Can't Get No Satisfaction: Both Romantic Partners Tell Us Why

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INTRODUCTION

Sometimes we forget that people, and their relationships with one another, are the core of demographic processes. Specifically, happiness with these interpersonal relationships has been linked to a variety of individual and family outcomes that are relevant to demographers and other social scientists. Satisfying romantic relationships contribute to individuals' physical (Donnellan et al. 2005) and emotional health (Donnellan et al. 2005; Dush and Amato 2005; Gaunt 2006; Sacher and Fine 1996), their cessation of criminal activity (Laub et al. 1998), the security and adjustment of their children (Davies et al. 2002), and the overall well-being of their families (Stack and Eshleman 1998).

While the presence of romantic relationship satisfaction (hereafter "RRS") is beneficial, its absence can be harmful. Marital withdrawal and hostility have been associated with decreases in the emotional availability of parents to their children (Sturge-Apple et al. 2006). Furthermore, the ultimate product of unsatisfying relationships—dissolution of the relationship—can be extremely painful for the partners and families involved (Fletcher et al. 2000; Sacher and Fine 1996). Understanding what contributes to RRS not only can keep family life harmonious but also can impact the number of family transitions and subsequent disruptions that family members will undergo. However, aside from the individuals and families directly associated with a particular relationship, society at large can be impacted by relationship dissatisfaction. Amato and Cheadle (2005) found that the divorce of one's grandparents is associated with lower education, more marital discord, and weaker ties to one's parents. The authors also suggest that relationship dissolution has consequences for subsequent generations of society, including individuals who were not yet alive when the original divorce occurred. Thus, we have a lot to gain from understanding what makes couples happy with their relationships.

While investigating RRS in a general sense has significance, understanding the RRS of individuals transitioning to adulthood has particular meaning and ramifications. Emerging adulthood, typically defined as the time in the life course when an individual is between 18 and 25, is the point when individuals characteristically form enduring romantic relationships (Arnett 2000). The initial phases of the relationship formation have lasting ramifications for the relationship, as the dynamics that are established in the beginning of the relationship tend to endure (Huston et al. 2001). Thus, the relationship patterns developed during this time in the life course can have implications for later life. From a policy standpoint, with today's median age of first marriage in the US being 25.3 years for women and 27.1 years for men (Johnson and Dye 2005), more informed pro-marriage programs such as Bush's Healthy Marriage Initiative could be implemented by understanding the relationship dynamics of young adults as they start moving towards marriage.

However, in attempting to examine such inner workings of relationships, "[m]ost research on romantic relationships…has overlooked the influence of social context" (Sprecher and Felmlee 1992: 888). Umberson et al. (2005b) also stress the need to factor in social context when assessing relationship quality. While relationship research is of interest to demographers and sociologist, a significant amount of this research is done within the discipline of social psychology. As a result, the samples in these studies are often small and non-representative, such as college undergraduates receiving some incentive for participation or those who responded to an advertisement (Gierveld 1995; Taylor 1998). In their critiques of the close relationship literature, several researchers have similarly argued for a greater incorporation of more large-scale studies that include socio-cultural measures (Bradbury et al. 2000; Felmlee and Sprecher 2000).

Despite the fact that the very existence of a romantic partnership is due to the interdependence of each partner in defining that relationship, another shortcoming of the relationship literature is that often only data from one partner are collected on this two-partner union (Sacher and Fine 1996). Attridge and his colleagues (1995) found that accuracy in predicting relationship stability was greatly improved by using measures from both partners instead of one. While some studies have been able to recruit both partners to participate, these designs have often consisted of small samples of dyads. For example, Gaunt critiqued the "relatively small sample sizes" (2006: 1402) in studies of relationships; however, her research was based on just 248 couples.

Because emerging adulthood is the life course stage in which the trajectory of relationship patterns and behavior is established, satisfaction in emerging adult romantic relationships has significant ramifications for the political and policy arenas as well as for personal, family, and societal well-being. Thus, the basic question that I want to answer in this project is: what makes young adults satisfied with their romantic relationships? Examining data from both partners in such couples is necessary to thoroughly understand these pivotal processes. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) allows for just that with its special sub-sample of young adult dating, cohabiting, and married couples in Wave III. By exploiting this unique couples' design, I am able to have more generalizability than previous studies with their small, non-representative samples. Furthermore, I can also include socio-demographic measures, which are scant in much relationship research. As Rogers and Amato (2000) argue, structural characteristics can impact the quality of romantic relationships. Thus, I want to explore this subject from a more sociological angle with the inclusion of social context variables. Because I am less interested in the relationship type than I am in the characteristics of

relationships that occur during this stage in the life course, I include partners from dating, cohabiting, and married unions.

<div align="center">BACKGROUND</div>

Gender

Gender is an extremely important consideration in understanding romantic relationship satisfaction. Generally speaking, men and women value different qualities in a partner and in a relationship. Psychologist Steven Clark with his colleagues (2005) found that men idealize very different traits in a potential mate than do women. In addition, sociologists have also found that the value of certain elements within the relationship vary by gender. For example, the emotional quality of marriage is a better predictor of divorce for women than for men (Nock 2001; Sayer and Bianchi 2000).

Related to these findings are the more sociological concepts of "doing gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987) and attitudes relating to gender roles. Kaukinen points out that the "transformation in the roles and responsibilities of women and men has led to concurrent changes in the quality of intimate relationships" (2004: 452). Other scholars concur by suggesting that more relationships are remaining intact due to today's couples being less constrained by past gender roles (Coontz 2005). Rogers and Amato (2000) reported that perceptions of unfairness in the division of labor and inequalities in power (regardless of which partner was favored by the inequality) have been linked to lower relationship quality. Along these lines, Kaukinen (2004) found that marriages in which both partners endorse egalitarian decision-making and an equal division of power have higher levels of marital satisfaction.

However, research in this area has been mixed. Amato and his colleagues (2003) found that there was no appreciable overall difference in the marital happiness from 1980-2000, even

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as there were increases in both husband's share of work and decision-making equality and decreases in traditional gender attitudes. Wilcox and Nock (2006) found that increased departures from the traditional breadwinning/homemaking model may actually account for declines in marital quality, for both men and women may continue to value gendered behavior in marriage. While there are disparate findings regarding men and women and mixed conclusions about the endorsement of egalitarian in the relationships, the one commonality among these studies is that gender plays a complicated role in romantic relationships. Such considerations cannot be ignored in understanding relationship dynamics.

Attitudes

In addition to examining attitudes related to gender and gender roles, further research has explored the impact of other attitudes on relationship satisfaction. For instance, support for the importance of social connectedness and ties to an established institution vis-à-vis reporting a strong religious orientation appears to be related to RSS. Those with a stronger religious orientation tend to report higher levels of marital happiness than their less religious peers (Amato et al. 2003). Within the psychological relationship literature, the research on attitudes tends to be more focused on personality traits. White et al. (2004) looked at the Big 5 measures of personality[1] and found that some associations between these personality traits and RRS varied by gender; others did not. Donnellan and his colleagues (2005) looked at other personality traits like constraint in addition to positive emotionality and negative emotionality[2] and found that relationship satisfaction was related to personality, particularly negative emotionality.

