

5-2000

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Laura A. Rowald
Senior Honors Thesis
Spring 2000

Running Head: PARENTS' MARITAL STATUS AND STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS

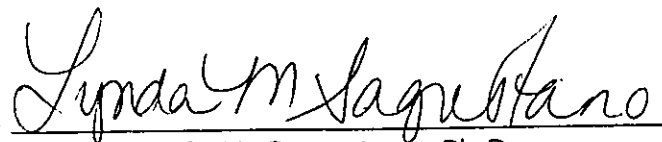
Influence of Parents' Marital Status on College Students'

Expectations for Marriage

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Abstract

This study examined the differences between college students from divorced and intact families with respect to their expectations for marriage, division of household labor, and childcare. A divorced family was defined as one in which the parents have divorced and includes those who remain single after the divorce and those where one or both parents have remarried. An intact family was defined as one in which the parents were currently married to each other and had never been divorced from each other.

Participants included 102 Southern Illinois University undergraduate students enrolled in a introductory psychology course who participated for course credit. It was hypothesized that participants from divorced families would have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage, more negative attitudes toward divorce, higher expectations for the husband's role in performing household labor, and higher expectations for the husband's role in taking care of the children than those participants from intact families. Results suggest that women have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage and more positive attitudes toward marriage than men do, women expect to do more household tasks than men whereas men expect household tasks to be shared equally, and women from intact families expect husbands to do more childcare than what men expect to do whereas women from divorced families expect husbands to do less than what men expect to do.

Influence of Parents' Marital Status on College Students'

Expectations for Marriage

Young adulthood is the time of life when many people begin to get involved in intimate relationships. They tend to start thinking about the future in terms of love, marriage, and children. The expectations one holds about these events affect the manner in which they are approached. There are many factors that may influence one's expectations for these events. One of these factors that has been noted in research is the person's biological parents' marital status and particularly if they have ever been divorced.

Marriage Statistics

Marriage is the socially sanctioned union that unites a man and a woman as a couple committed to each other. The vast majority of Americans plan to marry and have high optimism for achieving success in marriage (Thornton, 1989). It is estimated that between 90% and 95% of all Americans will get married at least once in their lifetime (Fitzpatrick, 1988). When a couple gets married they typically exchange wedding vows which include phrases such as "to have and to hold, for richer or poorer, until death do us part", but these vows are not always lived up to.

Larson (1988) claims that the breakdown in marriages is a result of Americans having "high and unrealistic expectations of marriage- expecting a spouse to simultaneously be a friend, a confidant, a fulfilling sex partner, a counselor, and a parent" (Larson, 1988, p. 3). We as a society experience more expectations for marriages today than in the past, but receive very little training in dealing with those

expectations (Altrocchi & Crosby, 1989). Unfortunately, marriage does not come with a handbook and the expectations that you have about marriage compared to what actually occurs affects how satisfied you will be with your marriage. According to Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989), it is assumed in our society that men and women expect a happy marriage, and if those expectations are not met then divorce is an option considered.

Divorce Statistics

Divorce is a way of dissolving a marriage where at least one of the partners is unhappy and not having their needs met. Some people refer to the past as consisting of more stable marriages and point to changes in family law and the increase of women in the workplace as contributing factors to the increasing divorce rate. It should be noted that divorce law changes occurred after the increased divorce rate. The increase of women in the workplace occurred after the increased divorce rate as well. (Coleman & Ganong, 1993)

Of today's first marriages, it is estimated that 50% will end in divorce (Brehm, 1992). This may be an inflated estimate because it is based on the ratio of the number of divorces to the number of marriages in the same year. For example, according to the National Center for Health Statistics in 1998 there were 2,244,000 marriages and 1,135,000 divorces, which is about 50%. It should be noted that those who divorced in that year were married at different times and that the comparison is to the number of marriages in the current year. Most divorces are not an outcome of marriages performed in the same year, and furthermore, there are many more marriages that could end in divorce during a single year than there are people planning to marry.

How are children affected?

In childhood you start to figure out who you want to be and what you want to do (Erikson, 1974). This developmental task is shaped largely by a person's family experiences. A child's earliest exposure to the institution of marriage is through the parents. One's perception of his or her parents' marriage may strongly influence his or her expectations and attitudes toward marriage and divorce (Greenburg & Nay, 1982; Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986). If the family structure is altered because of divorce, the expectations that the children of that family hold about their own future marriage and family relationships will be affected. How their expectations are affected depends on their immediate experiences prior to, during, and after the divorce. If they have a positive experience, they may develop an attitude of acceptance for divorce if their marriage becomes unsatisfying, and therefore view marriage as a temporary relationship (Greenburg & Nay, 1982). If they have a negative experience, they may be more cautious about getting married, have a negative view of divorce, and actually may work harder to make the marriage successful (Greenburg & Nay, 1982). According to Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989, p. 17), "People who grew up in divorced families are more eager for lasting relationships and more worried about ever achieving them". Children use their parents' experiences of marriage and divorce to form their own expectations for marriage and their attitudes toward marriage and divorce (Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986). Even when a person's expectations for a happy and successful marriage are tarnished by their parents' failed marriage, they may still have a strong desire to

attain success and happiness in their own marriage and family relationships (Jones & Nelson, 1996).

Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) studied premarital sexual activities and attitudes toward divorce and marriage of young unmarried women from intact, divorced, and reconstituted families. An overwhelming majority in each group reported that they wanted to marry. Their results indicated that participants from intact families had significantly more positive attitudes toward marriage than did those from divorced and reconstituted families. They noted that participants in the reconstituted group whose mothers remarried were the most accepting of divorce, possibly due to their perception of the remarriage being a positive outcome of the divorce. These same participants also stated that divorce was possible for them or even a probable event in their lives. On the other hand, those from the divorced group reported more negative attitudes toward divorce and were significantly less likely to state that divorce would be an option for them when they married.

A national survey reported on by Greenburg and Nay (1982) revealed that children from disrupted marriages have a higher rate of divorce than those from intact marriages. In addition to the higher rate of divorce, children from the divorced families adopted the most favorable attitudes toward divorce. The findings also indicated that a divorced family is no more harmful to child adjustment than an unhappy, intact family.

Amato (1988) examined the effects of parental divorce on children's attitudes toward marriage and family life. He found that those from divorced families held more negative attitudes toward their families of origin compared to those from intact families.

He also came to realize that those from a divorced family have a complex view of marriage, "they value marriage but at the same time are aware of its limitations and tolerant toward its alternatives" (Amato, 1988, p. 460).

Young people report that they want to eventually marry and have children, but expect to do so at a later age (Thornton 1989). This follows what Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) found in a ten year follow-up study with children of divorce reporting that they wanted to protect their future children from going through what they did, and would wait until they knew the marriage was working well before having children. As a twenty-three year old woman stated, "You can undo a marriage, but you can't undo a child" (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p.23). Although their expectations for a successful marriage may have been affected by the experience of their parents' divorce, they still desired a positive marital and family experience.

Thornton (1991) examined the influence of parents' marital history on the marital and cohabitational experiences of children. He concluded that experiencing parental divorce may be internalized in young people's apprehension about their own success in marriage, therefore causing them to be more cautious and proceed more slowly. He found the data to be consistent with the expectation that children of divorced parents "were more likely than others to cohabit first and then enter into a marital relationship" (Thornton, 1991, p. 892).

Axinn and Thornton (1996) examined parents' marital dissolutions on children's attitudes toward several dimensions of family formation. The mothers' attitudes changed from their divorce experience and had important effects on their children's

attitudes toward family formation. This could be a result of the mothers' socializing force in their children's lives and not just the children's reactions to the divorce. The desire of the children to avoid the negative experiences their parents had with family life may reduce their enthusiasm for family life. This suggests that they may have fears about being able to have a successful marriage of their own.

Changing Attitudes

Thornton (1989) examined three decades of changing norms and values concerning family life in the United States from the late 1950s through the middle 1980s. He concluded that there was a weakening of the normative importance to marry, to stay married, to have children, and to maintain a strict division of labor between men and women, as well as the adoption of attitudes permitting a wider range of behavior within the family life. The changes in norms and values were dramatic during the 1960s and 1970s and the only attitude trend that extended into the 1980s was for gender role attitudes, of which there was a continuing shift toward more egalitarian attitudes concerning family roles. Thornton suggested that the increased involvement of mothers in the workforce is related to the continuing trend toward more egalitarian sex role attitudes. These changes in attitudes suggest that the traditional socially shared beliefs that individuals have to follow a particular script based on their gender have diminished.

"One prominent conception of marriage reflects the historical change away from the institutional/traditional marriage and toward more equality between husbands and wives" (Pratt, 1972 as cited in Altrocchi & Crosby, 1989, p. 641). The "traditional"

marriage tends to emphasize the husband as the authoritarian and consists of relatively fixed gender roles. The "egalitarian" marriage tends to emphasize equality in partnership, openness in communication, more flexibility in gender roles, and the notion that in order for the marriage to be a success both partners will have to work on it together (Altrocchi & Crosby, 1989).

Household Labor

Repeatedly in the past, studies have shown that wives perform most of the household labor in America, even when both spouses work outside of the home. Slowly, men have come to contribute more to household tasks as a result of women spending less time on these tasks that have been previously considered "women's work" (Pleck, 1983; Robinson, 1988; Feree, 1991).

