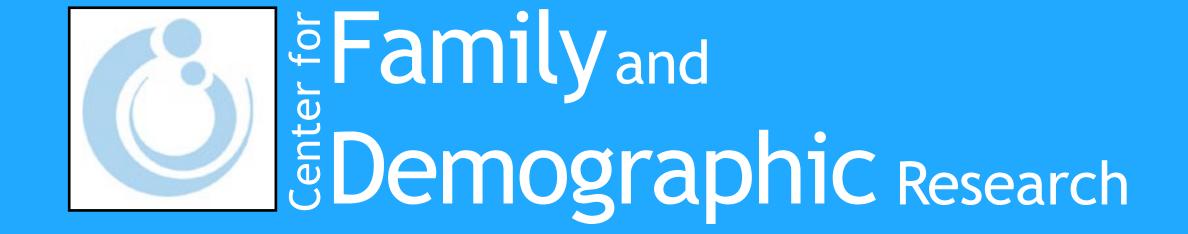
# His and Hers Baggage: Whose Weighs More? Gender and Union Formation following a Non-Coresidential First Birth



J. Bart Stykes (jstykes@bgsu.edu) & Karen Benjamin Guzzo (kguzzo@bgsu.edu) Department of Sociology **Bowling Green State University** 



Married (Cohabiting

## Background

- Fertility Trends in the Contemporary US - Delayed childbearing and fewer children
- Increasing Nonmarital Fertility
- ~50% of nonmarital births in cohabiting unions
- Research on Nonmarital Fertility
- Becoming an Unmarried Mother
- Usually unintended but not always - Stability in nonmarital parents' unions
- Volatility in "Fragile Families"

- Benefits of Unions for Unmarried Mothers

Match quality, type of union, and economic/psychological well-being

# Gaps in the Research

- Research has not focused solely on non-coresidential, nonmarital fertility and subsequent union formation.
- Yet half of all nonmarital births are outside of cohabitation
- Research focused primarily on mothers' perspectives.
- However, scholars have demonstrated that previous children's effects on marriage markets are gendered (see Goldscheider et al. 2009).
- Birth intentions may be a proxy for relationship commitment
- May progress into coresidential union with biological parent

## **Current Study**

- We consider the effects of experiencing a recent, non-coresidential first birth on
- subsequent union formation.
- Initial analyses consider forming any union.
- Next, we differentiate between remaining single, forming a cohabiting relationship, or entering directly into marriage.
- Analyses pay careful attention to...
- Gender
- Intendedness
- The interaction between gender and intendedness

# **Guiding Hypotheses**

- . Mothers are less likely than fathers to enter into a union following a noncoresidential first birth.
- 2. Parents who label the birth as unwanted are less likely to enter a union than parents having a wanted or mistimed (early) birth.
- 3. The effects of intendedness vary for mothers and fathers.

## Data and Methods

- 2006-2010 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG)
- Male and Female data files
- Detailed information on fertility and relationship histories, individual characteristics, and socioeconomic status
- Retrospective dates are used to transform data for eventhistory analyses
- Analytic Sample
- Restrictions
- First birth within 5 years (intendedness only asked for men's births in last 5 years)
- Non-coresident with the other parent at time of child's birth
- 613 individuals → 27,808 person-months