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[1] The Big 5 personality traits are multi-dimensional measures of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

[2] Constraint is composed of measures of control, harsh avoidance, and traditionalism; positive emotionality consists of achievement, social closeness, social potency, and well-being measures, and negative emotionality is comprised of aggression, alienation, and stress reaction measures.

Scholars have also been interested in studying the association between the couple's interactions and satisfaction with that relationship. Research shows that greater support—perceived or actual— and less conflict are all independently related to RRS (Cramer 2006). Srivastava et al. (2006) also found that support was important, for the higher reported RRS of optimists was attributed to the higher levels of support perceived by optimists. Besides perception, actual behavioral differences have been found between satisfied and dissatisfied partners. Compared to the interactions of happy couples, interactions of distressed couples are characterized by an increased likelihood of negative behavior following negative behavior by the partner (Margolin and Wampold 1981). By the same token, certain positive interactions within couples can intercede negative effects. Huston and Chorost (1994) showed that spousal expressions of affection moderate the relationship between negative behavior and marital outcomes.

Stressful Event and Situations

A life course perspective provides a helpful framework for understanding the importance of using sociological indicators in an analysis of RRS. Individuals do not live in a vacuum; one's present is not independent of one's past. The developmental pathway of an individual is a social trajectory of linked lives (Elder 1994). Therefore, from this perspective, the past of an individual has to be considered. Since the respondents being studied in my project are young adults, their recent past involves childhood and adolescence. Adults who recall a high level of conflict between parents while growing up report a larger number of psychological and marital problems in their own lives as adults (Amato and Booth 1991; Amato and Sobolewski 2001; Ensign et al. 1998). Also supporting a life course perspective is the repeated finding that emotional ties of children to their parents are associated with psychological adjustment and subjective well-being

through the adult years (Amato 1994; Amato and Sobolewski 2001; Rossi and Rossi 1990; Umberson 1992). Donnellan et al. (2005) found that the root of mutual satisfaction within romantic partnerships is situated in both personality and developmental experiences. Umberson et al. (2005b) also found that early life course experiences with stress interact with stressful adult experiences to influence both overall levels of positive relationship experiences and change in those experiences over time.

Current stressful situations can also impact RRS. Amato et al. (2003) showed that couples with children report less happiness in their relationships. Other stressors like unemployment, long work hours, low household income, and low education attainment can also negatively impact relationship satisfaction (Kaukinen 2004). An important and surprising omission in much of the relationship literature has been the presence of domestic violence ("DV") and factors associated with it (Bradbury et al. 2000). Relationships that are fairly new, involve young partners, have young children living in the household, and include the presence of heavy drinking heighten the risk of violence and abuse within the relationship (Kaukinen 2004). Accordingly, excluding measures of DV and other potential stressors can portray an incomplete picture of the inner workings of the relationship.

Demographic Measures

As aforementioned, gender is a major consideration in RRS research; however, Amato et al. (2003) have also found that other socio-demographic factors also play a role. Age, for example, is one of them. Compared with those who marry at older ages, people who marry at young ages spend less time searching for suitable partners, have fewer financial resources, and are less mature psychologically—all of which have ramifications on RRS. Race and ethnicity also appear to have a role. Compared to Whites, African Americans experience more marital

discord (Amato et al. 2003; Clarkwest 2007; Phillips and Sweeney 2006). In addition, Amato et al. (2003) argue that education is another characteristic that can impact RRS, for those with high levels of educational attainment tend to have individual and family characteristics that promote satisfaction and stability in relationships.

Couple Characteristics

Individual-level social factors like those mentioned above have added implications when thinking about the romantic dyad as a unit, rather than just the individuals comprising the couple. For example, individuals in heterogamous marriages (based on age, race, religion, and education) report less marital happiness and more divorce than do individuals in homogamous marriages (Amato et al. 2003). Wang et al. (2006) found that interracial couples are 11% more likely to experience relationship disruption than intraracial couples. Other research has also found that there were differences in the couples' satisfaction regarding interracial and intraracial relationships; however, it was in the other direction—partners in interracial relationships reported significantly higher relationship satisfaction compared to those in intraracial relationships (Troy and Lewis-Smith 2006).

Beyond racial differences, in unions in which the woman has more education, a higher income, or is employed when her male partner is not, there is an increased likelihood of emotional abuse (Kaukinen 2004). Tichenor (1999) also reported similar findings, for she found that in couples with such a status reversal there was lower marital satisfaction and stability. The flipside of this is that partners with greater similarity between them have higher levels of marital satisfaction and lower levels of negative affect (Gaunt 2006). Thus, the inclusion of factors highlighting the dissimilarity or similarity within the couple is essential in any analysis.

The status of the couple—dating, cohabiting, or married—is also a necessary inclusion. It is interesting that both psychology and sociology tend to favor certain relationship types. The research of psychologists regarding relationship satisfaction is largely focused on dating couples (e.g., Attridge et al 1995; Cramer 2006; Jones and Cunningham 1996; Murray et al. 1996; Sacher and Fine 1996; Sprecher et al. 2006; Srivastava et al. 2006). This is perhaps an artifact of the heavy reliance on university students as research participants in psychology studies. On the other hand, sociologists tend to focus more on marital and cohabiting relationships when investigating relationship satisfaction (e.g., Amato et al.2003, Kaukinen 2004; Rogers and Amato 2000; Umberson et al. 2005a, 2005b). When cohabitation is studied, it is often looked at not in isolation, as dating or marriage often are, but in association with marriage (e.g., Axinn and Thornton 1992; Cherlin et al. 2004). For example, partners in cohabiting relationships tend to be less happy with their relationships than those in married relationships (Brown 2003; Nock 1995). An examination of the literature also yields that studies with multiple relationship statuses are atypical. One of the rare studies looking at multiple relationship statuses found that married individuals reported the highest level of subjective well-being, followed respectively by individuals in cohabiting relationships, steady dating relationships, casual dating relationships, and then individuals who dated infrequently or not at all (Dush and Amato 2005). The results of this study also indicate that after shifting into more committed relationships, subjective well-being improved; there was also little support for the idea that people with a high level of well-being select themselves into more committed relationships.

From my review of the literature, I see the opportunity to make several contributions. First, there is a dearth of social context measures and socio-demographic controls at the individual- and couple-level in many relationship studies. By using a large, nationally

representative study, I can incorporate such measures into my analysis of relationship satisfaction. Secondly, I am using a much larger sample than is seen in a great deal of relationship studies. In doing this, I am able to make my third contribution of examining dating, cohabiting, and married individuals together. My final and most important contribution is my use of responses from both partners in a relationship. I do not have to rely on only one partner for information on a two-partner union. My data allow me to observe each individual's own psychological and socio-demographic characteristics separately of his/her partner's. However, I am also able to observe the characteristics of both individuals in the relationship jointly and to examine their combined effects on relationship satisfaction. By separating the couples by gender yet still linking the individuals as a couple, my design also allows me to take account of the processes and mechanisms underlying relationship satisfaction that impact each gender differentially.