Kamo (1988) suggests that the amount of household labor done by husbands and wives is associated with their sex-role orientations. Husbands' attitudes were found to be strongly related to how the household labor was divided between them and their wives. A husband with egalitarian sex-role attitudes can increase his contribution to household labor "by acting on his belief" (Kamo, 1988, p. 196). A wife with egalitarian sex-role attitudes has to do more to balance out the division of household labor between her and her husband by decreasing her contribution to household labor or to "persuade or force her husband to do more domestic work" (Kamo, 1988, p. 196). It could be hypothesized that it would be much easier to attain equality in division of household labor if the husband had an egalitarian attitude than if just the wife had an egalitarian attitude.

Kaufman (2000) suggests that for women egalitarianism indicates a desire for them to reduce their responsibility for household and family tasks, whereas egalitarian men tend to be willing to share in children and family activities. Men who hold an egalitarian attitude and engage in sharing household tasks equally with their wives may reduce the amount of conflicts that are experienced in the marriage and in turn make the relationship more attractive. If just the wife held an egalitarian attitude, she may experience resistance and conflict when asking that her husband share in household tasks. When the husband holds an egalitarian attitude and does participate in performing household tasks, he's not likely to experience any conflict or resistance from the wife, whereas when women hold egalitarian attitudes they may experience conflict and resistance from their husband.

Thorn and Gilbert (1998) found that fathers' participation in household work is associated with an orientation toward a marriage and family lifestyle in which traditionally divided roles are shared by both spouses. What gets modeled for the children in the home "reflects both parents' decisions regarding how to combine breadwinning, parenting, and division of labor around the house as well as their gender role ideology" (Thorn & Gilbert, 1998, p. 260). They concluded that parents modeling role-sharing behavior may influence the attitudes and expectations of a marital relationship with a more egalitarian role structure in sons. Young adult sons' increased role sharing expectations are associated specifically to their fathers engaging in household work with their wives.

Childcare

Parenting is often a complex and contradictory endeavor for both mothers and fathers, although mothers typically assume more responsibility for their children than fathers (Isshii-Kuntz & Coltrane, 1992). Like household labor, even when mothers work outside of the home they tend to be primarily responsible for childcare tasks.

According to Biernat and Wortman (1991), when husbands do participate in childcare they are more apt to do the "fun" things such as playing with the children. They also reported that the wives in their study were more involved in childcare than their husbands, and the husbands agreed. Although husbands do share in some tasks such as playing interactively, wives tend to be more responsible for the less enjoyable tasks such as making the childcare arrangements as needed and taking care of the physical needs of the children. Therefore, wives are more likely to be responsible for the necessary aspects of parenting and ensuring that the tasks do indeed get done.

Kaufman (2000) found that egalitarian men want children more so than traditional men and for different reasons as well. Children for traditional men are seen to be more symbolic, whereas for egalitarian men they are more of an interactive part of their family. Egalitarian men may want to be more involved in sharing childcare tasks with their partner. Egalitarian women may be hesitant in having children for fear that reality will not mirror the hope they have of their husband sharing equally in the childcare tasks.

Hypotheses

The current study investigated the differences between college students from divorced and intact families regarding their expectations for marriage, division of household labor, and childcare. Specifically, the following four hypotheses were generated. The first hypothesis (hypothesis #1) was that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than those from intact families. The independent variable for hypothesis #1 was family structure (divorced versus intact). A divorced family included those in which the student's parents had divorced and included those who remain single after the divorce and those where one or both parents had remarried. An intact family was one in which the participant's parents were currently married to each other and had never been divorced. The dependent variable for hypothesis #1 was the expectations for marriage (egalitarian versus traditional), as measured by the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (Dunn & DeBonis, 1979). An egalitarian marriage consists of open communication, flexible gender roles, and emphasizes equality in partnership, whereas a traditional marriage tends to consist of relatively fixed gender roles and emphasizes the husband as the authoritarian (Altrocchi & Crosby, 1989).

The second hypothesis (hypothesis #2) was that students from divorced families would have more negative attitudes toward divorce than those from intact families. This hypothesis goes against the idea of intergenerational transmission of marital instability from parents who divorce to their children. The rationale behind this hypothesis is the psychological reactance that children from divorced families have

about divorce, that is, "it won't happen to me" (Jones & Nelson, 1996, p. 173). The independent variable for hypothesis #2 was family structure (divorced versus intact). The dependent variable for hypothesis #2 was the attitudes toward divorce (negative versus positive), as measured by the Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998).

The third hypothesis (hypothesis #3) was that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in household labor than those from intact families. The rationale behind this hypothesis is that those from divorced families have observed their post-divorce primary caretakers (typically the mother) doing everything around the house. In addition, they may have had to participate in the household labor themselves to help out. Therefore, regardless of being male or female, they will want it to be different in their marriage and expect the husband to be involved in the household labor. The independent variable for hypothesis #3 was family structure (divorced versus intact) and the dependent variable for this hypothesis was expectations for the husband's role in household labor, as measured by the Household and Childcare Questionnaire (Sagrestano, Heavey, & Christensen, 1995).

