SEX+EDUC	605.79	480
M	K+RACE+SEX+AGE	603.95	480

Table 4. Parameter Estimates for the Log Odds of Approval Premarital Sex (Model E).

Parameter	Estimate	S.E.	T-ratio	Odds
Constant	0.103	0.241	0.428	1.108
(Black)				
White	0.749	0.233	3.220	2.115
(Men)				
Women	-0.125	0.179	-0.697	0.883
White Women	-0.611	0.201	-3.039	0.543
White 30-39	-0.488	0.243	-2.008	0.614
White 40-49	-0.634	0.284	-2.234	0.530
White 50-59	-0.812	0.306	-2.651	0.444
(Income < .75)				
.75-1.49	-0.114	0.156	-0.728	0.893
1.5-2.49	-0.014	0.144	-0.094	0.987
2.5x	0.157	0.124	1.267	1.170
(Age 20-29)				
Age 30-39	-0.113	0.214	-0.528	0.893
Age 40-49	-0.457	0.255	-1.789	0.633
Age 50-59	-0.731	0.276	-2.655	0.481
(< High School)				
High School	0.106	0.124	0.855	1.112
Some College	0.071	0.137	0.520	1.074
College +	-0.071	0.146	-0.484	0.932
(Currently Married)				
Previously Married	0.670	0.105	6.354	1.954
Never Married	0.892	0.129	6.936	2.440

Table 5. Gross and Net Effects in Model E on the Log Odds of Approval of Premarital Sex.

Variable	Gross	Net
White	0.658	0.749
Women	0.042	-0.125
White Women	-0.768	-0.611
White 30-39	-0.488	-0.488
White 40-49	-0.588	-0.634
White 50-59	-0.812	-0.812
.75-1.49	-0.105	-0.114
1.5-2.49	-0.084	-0.014
2.5x	-0.120	0.157
Age 30-39	-0.519	-0.113
Age 40-49	-0.938	-0.457
Age 50-59	-1.332	-0.731
High School	0.138	0.106
Some College	0.294	0.071
College +	-0.129	-0.071
Previously Married	0.419	0.670
Never Married	1.115	0.892

Table 6. Percent Approving "Women Who Have a Child Without Getting Married":
NSFH 1987-1988.

	Men		Women				Me n	Women
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White		
Total	20%	15%	31%	16%	26%	16%	15 %	18%
Education								
<12	18	19	29	15	23	17	19	19
12	23	13	34	15	30	14	14	17
13-15	17	16	28	18	23	17	16	20
16+	23	14	30	18	27	15	15	18
Age in Years								
20-29	24	17	40	23	33	20	18	26
30-39	19	17	31	17	26	17	17	19
40-49	16	13	25	12	21	13	14	14
50-59	16	9	18	9	17	9	10	10
Marital Status								
Never Mar	25	17	43	30	35	22	18	34
Currently Mar	14	13	24	12	19	12	13	13
Previously Mar	24	22	26	22	26	22	22	23
Income/Poverty line								
<.75	33	12	39	23	37	19	16	27
.75-1.49	27	18	28	21	27	19	19	22
1.5-2.49	22	12	27	18	25	15	13	19
2.5x	17	15	25	13	21	14	15	14

Table 7. Logistic Model Specifications Predicting the Odds of Approval of Non-marital Childbearing.

MODEL		G2	D.F.
	Baseline (no regressors)	686.18	501
A	RACE+SEX+INCOME+AGE+EDUC+STAT	556.01	488
B	A+RACE*SEX	555.95	487
C	A+RACE*AGE	555.62	485
D	B+RACE*AGE	555.55	484
E	A+SEX*EDUC	552.74	485
F	B+SEX*EDUC	552.59	484
G	A+RACE*STAT	551.35	486
H	A+RACE*EDUC	550.16	485
I	B+RACE*EDUC	550.15	484
J	D+RACE*SEX*AGE	548.90	478
K	A+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	546.33	482
L	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	546.24	481
M	L+RACE*SEX*EDUC	546.14	478

Table 8. Parameter Estimates for the Log Odds of Approval Of Non-Marital Childbearing (Model A).

Parameter	Estimate	S.E.	T-ratio	Odds
Constant	-0.791	0.205	-3.87	0.45
(Black) White	-0.438	0.115	-3.83	0.65
(Men) Women	0.051	0.104	0.49	1.05
(Income < .75)				
.75-1.49	-0.292	0.182	-1.60	0.75
1.5-2.49	-0.256	0.167	-1.53	0.77
2.5x	-0.192	0.144	-1.33	0.83
(Age 20-29)				
Age 30-39	-0.221	0.123	-1.80	0.80
Age 40-49	-0.535	0.154	-3.48	0.59
Age 50-59	-0.814	0.177	-4.61	0.44
(< High School)				
High School	-0.189	0.149	-1.27	0.83
Some College	-0.175	0.164	-1.07	0.84
College +	-0.020	0.175	-0.11	0.98
(Currently Married)				
Previously Married	0.527	0.127	4.16	1.69
Never Married	0.744	0.134	5.54	2.10

Table 9. Gross and Net Effects on the Log Odds of Approval of Non-marital Childbearing.