DATA

The data for my analysis are drawn from Wave III of The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). Add Health is a nationally representative study investigating the causes of health-related behaviors of adolescents in grades 7 through 12 and the outcomes of these health-related behaviors in young adulthood. The data collection began with a 1994 in-school questionnaire that was administered to every student present in the selected school on the day of administration. The study followed up with a series of in-home interviews of students approximately one, two, and six years after the initial administration. Data were collected at the individual, family, school, and community levels. The third wave of data collection was conducted by the Research Triangle Institute and occurred between August 2001 and April 2002. Wave III consisted of in-home interviews of 15,170 of the nearly 20,745 original Wave I

respondents. The response rate for Wave III is 77.4%. The participants were between the ages of 18 and 26 years old. The focus of the Wave III questionnaire was to obtain relationship, marital, childbearing, and educational histories, and to record key labor force events.

In addition to the core sample, one-half of the Wave III respondents were randomly selected for consideration of including their romantic partner in a special couple sub-sample. Only partners from heterosexual relationships with a duration of at least 3 months in which both partners were 18 years of age were eligible for the couples' sample. The purpose of creating a couples' sample was to have data on both members of romantic dyads. A total of 1,505 partners of Wave III respondents were included in the couple sample so that one-third of the partners were in a married union, one-third were in a cohabiting union, and one-third were in a dating relationship with a Wave III respondent.

My analytic sample consists of 2,440 total individuals in 1,220 couples. Because the couples are heterosexual, there are even numbers of males and females in both samples. Likewise, there are equal numbers of original respondents and their partners. There are still some data management problems that have yet to be solved, so some of the sample was lost because of these issues[3]. Listwise deletion accounted for the rest of my sample attrition[4]. If there were missing values on the dependent variable or key independent variables, I deleted that respondent and the corresponding partner.

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[3] A new file is supposed to be created to handle the 103 couples that do not merge properly
[4] Sensitivity tests were conducted for variables with more than 50 missing cases. The results suggested that dropping these cases bore no impact on the results.

MEASURES

Relationship Satisfaction

The dependent variable in my analysis is taken from the answer to the question: "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship with <PARTNER>?" The respondent answered on a five-point scale:

1. Very Satisfied
2. Somewhat Satisfied
3. Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied
4. Somewhat Dissatisfied
5. Very Dissatisfied

Rather than keeping all five categories, I collapse them to create a "very satisfied" and "not very satisfied" dichotomous outcome variable. As reported below, the reason for this decision is that a strong majority of the cases fall into the "very satisfied" category.

[Table 1 about here]

Several relationship satisfaction scales— Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), and the Relationship Rating Form (RRF)—have been utilized with some consistency in the psychology and social psychology literature (Masuda 2003). However, Add Health does not contain all questions contained in these inventories. In fact, it does not contain enough questions to mimic an approximation of the scales in these questionnaires. Furthermore, there is debate about how to measure relationship satisfaction and quality. Fincham and Bradbury (1987), for example, limit their analysis of relationship quality to reports of satisfaction, while others have a multidimensional conceptualization of relationship quality (Amato and Booth 1997). While some have chosen to use an index to measure a relationship construct, Johnson et al. (1986) found that many relationship dimensions are conceptually and empirically independent. These authors concluded that scales of marital quality that combine

measures from scales of marital happiness and interaction with scales of marital disagreements, problems, and instability are likely to yield ambiguous findings and contribute little to an understanding of marital process. In this paper, I will be calling upon the social-cognitive perspective of relationship satisfaction in which RRS is an attitude toward the partner or relationship (Bradbury et al. 2000). Therefore, to avoid conflating the measure of RRS with other relationship facets, I am choosing to analyze one measure of relationship quality—relationship satisfaction. As Amato et al. (2003) pointed out, the "[m]easurement error associated with single-item indicators generally attenuates correlations and can lead researchers to underestimate the strength of associations in the population." Hence, by using a single-item indicator, I am being conservative. Should I find an association between relationship satisfaction and one of my indicators, it should be robust relationship. Therefore, my choice of a dependent variable errs on the side of caution.

Independent Variables

Couple Characteristics

Perhaps because much of the research on relationships is done on homogenous samples, there is a surprising lack of couple-specific variables in many of the analyses in the literature on relationship happiness and satisfaction. Since there are 3 types of relationships in my sample—dating, cohabiting, and married—I have to take account of that in my analysis. I only code for current status, so if a couple cohabited at a previous time but are living separately now, they are coded as dating not cohabiting. The way in which I code relationship type allows for only one classification type per couple. If information on the relationship status is not available from one partner, I impute it for the other partner. If neither partner report that they are married or cohabiting, I code them as dating. If an individual reports being married and cohabiting, I code them as married. If there were discrepancies between partners about their relationship status, I

code the couple as having the higher status. For example, if one partner said that the couple was married and the other one just claimed to be living together, I code the couple as married. The breakdown of my analytic sample is 35.24% married, 37.46% cohabiting, and 27.30% dating.

I also create an indicator variable for the couple being interracial or not. If both partners match on how I code their race, for example both are coded as Hispanic, the couple is then coded "0" for interracial. If the races of the partners do not match, they are coded as a "1." The only case in which a match on the race variable is coded as interracial is when both partners are coded as "Other." Since the "Other" group comprises all races not included in the main categories of White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American, it is impossible to know whether or not the partners were both of the same race or same multi-racial background. In my analytic sample, 23.68% of the couples are coded as interracial.

Another couple-specific variable I include in my analysis is the length of the relationship. Relationship duration is calculated as the time from relationship start to the interview date, which would have taken the relationship up to the present, at the time of reporting. While several assumptions[5] have to be made to compute this number, because I code the relationship length in years, these assumptions do not have as great of an impact on the measure as they would have if I had coded relationship length in months. Upon calculating the relationship length, I made one final assumption in constructing this variable. In many of the cases, there is complete agreement within the couple about how long they had been together. However, there are mismatches in the

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[5] Each partner was asked to provide the month in which the relationship began. If they did not know, they were asked to give the season. The middle month of the season was then coded as the month in which the relationship began. For example, if the response was "fall (September, October, November)," the relationship was coded as "10" for October. If the month was still not available, I then imputed the month from the partner. If neither partner provided a month, I imputed a 6, making an assumption that the relationship started in the middle of the year. I also had to make another assumption about the relationship start date. Since only the month and the year were provided, I assumed that every relationship started in the middle of the month, on the 15th. I coded the year that the relationship began as well. If this information was missing from one partner, I imputed it as the partner's response. If neither partner could provide a year, the couple was then deleted from the sample.

relationship duration for some couples. While most of these are usually small discrepancies— +/-

1 year—there are larger discrepancies. In two cases, one partner reported the relationship began

1 year ago. The other claimed that it began 14 years before. This disparity is the largest one in

my dataset. There is no way to know if this is a data input error or one partner considered their

romantic relationship to have begun much earlier (perhaps when they met as children?). Since

relationship duration treated as a couple-level variable, in the cases of discrepancies on

relationship length, I made the decision to use the report of the partner who claimed a longer

duration as the stated relationship length for the couple. It is often hard to pinpoint the exact

start date a relationship, so it is not surprising that there would be some discrepancy between

partners. These discrepancies may also be an artifact of the data collection itself. In some cases,

the partners were interviewed the very next day as the original respondent. In other cases, the

there were months that lapsed between each member's interviews. Due to this, the couple could

have celebrated an anniversary in-between interview dates.