Finally, the fourth hypothesis (hypothesis #4) for this study was that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in taking care of their children than those from intact families. The rationale behind this hypothesis is that those from divorced families who lived with their mother after their parents divorced may feel like they missed out on a relationship with their father, even if they regularly visited him, whereas those who lived with their father after the divorce would have had more interactions with him on a regular basis. Therefore, regardless of

whom they lived with, they want things to be different when they have their own children. The independent variable for hypothesis #4 was family structure and the dependent variable for this hypothesis was the expectations for the husband's role in childcare, as measured by the Household and Childcare Questionnaire (Sagrestano, Heavey, & Christensen, 1995).

Method

Sample

Participants included 102 Southern Illinois University undergraduate students who participated voluntarily in exchange for course credit in their Introductory Psychology course. Because this study investigated comparisons of those from intact versus divorces families, only those participants who could be categorized into intact ($N = 55$) versus divorced ($N = 31$) families were included in the analyses, yielding a final sample of 86 participants. Demographic information for the final sample is included in Table 1. Reliabilities were computed using the full original sample.

Procedure and Measures

Participants completed a written survey independently in small groups. The survey included demographic characteristics including both personal information and family information, the Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998), Marriage Quiz (Larson, 1998), a housework and childcare questionnaire (Sagrestano, Heavey, & Christensen, 1995), and the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (Dunn & DeBonis, 1979).

Demographic Questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire included personal information to include sex, age, race (dummy coded as Caucasian, African American, Latino, or Asian), marital status (single, married, divorced, or widowed), college status (freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior), and sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual). It also included family information such as: mother's marital status, father's marital status, age at parent's divorce, age at parent's remarriage (if applicable), age at mother's remarriage (if applicable), age at father's remarriage (if applicable), socioeconomic status (SES) of custodial parent (low income, working class, middle class, upper middle class, or upper class), non-custodial parent's SES, number of siblings in family or origin, birth order (first, middle, or last), number of half-siblings (if applicable), number of step-siblings (if applicable), mother's work status, father's work status, stepmother's work status, stepfather's work status, and stepmother's work status. Characteristics and descriptives of the sample can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Marital Attitude Scale. The Marital Attitude Scale (MAS; Braaten & Rosen, 1998) measures global satisfaction toward heterosexual marriage and is designed for both single and married persons. Participants responded to 23 items using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). To compute the total scale score, 9 items were recoded, and then means were computed across the 23 items, such that higher scores indicated a more positive attitude toward marriage. Braaten and Rosen (1998) found this measure to have a high degree of internal consistency with a coefficient alpha of .82. Similarly, reliability in the current sample

was .83. Means, standard deviations, and significant differences between students from intact and divorced families are reported in Table 3.

Marriage Quiz. The Marriage Quiz (Larson, 1998) measures students' beliefs in myths about marriage and family relations. Participants responded to 20 close-ended statements about marriage that were answered either true or false. Fifteen of the statements were myths about marriage to which the correct answer is false and the other five were facts about marriage to which the correct answer is true. To compute the total score, the 5 factual statements were dropped and of the 15 remaining statements those that were marked true were counted. The higher the score, the greater is his or her belief in marital myths. Larson (1998) found this measure to have an internal consistency reliability of .70 and test-retest reliability of .89. Reliability in the current sample was .30. Means, standard deviations, and significant differences between students from intact and divorced families are reported in Table 3.

Housework and Childcare Questionnaire. The housework and childcare questionnaire (Sagrestano et al., 1995) includes five household areas: shopping/errands, indoor maintenance, finances, food preparation/clean-up, and outdoor maintenance, and eight items regarding the different aspects of childcare. Participants completed two different versions of this questionnaire. On the first one, participants responded according to whom they expected to do each task in their own marriage using a Likert-type scale: wife always, wife usually, both equally, husband usually, and husband always. On the second one, participants responded according to who they perceived as doing each task in their parents' marriage using a Likert-type

scale: mother always, mother usually, both equally, father usually, father always.

Means, standard deviations, and reliabilities are reported for the full scale and each of the subscales in Table 3. In addition, means, standard deviations, and significant differences between children from intact and divorced families are reported in Table 3.