Variable	Gross	Net
White	-0.673	-0.438
Women	0.157	0.051
.75-1.49	-0.400	-0.292
1.50-2.49	-0.476	-0.256
2.5x	-0.611	-0.192
Age 30-39	-0.315	-0.221
Age 40-49	-0.659	-0.535
Age 50-59	-0.854	-0.814
High School	-0.260	-0.189
Some College	-0.156	-0.175
College +	-0.134	-0.020
Previously married	-0.570	-0.527
Never married	1.066	0.744

Table 10. Percent Agreeing that "It Is All Right For An Unmarried Couple To Live Together": NSFH 1987-1988.

	Men		Women		Black	White	Men	Women
	Black	White	Black	White				
Total	53%	54%	46%	46%	49%	50%	54%	46%
Education								
<12	48	45	45	42	46	43	46	43
12	50	53	43	44	46	48	53	44
13-15	61	57	46	49	52	53	58	48
16+	60	56	56	49	58	53	56	50
Age in Years								
20-29	60	63	54	54	57	59	62	54
30-39	53	61	47	50	50	56	60	50
40-49	55	48	42	40	48	44	49	41
50-59	36	33	30	31	33	32	33	31
Marital Status								
Never Mar	62	65	56	55	59	61	64	55
Currently Mar	44	49	39	41	41	45	49	41
Previously Mar	60	63	42	59	48	60	62	55
Income/Poverty line								
< .75	56	52	47	46	49	48	52	47
.75-1.49	43	48	47	48	46	48	48	48
1.5-2.49	48	54	36	44	42	49	53	43
2.5x	52	55	45	43	48	49	55	43

Table 11. Logistic Model Specifications Predicting the Odds of Approval of Cohabitation.

MODEL		G2	D.F.
	Baseline (no regressors)	760.82	497
A	RACE+SEX+INCOME+AGE+EDUC+ST T	611.21	484
B	A+RACE*SEX	610.61	483
C	A+SEX*EDUC	608.67	481
D	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*EDUC	608.24	480
E	A+SEX*EDUC	608.19	481
F	A+RACE*SEX+SEX*EDUC	607.79	480
G	A+SEX*INCOME	606.95	481
H	A+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	605.87	478
I	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	605.61	477
J	A+EDUC*INCOME+RACE*INCOME	605.25	478
K	A+EDUC*INCOME	604.64	484
L	A+SEX*INCOME+SEX*EDUC	603.70	478
M	A+RACE*AGE	602.45	481
N	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*AGE	601.97	480
O	H+RACE*SEX*EDUC	600.66	474
P	H+RACE*SEX*AGE	599.14	474
Q	A+EDUC*RACE*INCOME	598.52	460
R	H+SEX*EDUC*INCOME	591.94	460

Table 12. Parameter Estimates For The Log Odds Of Approval Of Cohabitation (Model A).

Parameter	Estimate	S.E.	T-ratio	Odds
Constant	0.008	0.172	0.05	1.01
(Black)				
White	0.258	0.100	2.58	1.29
(Men)				
Women	-0.340	0.082	-4.14	0.71
(Income < .75)				
.75-1.49	-0.087	0.154	-0.57	0.92
1.5-2.49	-0.026	0.140	-0.19	0.97
2.5x	0.133	0.121	1.10	1.14
(Age 20-29)				
Age 30-39	-0.098	0.103	-0.95	0.91
Age 40-49	-0.677	0.121	-5.61	0.51
Age 50-59	-0.945	0.134	-7.06	0.39
(< High school)				
High school	0.043	0.122	0.35	1.04
Some college	0.018	0.134	0.13	1.02
College +	0.085	0.142	0.59	1.09
(Currently married)				
Previously married	0.617	0.103	5.97	1.85
Never married	0.579	0.121	4.80	1.78

Table 13. Gross and Net Effects in Model A on the Log Odds of Approval of Cohabitation.

Variable	Gross	Net
White	0.115	0.258
Women	-0.279	0.340
.75-1.49	-0.050	-0.087
1.5-2.49	-0.031	-0.026
2.5x	0.024	0.133
Age 30-39	-0.100	-0.098
Age 40-49	-0.625	-0.677
Age 50-59	-0.889	-0.945
High school	0.146	0.043
Some college	0.259	0.018
College +	0.312	0.085
Previously married	0.353	0.617
Never married	0.653	0.579

Table 14. Percent Agreeing That "It Is Better For a Person To Get Married Than To Go Through Life Single": NSFH 1987-1988.