Because disagreement within the couple on the start of their relationship could be

indicative of something that impacts RRS, such as a difference in the perception of events

occurring between the two partners, I include a measure of the discordance in reported

relationship duration. As evidenced by the distribution below, the general pattern is that most

couples agreed on the start of the relationship. Larger discrepancies are less common than

smaller ones.

[Table 2 about here]

I also include an additional relationship-specific variable for discordance of college

attendance. As aforementioned, individuals in heterogamous marriages tend to report lower

satisfaction with their relationship. However, certain differences within the couple may operate

differently based on gender. Therefore, my educational mismatch indicator is a means of testing these findings. In my sample, 77.38% of couple had similar educational experiences. That is, either both partners had attended college or both had not. The remaining 22.62% consists of partnerships in which one member has ever attended college and the other has not.

My final couple-specific variable is the age disparity of the partners within the relationship. This is a reliable variable since there is an age for every respondent in the survey. Because I treat this as a couple-level variable, age disparity is coded the absolute value of the age difference between the partners within the couple.

Demographic Measures

Several demographic variables must be included in my analysis as controls since previous research has indicated differential effects based on gender, age, race, and educational attainment. I rely on self-reports of gender and divide my sample into separate female and male sub-samples in order to capture any processes underlying relationship satisfaction that differentially affect each gender. I use the pre-constructed calculated age variable to take account of the individual's age. In addition to current age, I also include a measure of the age at the start of the relationship. This is a self-reported number. If this age is missing for any interviewee, I impute it from the partner.

I also code race as White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, or Other Race based on the answers to a series of questions in Wave III regarding race and ethnicity. The reason that I do not use the constructed race variables from Wave I is because these variables do not exist for the recruited partner in Wave III. Thus, for consistency's stake, I have created my own codes. How I code race means that each respondent can only be in one race category. That is, the race categories are mutually exclusive, so if an interviewee self-identified as more than one race, the

interviewee was coded as "Other Race." Likewise, if the respondent does not identify as White,

Black, Hispanic, Native American, or Asian, the respondent is coded as "Other Race" as well.

I use the racial category that had the highest percentage of "very satisfied" responses as

my reference group. This turns out to be White, with 77.80 % being very satisfied with their

relationship. The breakdown of the other racial groups is as follows: Hispanic: 75.78 %, Black:

59.64%, Native American: 62.03 %, Asian: 73.65 %, and Other: 61.00 %.

I also include a measure of educational attainment. Because the respondents are aged 18-

26, many could still be in the process of completing their education. However, most should have

had the opportunity to at least start post-high-school education. Thus, I capture educational

attainment with an indicator of having ever attended college.

Attitudinal Measures

Continuing the tradition of the psychological literature, I include several attitudinal

measures related to personality. I include 2 scales of emotionality—one is positive and one is

negative—much like Donnellan et al. (2005). The positive emotionality scale is comprised of

the respondent's responses to phrases "I am affectionate, I am sympathetic, I am sensitive to the

needs of others, I am understanding, and I am compassionate." The positive emotionality scales

(alpha=.88) is a composite of the following responses to those statements:

1 Never or almost never true
2 Usually not true
3 Sometimes but infrequently true
4 Occasionally true
5 Often true
6 Usually true
7 Always or almost always true

A measure of negative emotionality (alpha=.70) is calculated from the responses to the

following statements, using the same 7-point scale as above: "I am jealous; I am forceful; I am

secretive; I am dominant; and I am aggressive."

In my analysis, I also include attitudes related to the social world. Many studies have looked at the impact of views on gender roles and gender-related power dynamics within the relationship on happiness with the relationship. Add Health does not have a plethora of such measures, so I only include one in my analyses. Responses on a 5-point response scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to the statement "It is much better for everyone if the man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home and family" constitute my measure of attitudes about gender equality. To capture another socially-relevant measure—religious orientation —I use the responses to the question, "To what extent are you a religious person?" The responses for this question were given on a 4-point scale:

1. Not religious at all
2. Slightly religious
3. Moderately religious
4. Very religious

I have recoded these responses from 0-3 in order to be more consistent with other response values in my analysis.

Stressors

Besides traditional demographic variables in the analysis, I include measures that could be possible personal and relationship-related stressors. Problematic drinking is one such example. To account for this, I include in my model the responses to the question: "During the past 12 months, how many times ha[ve]… [y]ou had problems with someone you were dating because you had been drinking?" The responses were scaled from "never" to "5 or more times[6]." The presence of children in the household can also be stressful. I combine two variables: one accounting for the number of children less than six years old that live in the respondent' household and the other that tallies the number of children between the ages of six and twelve

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[6] I intended to include responses to a similar question about drug use, but no one in the sample responded affirmatively to that question

living in the respondent's home. Thus, I end up with a measure of the number of children that were under the age of 13 in the respondent's home.

To capture the amount of reported domestic violence within a relationship, I create two 4-item scales of DV. One measures perpetration of DV, and the other measures DV victimization. For my perpetration measure, I include the number of times in the past year the respondent has:

 -Threatened the partner with violence, pushed or shoved {HIM/HER}, or thrown something at {HIM/HER} that could hurt
- Slapped, hit, or kicked the partner
- Insisted on or made the partner have sexual relations when the partner did not want to
- Had an injury, such as a sprain, bruise, or cut because of a fight with the partner

My victimization measure is the number of times in the past year the respondent has suffered from these events. Instead of treating the response category as a continuous measure, I take an average of the values responses in each. For example, a "3" corresponds to this happening 3-5 times in the past year. I take the average of the values represented in that category, so response of "3" was coded as "4." I also a separate dummy variables for responding "don't know" or "refused" to any of the DV perpetrator or victim questions. I collapse "don't know" and "refused" into one category due to cell sizes. I also control for DV with the current partner that has not occurred within the past year by has previously by including a dichotomous variable indicating past DV.