Marriage Role Expectation Inventory. The Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (MREI; Dunn & DeBonis, 1979) consists of 71 items about marriage role expectations, rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). To compute the total score: the 34 egalitarian items were recoded such that if the participant answered agree or strongly agree it was coded as +1 and the 37 traditional items were recoded such that if the participant answered agree or strongly agree was coded as -1. For all 71 items, uncertain, disagree, or strongly disagree were coded as 0. Scores may range from -37 to +34, with higher scores indicating an expectation for an egalitarian marriage and lower scores indicating an expectation for a traditional marriage. Dunn and DeBonis (1979) reported an odd-even reliability coefficient of .95 based on the total scores of 50 respondents. From the data collected by Marlar (1992) for 100 participants, Jacobs and Marlar (1992) found the total score of this measure to "possess unusually high internal consistency" (p. 633) with high reliabilities of $\alpha = .95$, split-half = .87, and corrected split-half = .93. Reliability in the current sample was .89. Means, standard deviations, and significant differences between students from intact and divorce families are reported in Table 3.

Data Analytic Plan

To analyze the data, we first examined descriptive statistics for the

demographics and each of the measures included in the study. Second, intercorrelations among the measures were examined. Third, a series of 2 (gender) X 2 (parents' marital status) univariate ANOVAs were conducted to compare those from divorced families to those from intact families and to compare men to women on all measures, as well as to compare within each gender those from divorced families to those from intact families. Finally, multivariate linear regressions were conducted to examine the role of demographics and family variables in predicting the dependent variables, including negative attitudes toward divorce, beliefs in marital myths, expectations for division of household labor and childcare, and perceptions of parents' division of household labor and childcare. For each dependent variable, a linear regression was conducted, with sex, age, race (dummy coded; 1 = White; -1 = non-white) and parents' divorce status (divorced or not divorced) entered simultaneously. Due to the small size of the sample from divorced families ($N = 31$), univariate, but not multivariate analyses were conducted to further explore this subgroup.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and significant group differences for demographics and all psychological measures are presented in Tables 1-3. Correlations among the dependent variables are presented in Table 4. Regression analyses are presented in Table 5. Results of the univariate analyses (see Table 3) indicate that for the Marital Attitude Scale, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported more positive attitudes towards marriage than did males. For the Marriage Quiz, a marginal significant difference emerged for parents' marital status such that those students from

divorced families reported more beliefs in marital myths than those from intact families. For the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than did men.

For the household and childcare expectations (combined across household expectations and childcare expectations), significant sex differences emerged such that women expected to do more household and childcare tasks than men, whereas men expected that both the husbands and wives would equally share the household and childcare tasks. For the indoor maintenance expectations subscale, significant differences emerged for parents' marital status such that those students from divorced families reported an expectation for the indoor maintenance tasks to be done by husbands and wives almost equally, whereas students from married families expected the wives to do more indoor maintenance tasks than the husbands. For the finance expectations subscale, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported an expectation for finance tasks to be shared almost equally with the husbands, whereas the men reported an expectation for husbands to mostly perform finance tasks. For the outdoor maintenance expectations subscale, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported an expectation to perform some outdoor maintenance tasks as well as the husbands, whereas men reported an expectation for the husbands to perform most of the outdoor maintenance tasks. For the household expectations (combined across subscales), significant sex differences emerged such that women expected to do more household tasks than men, whereas men expected that both the husbands and wives would equally share the household tasks. For the

childcare expectations, a significant interaction emerged such that for those from intact families, women expected husbands to do more childcare than men expected, whereas for those from divorced families, women expected husbands to do less childcare than men expected. There were no significant sex differences, parents' marital status differences, or interaction effects for the shopping expectations subscale or the food preparation expectations subscale.

With respect to reports on parents' actual household and childcare behavior, a significant interaction emerged such that for those from intact families, women reported that fathers contributed more than men reported, whereas for those from divorced families, women reported that fathers contributed less than men reported. A similar interaction emerged for the parents' shopping behavior subscale, the parents' household behavior (combined across subscales) and the parents' childcare behavior. For the parents' food preparation behavior subscale, a marginal significant interaction emerged such that women reported that fathers contributed more than men reported, whereas those from divorced families, women reported that fathers contributed less than men reported. For the parents' outdoor maintenance behavior subscale, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported that mothers contributed some to outdoor maintenance tasks, whereas men reported that fathers mostly performed the outdoor maintenance tasks. There were no significant sex differences, parents' marital status differences, or interaction effects for the parents' indoor maintenance behavior subscale or the parents' finance behavior subscale.

For each dependent variable, a linear regression was conducted, with sex, age, race (dummy coded) and parents' divorce status (divorced or not divorced) entered simultaneously. For the Marital Attitude Scale, race emerged as a significant predictor such that Whites reported more positive marital attitudes than did non-Whites. For the Marriage Quiz, race and parents' marital status emerged as significant predictors such that non-Whites and those from divorced families reported more beliefs in marital myths than did Whites and those from intact families. For the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory, sex emerged as a significant predictor such that women had higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than did men.