	Men		Women		Black	White	Men	Wome n
	Black	White	Black	White				
Total	47%	50%	35%	34%	41%	42%	49%	34%
Education								
<12	57	57	51	45	54	51	57	47
12	41	48	35	35	37	41	47	35
13-15	44	47	26	30	34	38	46	29
16+	43	53	25	31	33	43	52	31
Age in Years								
20-29	39	44	30	32	34	38	44	31
30-39	40	43	34	30	36	37	43	31
40-49	55	54	41	37	48	45	54	37
50-59	67	67	46	42	55	53	67	42
Marital Status								
Never Mar	39	40	27	27	32	35	39	27
Currently Mar	53	54	40	37	47	45	54	38
Previously Mar	47	44	40	28	42	33	44	30
Income/Poverty line								
< .75	52	62	39	38	42	47	60	38
.75-1.49	60	48	39	35	46	41	50	36
1.5-2.49	60	47	37	30	48	37	49	31
2.5x	41	51	32	36	37	43	51	35

Table 15. Logistic Model Specifications Predicting the Odds of Agreeing that Marriage is Better than Being Single.

MODEL		G2	D.F.
	Baseline (no regressors)	835.69	497
A	RACE+SEX+INCOME+AGE+EDUC+STAT	626.38	487
B	A+RACE*AGE	624.50	484
C	A+RACE*STAT	622.80	485
D	A+RACE*SEX	622.59	486
E	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*AGE	620.60	483
F	A+SEX*EDUC	620.49	484
G	E+RACE*SEX*AGE	616.55	477
H	A+RACE*SEX+SEX*EDUC	617.46	483
I	A+RACE*EDUC	613.57	484
L	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*EDUC	611.09	483
J	A+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	608.36	481
K	A+RACE*SEX+RACE*EDUC+SEX*EDUC	606.56	480
	C		
L	K+RACE*SEX*EDUC	600.95	477

Table 16. Parameter Estimates for the Log Odds of Agreeing that "It Is Better for a Person To Get Married Than To Go Through Life Single" (Model K).

Parameter	Estimate	S.E.	T-ratio	Odds
Constant	0.882	0.262	3.37	2.42
(Black)				
White	-0.222	0.243	-0.91	1.25
(Men)				
Women	-0.442	0.459	-0.96	.64
White women	-0.277	0.207	-1.34	.76
(< High School)				
High School	-0.432	0.269	-1.61	.65
Some College	-0.857	0.302	-2.84	.43
College +	-0.839	0.344	-2.44	.43
Women High School	0.011	0.244	0.05	1.01
Women Some College	-0.306	0.267	-1.14	.74
Women College +	-0.384	0.275	-1.40	.68
White High School	0.087	0.255	0.34	1.09
White Some College	0.616	0.294	2.09	1.85
White College +	0.879	0.344	2.56	2.41
(Income < .75)				
.75-1.49	-0.134	0.157	-0.85	.88
1.50-2.49	-0.287	0.145	-1.98	.75
2.5x	-0.363	0.124	-2.92	.70
(Age 20-29)				
Age 30-39	-0.210	0.108	-1.94	.81
Age 40-49	0.207	0.123	1.68	1.23
Age 50-59	0.523	0.133	3.92	1.68
(Currently Married)				
Previously Married	-0.448	0.107	-4.21	.64
Never Married	-0.538	0.126	-4.26	.58

Table 17. Gross and Net Effects in Model K on the Log Odds of Approval of Non-marriage.

Variable	Gross	Net
White	-0.120	-0.222
Women	-0.562	-0.442
White Women	-0.193	-0.277
High school	-0.620	-0.432
Some college	-1.132	-0.857
College +	-0.983	-0.839
Women High school	0.108	0.011
Women Some college	-0.199	-0.306
Women College +	-0.375	-0.384
White High school	0.061	0.087
White Some college	0.576	0.616
White College +	0.725	0.879
.75-1.49	0.113	-0.134
1.5-2.49	0.266	-0.287
2.5x	0.190	-0.363
Age 30-39	0.161	-0.210
Age 40-49	-0.287	0.207
Age 50-59	-0.651	0.523
Previously married	0.298	-0.448
Never married	0.447	-0.538

Center for Demography and Ecology
University of Wisconsin
1180 Observatory Drive, Rm. 4412
Madison, WI 53706-1393
U.S.A.
608/262-2182
FAX 608/262-8400