Financial hardships can put a strain on a relationship. Because of this, I include an employment indicator variable. A "1" is coded for those who responded "yes" and a "0" is coded for those who responded "no" to the question, "Are you currently working for pay for at least 10 hours a week?" I use a dummy variable for employment of at least 10 hours instead using a variable a differentiating longer work hours because over 1/3 of the respondent were currently going to school full- or part- time while interviewed.

I also include an indicator of receipt of public assistance during the previous year. Because of the age of the respondents, I decided not to include an income measure. Since many are still in school, an income measure is likely to be conflated with age and education status. I am still interested in the effect of extreme financial hardship on relationship satisfaction, so I created an indicator of whether or not the respondent had received food stamps, AFDC/TANF, and/or housing assistance during the previous year. Rather than delineating the amount of type of assistance, I combine having received any assistance in the above forms since 91.6% of the sample did not receive any assistance. Because of this, a dichotomous measure seems to be the best choice.

Having a disability can also be stressor in a relationship due to limited ability and increased reliance on others. Therefore, I dummy code the responses to the question, "During any part of {2000/2001} did you receive income from the following sources?

-Unemployment insurance
-Workmen's compensation
-Disability
-Social Security benefits, including SSI (supplemental security income)

Although past events in the last year within the relationship are likely related to the current reports of RRS, events in the more distant past can also have an impact on the reported satisfaction within a romantic relationship. Calling upon the life course perspective, I include an indicator of mistreatment by adults when the respondent was a child (Cherlin et al. 2004). This measure concerns the time prior to the start of 6th grade when the parents or other adult care-givers left the respondent home alone when an adult should have been with the respondent; had not taken care of the respondent' basic needs, such as keeping the respondent clean or providing food or clothing; had slapped, hit, or kicked the respondent; and had touched the respondent in a sexual way, forced the respondent to touch him or her in a sexual way, or forced the respondent

to have sexual relations. This mistreatment indicator also includes any Social Services

investigation or removal of the respondent from the home. I also include a dummy for "refused"

or "don't know" for any of the mistreatment questions.

Analytic Plan: Binomial Logistic Regression Analysis

Because I dichotomized my response variable as being "very satisfied" or "not very

satisfied" in one's current romantic relationship, I use binomial logistic regression analyses in

my paper. I have separated the sample by gender and use either female RRS or male RRS as the

dependent variables. Because I am using the individual as the unit of analysis and only this one

level of analysis, I do not have the same clustering between observations that I would when

including both individuals from the same couple simultaneously into my model. I have

conceptualized my models to include only females in my first 4 models and then only males for

my next 4 models.

Taking the females as an example, I run a logistic regression based solely on the

characteristics of their relationships (these are the same as they are for their male partners)

without taking into account any of the individual characteristics of the partners. Examples of

these measures include relationship status or whether or not the couple is interracial. Next, I add

the female's own characteristics like her race and age to see what impact her own characteristics

have on her satisfaction with the relationship. Then, I run the model with just the relationship

characteristics and her partner's attributes like his race and age. This way, I can see the effects of

the partner's attributes net of the respondent's own within the context of the couple's shared

characteristics. Finally, I include the relationship characteristics, her characteristics, and her

partner's characteristics. This final analysis most closely models the real life situation of being in

a relationship. It accounts for not only the woman's own characteristics but also her partner's

while also incorporating the characteristics that they share as a couple. Each female has three sets

of variables: those associated with relationship, those associated with herself, and those

associated with her male partner. I will not include the male partner, per se, into any of the

models; I will only include the male's characteristics. Thus, my N does not change in any model.

After running these, I then repeat the same process for the males in my sample by running 4

models. The first is a model examining the effects of relationship characteristics on male RSS,

the next model includes the relationship characteristics and the males' own characteristics, then a

model is run with the relationship and female partners' characteristics, and the final model

includes the relationship, males' own, and female partners' attributes.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

To understand the sample in this analysis, I provide univariate descriptives of it below in

Tables 3-5. Table 3 illustrates the racial breakdown of the sample. The distributions are fairly

similar for men and women, with White being the majority category representing approximately

60% of the women and men in the sample. The second most common reported race/ethnicity is

Black followed Hispanic, Asian, Other Racial category, and Native American is the smallest

category with representation of only 2.5% of the women and 3.9% of the men.

[Table 3 about here]

As demonstrated in Table 4, the ages in the sample range from 18 to 43. The reason for

this is because some of original respondents' partners were older than the 18-26-age range of the

Wave III respondents. However, the mean age is 22.62 years with a SD of approximately 3

years, so the ages within the sample are still primarily clustered in emerging adulthood. This is

also supported by the fact that the mean age disparity within couples is 2.41 years with a SD of

2.70 years. Thus, the overwhelming majority of the sample falls in the young adult range, with a few outliers. Table 4 also illustrates that typical person in the sample has been in a relationship of a little more than 3 years and began that partnership in late teenage years. In addition, most of the sample does not live with children in the home and reports little problematic drinking behavior. The respondents also have experienced low levels of domestic violence as either a perpetrator or victim in the past year; however, men report less perpetration of DV and more victimization than do women. Also, the average respondent scores higher on the positive emotionality scale than the negative emotionality scale; however, women tend to report higher levels of positive emotionality (29.33, SD=5.53) than the men in the sample (26.47, SD=6.34). Both men and women are moderate in their views of the importance of religion in their lives as well as in their support of egalitarian gender roles. Not surprisingly, the women on average report .43-point higher support for egalitarianism than to the men out of a 0-4 scale, with similar spread among the men and women's responses.

Regarding the financial matters displayed in Table 5, most of the sample is employed at least 10 hours a week. A small minority has received disability payments or public assistance during the past year, 5.00% and 8.40% respectively. Most of the respondents (72.79%) have not attended college. Also, there is concordance within most couples (77.37%) regarding college attendance or not. Very few people (1%) refused or did not know the responses to any of the DV questions, and even fewer—only .53%--report non-recent DV with the current partner. Finally, the sample is fairly evenly divided among people who are in married, cohabiting, and dating relationships.

[Tables 4 & 5 about here]

Logistic Regression Results

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Tables 6 and 7 report the results of the logistic regression analyses. Before going over the specifics in each model, several overall trends should be highlighted. Across all 8 models, those who cohabit have higher odds of being very satisfied than those who are in dating relationships; however both statuses are associated with lower satisfaction than marriage is. Since this finding constantly holds across all analyses, it will not be mentioned again in this results section. In addition, in both Table 6 and 7, one's own characteristics are more explanatory of satisfaction in a romantic relationship than are one's partner's attributes as evidenced by log-likelihood statistics (Model 2 vs. Model 3 and Model 6 vs. Model 7). Since these models have the same degrees of freedom, a simple examination of these numbers demonstrates this finding. However, it should be noted that these differences are significant at an alpha-level of .01.