For the household and childcare expectations, sex emerged as a significant predictor such that men reported more expectations for the husband to do household and childcare tasks than did women. For the finance expectations subscale, sex and race emerged as significant predictors such that men and Whites reported more expectations for the husband to do the finance tasks than did women and non-Whites. For the outdoor maintenance expectations subscale, sex and age emerged as significant predictors such that men and the older participants reported more expectations for the husband to do the outdoor maintenance tasks than did women and younger participants. For the childcare expectations, age emerged as a significant predictor such that the older participants reported more expectations for the husband to contribute to taking care of the children than did the younger participants. Regressions for the shopping expectations subscale, the indoor maintenance expectations subscale, and the food preparation expectations subscale were not significant.

For the parents' household and childcare behavior, race emerged as a significant predictor such that Whites contributed more to household and childcare tasks than did non-Whites. For the parents' food preparation behavior subscale, race emerged as a significant predictor such that Whites reported that fathers contributed more to food preparation than did non-Whites. For parents' outdoor maintenance behavior subscale, sex and race emerged as significant predictors such that men and Whites reported that fathers contributed more to outdoor maintenance tasks than did women and non-Whites. For parents' childcare behavior, parents' marital status emerged as a significant predictor such that those from intact families reported that fathers contributed more to taking care of the children than did those from divorced families. Regressions for the parents' shopping behavior subscale, the parents' indoor maintenance behavior subscale, and the parents' finance behavior subscale were not significant.

Discussion

The overall purpose of this study was to address differences between college students from divorced and intact families and their expectations for marriage. There were four hypotheses generated: 1) students from divorced families would have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than those from intact families, 2) students from divorced families would have more negative attitudes toward divorce than those from intact families, 3) students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in household labor than those from intact families, and 4)

students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in taking care of their children than those from intact families.

Although there was no support for the first hypothesis, that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than those from intact families, significant sex differences emerged such that women reported higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage than did men, as measured by the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (Dunn & DeBonis, 1979). It is possible that women have higher expectations for an egalitarian marriage because this type of relationship is more beneficial to them, whereas for men the traditional marriage is more beneficial.

Results from the Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998), revealed no support for the second hypothesis, that students from divorced families would have more negative attitudes toward divorce than those from intact families. However, there was a significant sex difference such that women reported more positive attitudes toward marriage than did men. The results of the Marriage Quiz (Larson, 1988) indicated that those students from divorced families reported more beliefs in marital myths than those from intact families. This finding could be due to their lack of readiness for marriage as a result of their experience of their parents' failed marriage. It is possible that those from divorced families lacked the role models necessary to develop realistic expectations for marriage.

Results showed no support for the third hypothesis, that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in household labor than

those from intact families. Results from the household expectations (combined across subscales) did however reveal significant sex differences such that women expected to do more household tasks than men do and men expected the household tasks to be shared equally between husbands and wives. Women may report an expectation to do more household tasks than men because they feel that they are responsible for these tasks because of the traditional views of society. Men, on the other hand, may report an expectation for these tasks to be shared equally because of the increased likelihood that their wife will be employed as well as them.

For the indoor maintenance expectations subscale, it was not surprising to find that those from divorced families reported an expectation for the indoor maintenance tasks to be shared equally, whereas those from intact families reported an expectation for wives to do more indoor tasks than husbands. By growing up in a divorced family it is likely that fathers were observed by their children doing indoor maintenance tasks as well as mothers, at least up until they remarried.

With respect to the finance expectations subscale, women reporting an expectation to share these equally with husbands could be due to more women being in the workforce and contributing to supporting the family financially. Men, on the other hand, reported an expectation to mostly take care of these themselves, which could be due to the traditional beliefs that a man is supposed to support his family.

On the outdoor maintenance expectations subscale, women reported an expectation to perform some of the outdoor maintenance tasks. Men, on the other hand, reported an expectation to usually perform these tasks themselves. This finding

is not surprising considering that the outdoor tasks consist of gardening, repairing car, washing/waxing car, making home improvements, and taking care of yard.

The fourth hypothesis, that students from divorced families would have higher expectations for the husband's role in taking care of their children than those from intact families, was not supported either. However, the interaction that emerged in the childcare expectations is interesting. For those from intact families, women expecting husbands to do more childcare than what men expected could be a result of women becoming more egalitarian and wanting to reduce their family and household responsibilities as stated by Kaufman (2000). For those from divorced families, women expecting husbands to do less childcare than men expected could be a result of their experience of growing up within a divorced family. Typically in these situations the mother is the one who ends up doing more for their children after the divorce occurs and therefore the women may be relying on the reality of what actually happened during their childhood. The men who grew up in this situation may be reacting to what occurred during their childhood with their mother doing most of the childcare tasks by herself and the lack of interaction with their father and responded by reporting an expectation for themselves, as fathers, to be more involved.