A comparison of the log-likelihood statistics between Model 2 and Model 4 as well as between Model 6 and Model 8 reveals some intriguing differences between sexes. Compared to the models with only the individual's own characteristics, the inclusion of the partner's characteristics does lower the -2 log-likelihood statistics. However, the difference in the log-likelihoods between Models 2 and 4 is not statistically significant for women's RRS. On the other hand, this difference is significant at an alpha-level of .01 for the men's RRS. Therefore, the inclusion of the male partner's characteristics does not add a great deal more explanation regarding a woman's satisfaction with her relationship than does just knowing her own characteristics and the characteristics of the relationship. However, for a man, the addition of his partner's traits does provide more insight into his satisfaction with the relationship.

[Table 6 about here]

Looking now at specific models, without regard to her own or her partner's characteristics, Model 1 tells us the effect of the relationship characteristics on the woman's

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RRS. Net of the other relationship characteristics, being in an interracial partnership versus not is associated with 31% decrease in a woman's odds of being very satisfied. Discordance with her partner on the reported length of the relationship is marginally significant, and it too is associated with lower odds of being very satisfied, holding the other relationship characteristics constant.

With the addition of personal characteristics in Model 2, the directional associations between the relationship variables and RRS stay consistent to those depicted in Model 1. Looking at the woman's own attributes, being a Black or Native American, compared to being White, decreases odds of high satisfaction by about half. There is a marginally significant association between being very satisfied and being an Asian woman, compared to being White. Furthermore, for every additional year older the woman is when she starts her relationship, her odds of being very satisfied drop 6%. Also associated with lower satisfaction is negative emotionality, being a victim of DV, and problematic drinking. Positive emotionality is related to higher satisfaction. Each additional point on the positive emotionality scale is associated with a 7%-increase in the odds of high satisfaction.

With the addition of the male characteristics in Model 3, the same patterns hold regarding the relationship characteristics and a young woman's RRS. The effect on RRS is the similar for the man's reports of positive and negative emotionality as they are for the woman's. Having a partner who is Black is associated with lower satisfaction, as is having a partner with children in the home. Furthermore, each additional child living in the male's home is associated with 17% lower odds of high satisfaction.

Model 4 combines the relationship characteristics with the woman's partner's and her own. Although the log-likelihood statistics indicate that there is not much explanatory power gained from this model, having a model with the relationship characteristics and both partners'

characteristics for each gender can further highlight any similarity and dissimilarity of the factors in contributing to each gender's RRS. Furthermore, since the romantic relationship takes places within the context of both partners' characteristics, a model with all 3 sets of variables most fully takes account of the social contexts that impact RRS. In addition, certain associations between covariates and RRS hold and others change with the inclusion of all 3 types of variables in Model 4; thus, Model 4 still does provide a great deal of information on relationship dynamics.

Regarding specific associations, across all 4 female models, being in an interracial relationship as well as disagreeing with her partner on the length of their relationship were associated with lower satisfaction, regardless of the other covariates being controlled for in the models. In Model 4, all race-related effects on RRS disappear—for both the woman and her male partner. Concerning emotionality, positive and negative emotionality were both significant in Models 2 and 3; however, only the woman's own emotionality remains significant in Model 4. It is associated with a modest 2% increase in the odds of high satisfaction. Being a victim of DV is also still associated with lower satisfaction. However, being a perpetrator has no effect on RRS across any of the models in this table. While the number of children the woman has living in her home does not impact her RRS, the number of children in the male's home remains significant in this final model. The addition of one child in the male partner's home is associated with an 18% decrease in odds of high satisfaction. This differential impact of own child versus the partner's alone highlights why this model with both male and female regressors is important.

When compared to Table 6, Table 7 reveals some similarities and differences regarding men and women's RSS. In the relationship-characteristics-only model (Model 5) being in an interracial relationship is associated with lower odds of satisfaction as it was for the women. However, relationship length is significant in this model as well and that was not the case for the

models of female RRS. An additional year in the relationship lowers a man's odds of satisfaction by nearly 7%. However, after controlling for other factors in subsequent models, this association disappears. Additionally, unlike for the women, disagreement of the length of the relationship has no effect on male RRS.

The inclusion of the men's personal characteristics in Model 6 reveals more about male RRS. Holding everything else constant in the model, having a disparity in educational backgrounds with his partner is associated with a 30% decrease in a young adult male's odds of being very satisfied with his romantic relationship. Net of the relationship characteristics and all other personal characteristics, a male being Black, compared to being White, lowers his odds of being highly satisfied with his relationship by 54%. Being classified in the Other racial category is associated with about a 50%-reduction in the odds of being very satisfied. A man's own positive and negative emotionality have the expected effects of his RRS, as does being a victim of DV. The stressor of having children in the home appears to lower satisfaction as well. However, having a strong orientation towards religion is associated with increased satisfaction. There are also some interesting age effects. For every year that a man ages, his odds of high satisfaction lower by about 15%, yet the older he is when his relationship starts, the more satisfied he is. These seemingly contradictory results exist because they based on holding all the other variables in the model constant. Thus, all things being equal, a man is less satisfied with his relationship the older he is, not taking into account the age he was when he started that relationship or any of the other variables.

[Table 7 about here]

With the addition of the female partner's characteristics to the relationship characteristics in Model 7, the effect of a mismatch in education gets stronger: a man is 40% less likely to be

highly satisfied than if he and his partner had the same college attendance experience. Interestingly, having a female partner who went to college increases odds of being very satisfied by nearly 60%. Having a female partner endorse egalitarian ideas is marginally associated with an increase in satisfaction, while having a partner report being a victim of DV is marginally associated with decreased odds of high satisfaction. In this model, being in an interracial relationship is also marginally associated with decreased satisfaction. As is being a black male, having a black female partner is also associated with lower satisfaction with the relationship. Also similarly affecting male RRS is the number of children living with the female partner decreases the man's satisfaction, just as the number of his own children does.

Model 8, with male, female, and couple characteristics, has the most explanatory power of all analyses of modeling male RRS. In this model, many of the previous patterns hold. For example, the impact of having a mismatch is college experience is significant in Model 6-8. However, the effect is the strongest in Model 8, as the odds of high satisfaction are reduced by 46%. Not seeing a similar trend regarding female RRS, it appears that there could be some real differences across gender lines regarding the variable. To test this, I ran gender*college mismatch interaction in the pooled female-male sample[7]. This interaction was indeed significant at the .05-level[8], so it indicates that a mismatch in college education between partners is associated with lower satisfaction for men and higher satisfaction for women. While this measure is only an indicator of a mismatch in college attendance, there is no way to know if this decreased satisfaction is cause by a status reversal. However, the distribution of college

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[7] To test interactions by gender, I merged the female and male samples into a combined sample of 2,440 individuals. I ran a logistic regression with the combined RRS variable as the outcome variable. In addition to including the pooled covariates of Models 4 and 8, I also included a gender variable and a gender*college mismatch variable. To account for couple clustering, I performed Huber-White corrections to the standard errors.

[8] Significance at this level was found for the p-value of the interaction term as well as the difference in the -2 log-likelihood statistics between the model with and without the interactions term.

attendance in the sample does indicate that this is a distinct possibility as 31.7% of the females in the sample have attended college and only 22.8% of the men have.

Other factors also have a different impact on the men than the women in the sample. For every additional year of age, an emerging adult male's odds of being very satisfied decrease by about 15%. Again, the male's age at the start of the relationship is associated with higher satisfaction. Each year of delaying the start of his relationship is associated with 13% greater odds of high relationship satisfaction. Meanwhile, his partner's current age or age at the start of the relationship has no effect on his satisfaction. A man having a partner who attended college increases the odds of satisfaction by 60%, while his own college attendance has no impact on his satisfaction. Similarly, while his support of egalitarian ideas has no relationship with his RRS, his partner's belief in such ideas does increase his odds of satisfaction with the relationship by nearly 13%. The impact of children wanes in this model, with only the number of the female partner's children having a marginal effect. Both a man's own positive emotionality and his partner's have beneficial effects on satisfaction. However, only his own negative emotionality appears to lower his satisfaction.

A man's strong religious orientation is associated with higher odds of satisfaction. This is seen in Model 6 and 8. His partner's own religious orientation has no effect on his satisfaction nor does her religious orientation on her own satisfaction. Those reporting a strong religious orientation could actually be responding that they have more satisfying relationships due to social desirability. It is unclear what is exactly underlying this pattern; however whatever is driving this effect, it appears to have stronger impact on men.

DISCUSSION

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What it is that makes young adults satisfied with their romantic relationships? As this paper shows, context is the key to answering this question. Satisfaction lies not only in the characteristics brought into the relationship by the individual but also in the characteristics brought into the relationship by the partner. Each member of a romantic union creates a unique context with other partner, and it is that very context that is of interest. To understand the dynamics of the couple, you simply have to understand both halves of the whole. By only examining the characteristics of the individual or partner individually, certain factors may appear important or unimportant to relationship satisfaction until the rest of the characteristics of the couple are taken into account. Relationships do not exist within a vacuum, romantic relationships occur within a couple.

By using both partners, my analyses reveal several differential findings that could not be ascertained without the firsthand information from both members of the couple. For example, the total number of children living with the male partner lowers the odds of high satisfaction for a woman, while the number of her own kids has no influence on her satisfaction with her relationship. At the same time, the female's number of children impacts a man's satisfaction more than does the number of his own children. In this case, it seems that the partner's characteristics matter more than one's own. Other interesting findings along these lines come out in regards the emotionality. A male's positive emotionality has no bearing on a woman's satisfaction, while her positive emotionality increases his odds of being very satisfied. Furthermore, a male's own education experience and egalitarian ideas have no effect on his satisfaction, but a female's college attendance and her espousal of egalitarian ideas increases his satisfaction. However, these factors have no impact on her satisfaction. Thus, certain characteristics belonging to the partner have an effect on RRS, while those same characteristics

belonging to the individual have no impact. Obviously having information from the partner is necessary in revealing these relationships.

This brings up another interesting outcome of the results: some noteworthy gender differences. The different findings for men and women call attention to the fact that some processes affect men and women differentially. In terms of relationship characteristics, a mismatch in educational experience has fairly dramatic negative effects on male RRS, while it appears to have the opposite impact on female RRS. When there is discordance in reported relationship duration, the woman's satisfaction is affected, not the man's. Likewise, one's current age, age at the start of the relationship, and religious orientation appear to have more influence over a man's satisfaction than a woman's. Without examining both partners, this much of this information would be lost, especially regarding personal attitudes.

Separating the sample by gender also reveals something else. Overall, it appears that partner characteristics are more important for male satisfaction at this age than they are for women. Besides revealing more about the complicated nature of gender, these finding have potential implications for couples or policy-oriented programs striving to keep relationships intact. My analyses suggest that a more couple-centered approach may be more effective for men, while a more individualistic, introspective approach may work better for women.

Although researchers have attempted to explore satisfaction within couples, they have often failed to incorporate measures of both psychological and socio-demographic taken directly from both members of the two-partner union. The large couples' sub-sample of Add Health affords me the ability to include micro and macro-level measures in addressing this topic. While this project is limited to studying young adults, the use of large, nationally representative study allows me to generalize my findings to the greater emerging adult population in the US.

Emerging adulthood is an extremely important for time understanding relationship dynamic, for it during this period that relationship patterns become established and last-longing relationships get formed. As marriage is becoming less of a central force in organizing and controlling our life course transitions, intimate relationships, living arrangements, individual identities, childbearing, and childrearing (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001, Axinn and Thornton. 2000), understanding what keeps relationships satisfying and intact has taken on more personal, political, and societal significance than ever before. By examining data given directly by both members of couples, I add a bit one more piece of information to the puzzle of couple satisfaction.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

I have several immediate plans for completing this project. First, I would like to further tease apart the children living in the household variable. Currently, my measure does not take into account whether or not the children in house are the products of the current relationship. I want to investigate whether or not having children from a relationship outside the current one affects own and partner RRS differently than having children with one's current partner. The fact that the number of children in the partner's home more negatively impacts RRS than children in one's own home for both the women and men in sample seems to indicate that this is a likely occurrence.

Similarly, I also plan to further explore another issue that is preliminarily indicated in the data. My findings seem to suggest that a status reversal in which the female partner has a greater education attainment than her male partner is what is driving lower satisfaction for men in educationally mismatched couples. I need to construct some further variables to test out this supposition.

I also hope to create some additional variables. The works of Phillips and Sweeney (2006) as well as Landale and Oropesa (2007) have convinced me that I should include a measure of immigrant status in my models as well. I would also like to work further with my DV measure to create an indicator whether an individual is a simultaneous perpetrator and victim. Eventually, I would also like to compare concordance in DV reports between partners (i.e., one partner reporting being a perpetrator and the other simultaneously reporting as being a victim).