There were several limitations of this study. One of the more profound limitations of this study was the small sample size, particularly from the divorced families and the ratio of men to women. Results using the present sample may be generalized only to a limited population. In addition, the participants may not have taken the study seriously, as they were students participating for class credit and it is

possible that they just filled in the survey without much thought or that they were answering according to what they thought the researcher was looking for.

Future studies should focus more on gender differences and the expectations that individuals have toward their own marriages. It would also be interesting to study the expectations for marriage held by those from intact versus divorced families before their marriage, and then to follow up with them after they marry to see if their expectations predict what they actually do in their marriage, particularly looking at men's expectations for participation in household labor and childcare tasks.

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Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Full Sample		From Intact		From Divorced	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Total	86	100	55	64	31	36
Sex						
Male	34	39.5	27	49.1	7	22.6
Female	52	60.5	28	50.9	24	77.4
Race						
White	56	65.1	36	65.5	20	64.5
Black	18	20.9	9	16.4	9	29
Latino	3	3.5	2	3.6	1	3.2
Asian	9	10.5	8	14.5	1	3.2
Grade						
Freshman	58	67.4	33	60	25	80.6
Sophomore	15	17.4	12	21.8	3	9.7
Junior	10	11.6	8	14.5	2	6.5
Senior	3	3.5	2	3.6	1	3.2
Sexual Orientation						
Heterosexual	85	98.8	54	98.2	31	100
Bisexual	1	1.2	1	1.8	0	0

(table continues)

Variable	Full Sample		From Intact		From Divorced	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Marital Status						
Single	82	95.3	53	96.4	29	93.5
Married	4	4.7	2	3.6	2	6.5
Mother's Work Status						
Unemployed	15	17.4	11	20	4	12.9
Employed	71	82.6	44	80	27	87.1
Father's Work Status						
Unemployed	4	4.8	4	7.3	0	0
Employed	82	95.3	51	92.7	28	90.3

Table 2

Descriptive Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	<u>Full Sample</u>		<u>From Intact</u>		<u>From Divorced</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Age	20.36	4.63	20.75	5.41	19.68	2.69
Age at parents' divorce	8.97	6.03	N/A	N/A	9.18	6.02
Custodial Parents' SES*	3.06	.90	3.25	.91	2.71	.78
Non-custodial Parent's SES	3.05	.84	N/A	N/A	3.05	.84
Family of origin Siblings	2.19	1.97	2.31	1.92	1.97	2.06
Birth Order	1.88	.86	1.89	.90	1.87	.81
Half-siblings*	.74	1.62	.44	1.38	1.30	1.88
Step-siblings*	.31	1.05	.009	.56	.70	1.53

Note. SES scale: 1 = low income, 2 = working class, 3 = middle class, 4 = upper middle class, and 5 = upper class.

Significant differences between participants from intact families versus divorced families are designated by * $p < .05$.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Alphas of Measures

Measure	<u>Full Sample</u>			<u>From Intact</u>				<u>From Divorced</u>			
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Alpha</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>		<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
				<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
MAS _a	3.05	.35	.83	3.02	.40	3.09	.32	2.84	.35	3.12	.31
Quiz _b *	6.55	2.10	.30	6.60	2.20	6.00	1.91	7.86	2.13	6.78	2.09
MREI _a	23.63	8.32	.89	18.92	10.50	26.22	6.55	22.29	5.25	26.70	4.99
Hshld _a	2.92	.25	.79	2.97	.29	2.87	.18	3.14	.13	2.87	.26
Child _c	2.76	.27	.76	2.72	.34	2.81	.19	2.90	.22	2.69	.25
H & C _a	2.89	.23	.83	2.93	.27	2.86	.16	3.10	.25	2.84	.24
Indoor _b	2.72	.55	.65	2.63	.57	2.68	.33	3.05	.33	2.75	.37
Fin _a	3.06	.54	.83	3.31	.58	2.95	.46	3.36	.38	2.83	.50
Outdoor _a	3.79	.53	.76	4.04	.54	3.68	.46	3.90	.49	3.59	.51

Note. MAS = Marital Attitude Scale, Quiz = Marriage Quiz, MREI = Marriage Role Expectation Inventory, Hshld = household expectations, Child = childcare expectations, H & C = household & childcare overall expectations, Indoor = indoor maintenance expectations, Fin = finance expectations, and Outdoor = outdoor maintenance expectations.

a = main effect for sex.

b = main effect for parents' marital status.

c = interaction effect.

* = marginal significance.