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Table 1. Distribution of Dichotomized Dependent Variable in the Separated Samples

	Female Sample (N=1,220	Male Sample (N=1,220)
Very Satisfied	73.77%	72.79 %
Not Very Satisfied	26.23%	27.21%

Table 2. Distribution of Couples' Discrepancies in Years of Relationship Duration (N=1,220)

Discrepancy in Years	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	13
% of Couples	64.4	24.0	6.3	1.8	1.5	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2

Table 3. Racial Distribution for Separated Gender Samples

	Female Sample (N=1,220)	Male Sample (N=1,220)
White	61.72%	59.02%
Black	15.00%	16.48%
Hispanic	10.49%	10.49%
Asian	6.72%	5.41%
Native American	2.54%	3.93%
Other Racial Category	3.52%	4.67%

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Independent Variables

	Range	Mean (SD) for Combined Sample (N=2,440)	Mean (SD) for Females (N=1,220)	Mean (SD) for Males (N=1,220)
Age (years)	18 - 43	22.62 (2.98)	21.82 (2.42)	23.41 (3.26)
Age at Relationship Start (years)	10 - 38	19.26 (21.36)	18.69 (2.74)	19.83 (3.16)
Religious Orientation	0 – 4	1.39 (0.91)	1.45 (0.90)	1.33 (0.93)
Support of Egalitarian Gender Roles	0 – 4	2.39 (1.36)	2.61 (1.37)	2.18 (1.33)
Positive Emotionality Index	0 – 35	27.90 (6.11)	29.33 (5.53)	26.47 (6.34)
Negative Emotionality Index	0 - 35	18.17 (5.85)	18.20 (5.91)	18.14 (5.80)
Total # Children under 13 in the Household	0 - 32	0.67 (1.17)	0.73 (1.35)	0.62 (0.96)
Degree of Drinking Interference in Relationship	0 - 4	0.16 (0.58)	0.13 (0.52)	0.19 (0.62)
Domestic Violence Index-- Perpetrator	0 - 84	1.49 (4.81)	1.87 (4.97)	1.12 (4.63)
Domestic Violence Index-- Victim	0 – 78.5	1.63 (5.36)	1.47 (4.79)	1.79 (5.87)
Relationship Length (years)	0 - 15	3.09 (2.41)	_____	_____
Age Disparity with the Relationship (years)	0 - 20	2.41 (2.70)	_____	_____
Disparity in Reported Relationship Length (years)	0 - 13	.63 (1.27)	_____	_____

Table 5. Distribution by Percent for Categorical Independent Variables (N=2,400)

	No	Yes
Dating	72.70	27.30
Cohabiting	62.54	37.46
Married	64.76	35.24
College Mismatch	77.37	22.63
Interracial Couple	76.31	23.69
College Attendance	72.79	27.21
Employed at least 10 Hours	28.65	71.35
Received Disability in Past Year	95.00	5.00
Received Public Assistance in Past Year	91.60	8.40
Mistreated Ever as Child	47.05	52.95
Refused/DNK Mistreated as Child	88.57	11.43
Refused Current DV	98.89	1.11
Past DV Involvement with Partner	99.46	0.53

Table 6. Logistic Regression Odds Ratios for Female RRS (N=1,220)

	Model 1: Couple Characteristics	Model 2: Couple + Own Characteristics	Model 3: Couple + Partner's Characteristics	Model 4: Couple + (Own/Partner's) Characteristics	
Relationship Characteristics					
Dating (ref=Married)	0.486***	0.481**	0.459***	0.421***	
Cohabiting (ref=Married)	0.530***	0.617*	0.588**	0.599*	
Relationship Length	0.949	0.922	0.978	.952	
Difference in Reported Relationship Duration	0.912+	0.914*	0.874*	0.876+	
Age Disparity	0.970	0.979	1.014	1.041	
College Mismatch [I*]	1.303	1.244	1.248	1.410	
Interracial Relationship	0.686*	0.667*	0.608**	0.594*	
Demographic Characteristics					
Race: (ref=White)					
Black		0.515**	0.524***	0.640	0.781
Asian		1.714+	1.293	1.824	0.960
Latino		1.096	0.893	1.106	0.949
Other		1.230	1.699	1.058	1.637
Native American		0.513*	1.335	0.525	1.601
Age		1.049	0.972	1.046	0.941
Age at start of relationship		0.936***	0.976	0.952	0.987
College Attendance		0.988	1.329	0.782	1.407
Attitudinal Measures					
Religious Orientation		1.059	1.103	1.017	1.106
Positive Emotionality		1.075***	1.031**	1.074***	1.021
Negative Emotionality		0.965**	0.975*	0.969*	0.989
Egalitarian Gender Roles		0.937	0.955	0.938	0.952
Measures of Stress					
# Children 12 & under in the home		0.947	0.832*	1.020	0.820*
Drinking Interference		0.758*	0.890	0.778	0.913
DV Perpetrator		0.998	0.989	1.006	1.000
DV Victim		0.881***	0.986	0.872***	1.006
-2 Log Likelihood	1366.772	1206.767	1297.390	1176.220	

Notes: Significant at p-value <.10 = +, p-value < .05=*, p-value < .01=***, p-value < .001***;

Covariate*gender interaction significant at a p-value < .05 in pooled model = [I*];

Control variables were included in Models 2-4 for the following: Refused/DNK DV, Past DV Experience, Ever Mistreated as a Child, Refused/DNK Mistreated as Child, Public Assistance Receipt, Disability Receipt, Employment of at least 10 hrs/wk

Table 7. Logistic Regression Odds Ratios for Male RRS (N=1,220)

	Model 5: Couple Characteristics	Model 6: Couple + Own Characteristics	Model 7: Couple + Partner's Characteristics	Model 8: Couple + (Own/Partner's) Characteristics	
Relationship Characteristics					
Dating (ref=Married)	0.481***	0.456***	0.419***	0.394***	
Cohabiting (ref=Married)	0.466***	0.532***	0.500***	0.506***	
Relationship Length	0.931*	01.080	0.918	1.098	
Difference in Reported Relationship Duration	0.989	0.902	1.007	0.903	
Age Disparity	0.965	1.052	0.976	1.052	
College Mismatch [I*]	0.823	0.702*	0.595**	0.542**	
Interracial Relationship	0.731*	0.939	0.720+	0.886	
Demographic					
Race: (ref=White)					
Black		0.460***	0.571**	0.749	0.628
Asian		0.639	0.916	0.697	1.180
Latino		1.091	1.284	0.991	1.487
Other		0.507+	0.993	0.501+	1.034
Native American		0.701	0.657	0.774	0.621
Age		0.859**	1.055	0.849***	1.012
Age at start of relationship		1.104**	.945	1.134**	0.979
College Attendance		1.053	1.596*	0.811	1.597*
Attitudes					
Religious Orientation		1.315***	1.056	1.372***	0.948
Positive Emotionality		1.031**	1.041**	1.022+	1.044**
Negative Emotionality		0.954***	0.974*	0.959**	0.980
Egalitarian Gender Roles		1.091	1.093+	1.036	1.128*
Stressors					
# of Children 12 & under in the home		0.819*	0.861**	0.947	0.849+
Drinking Interference		0.844	0.861	0.864	0.865
DV Perpetrator		1.016	0.990	1.020	1.009
DV Victim		0.934***	0.969+	0.932***	0.973
-2 Log Likelihood	1392.826	1267.536	1309.795	1220.382	

Notes: Significant at p-value <.10 = +, p-value < .05=*, p-value < .01=***, p-value < .001***;

Covariate*gender interaction significant at a p-value < .05 in pooled model = [I*];

Control variables were included in Models 2-4 for the following: Refused/DNK DV, Past DV Experience, Ever Mistreated as a Child, Refused/DNK Mistreated as Child, Public Assistance Receipt, Disability Receipt, Employment of at least 10 hrs/wk