Table 4

Correlations of Measures

Measures	MAS	Quiz	MREI	Household	Child
MAS	1.00				
Quiz	-.104	1.00			
MREI	.358**	-.234*	1.00		
Household	-.020	.247*	.011	1.00	
Child	.012	.109	.141	.395**	1.00

Note. MAS = Marital Attitude Scale, Quiz = Marriage Quiz, MREI = Marriage Role Expectation Inventory, Household = household expectations, and Child = childcare expectations.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 5

Linear Regression Results

Variables Entered	B	SE B	t
Marital Attitude Scale ($R^2 = .135$)			
Sex	-.065	-.182	-1.69
Age	-.001	-.018	-.169
Race	.115	.316	3.021**
Parents' Marital Status	.018	.048	.450
Marriage Quiz ($R^2 = .136$)			
Sex	.365	.171	5.95
Age	-.032	-.054	-.510
Race	-.616	-.280	-2.644**
Parents' Marital Status	-.456	-.210	-1.937+
Marriage Role Expectations Inventory ($R^2 = .204$)			
Sex	-3.190	-.380	-3.571**
Age	-.006	-.004	-.034
Race	1.602	.185	1.772
Parents' Marital Status	-.766	-.088	-.826
Shopping Expectations ($R^2 = .037$)			
Sex	.016	.041	.358
Age	.004	.051	.453
Race	-.069	-.166	-1.507
Parents' Marital Status	-.022	-.055	-.485

(table continues)

Variables Entered	B	SE B	t
Indoor Maintenance Expectations ($R^2 = .059$)			
Sex	.029	.066	.586
Age	-.008	.088	-.795
Race	-.066	.146	-1.335
Parents' Marital Status	-.082	.182	-1.625
Finance Expectations ($R^2 = .225$)			
Sex	.201	.365	3.580**
Age	.007	.061	.608
Race	.156	.276	2.787**
Parents' Marital Status	.027	.048	.476
Food Preparation Expectations ($R^2 = .045$)			
Sex	-.037	.070	-.619
Age	-.001	.007	-.061
Race	-.020	.037	-.334
Parents' Marital Status	-.097	.180	-1.591
Outdoor Maintenance Expectations ($R^2 = .183$)			
Sex	.156	.291	2.784**
Age	.028	.242	2.354*
Race	.044	.080	.785
Parents' Marital Status	.041	.075	.717

(table continues)

Variables Entered	B	SE B	t
Childcare Expectations ($R^2 = .190$)			
Sex	.012	.043	.409
Age	-.025	-.430	-4.196**
Race	.009	.032	.320
Parents' Marital Status	.028	.100	.961
Household Expectations ($R^2 = .095$)			
Sex	.073	.287	2.602**
Age	.006	.111	1.024
Race	.009	.034	.322
Parents' Marital Status	-.027	-.103	-.934
Household & Childcare Expectations ($R^2 = .070$)			
Sex	.063	.270	2.420**
Age	.001	.018	.161
Race	.009	.038	.348
Parents' Marital Status	-.018	-.074	-.668
Parents' Shopping Behavior ($R^2 = .039$)			
Sex	.060	.080	.704
Age	-.003	-.018	-.157
Race	.117	.152	1.377
Parents' Marital Status	.057	.074	.652

(table continues)

Variables Entered	B	SE B	t
Parents' Indoor Maintenance Behavior ($R^2 = .034$)			
Sex	-.015	-.019	-.168
Age	-.001	-.007	-.060
Race	.115	.145	1.308
Parents' Marital Status	.091	.115	1.013
Parents' Finance Behavior ($R^2 = .035$)			
Sex	.089	.078	.683
Age	.022	.091	.811
Race	.165	.140	1.271
Parents' Marital Status	.046	.036	.313
Parents' Food Preparation Behavior ($R^2 = .094$)			
Sex	.032	.038	.340
Age	-.025	-.147	-1.348
Race	.185	.224	2.074*
Parents' Marital Status	-.085	-.105	-.945
Parents' Outdoor Maintenance Behavior ($R^2 = .210$)			
Sex	.233	.118	1.982*
Age	.046	.191	1.882
Race	.391	.333	3.332**
Parents' Marital Status	.134	.115	1.122
(table continues)			

Variables Entered	B	SE B	t
Parents' Childcare Behavior ($R^2 = .104$)			
Sex	.074	.118	1.982*
Age	-.028	-.177	-1.643
Race	.016	.021	.199
Parents' Marital Status	.193	.250	2.288*
Parents' Household Behavior ($R^2 = .089$)			
Sex	.077	.108	.976
Age	.007	.049	.455
Race	.190	.261	2.427*
Parents' Marital Status	.051	.070	.634
Parents' Household & Childcare Behavior ($R^2 = .081$)			
Sex	.076	.110	.995
Age	.001	.010	.092
Race	.161	.076	2.111*
Parents' Marital Status	.074	.106	.956

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. + $p < .06$ (marginal).