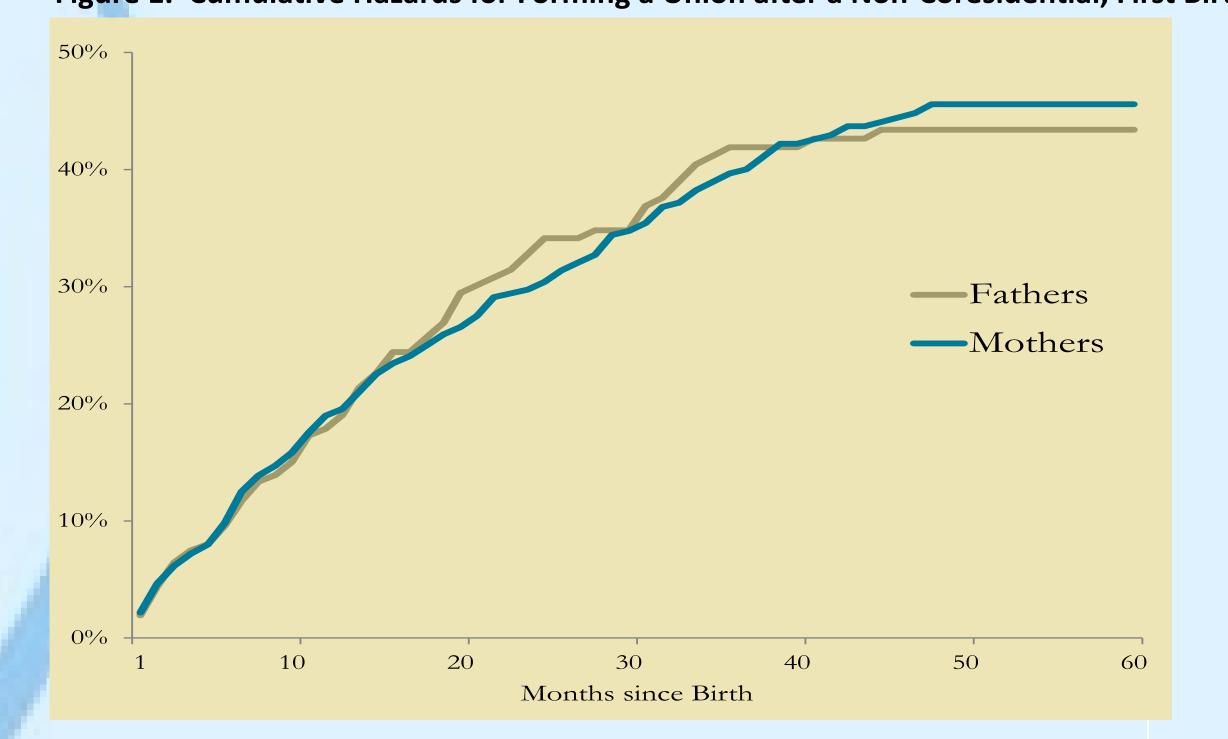
### Measures

- DVs
- (1) entered into any union, dichotomous
- (2) type of union entered, categorical: none, cohabiting, or marital
- Focal IVs
- Mother (father reference)
- Intendedness: wanted; mistimed, too soon (reference); and
- Interaction: mother, wanted; mother, mistimed (reference), and mother, unwanted
- Additional Characteristics
- Time-invariant: race/ethnicity, education, child's gender, age at birth, and family structure at 14
- Time-varying: duration since birth and additional birth

# **Analytic Strategy and Results: Event History Analyses**

- Discrete-time Logistic Models
- Predict the odds of entering any union within five years of having a non-coresidential, first birth.
- Discrete-time Multinomial Logistic Models
- Consider the different type of unions that non-coresidential parents form within five years of their first birth.
- Model 1: Gender only
- Model 2: Gender + Intendedness
- Model 3: Gender + Intendedness + Gender X Intendedness
- Model 4: Full model, including control characteristics

### Figure 1. Cumulative Hazards for Forming a Union after a Non-Coresidential, First Birth



Descriptively speaking, we find minimal gender differences in the hazards of censoring. However, additional analyses demonstrated important variation in the types of unions formed, birth intendedness, and the interaction between gender and intendedness.

## Table 1. Odds Ratios for Entering any Union

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	
(Father)					
Mother	0.30 ***	0.30 ***	0.39 ***	0.54***	
Mistimed, early	<b>/</b> )				
Wanted		1.44 ***	1.61 ***	1.24**	
Unwanted		1.13 **	1.58 ***	0.89	
(Mother, early)					
Mother X Wa	inted	0.81 *	0.69**		
Mother X Un	wanted	0.42 ***	0.62**		
0<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***					

Source. 2006-2010 NSFG

Model 4 includes controls for race/ethnicity, child's gender, education, age at birth, family structure at age 14, duration, and subsequent births (full table available on request).

#### Table 2. Summary Table from Multinomial Models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4					
Reference category	(No Union) (C)		(No Union) (C)		(No Union) (C)		(No Union) (C)		(C)			
	M	C	M	M	C	M	M	C	M	M	C	M
Mother	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	ns	-	-	ns
(Mistimed)												
Wanted				+	ns	+	+	+	ns	+	+	ns
Unwanted				+	+	ns	+	+	-	+	ns	-
(Mother, mist	imed)											
Mother, war	nted						+	-	+	ns	-	+
Mother, unv	vanted						ns	-	+	+	-	+

Positive signs correspond to characteristics that significantly improve the odds of being in a particular type of union compared to the reference category (see parentheses). Similarly, negative signs correspond to characteristics that significantly lower the odds of being in a particular type of union compared to the reference category

Red signs indicate at least a 50% change in the odds. Green signs indicate at least a 100% change in the odds.

# Investigating the Interaction between Gender and Intendedness with Targeted Centering

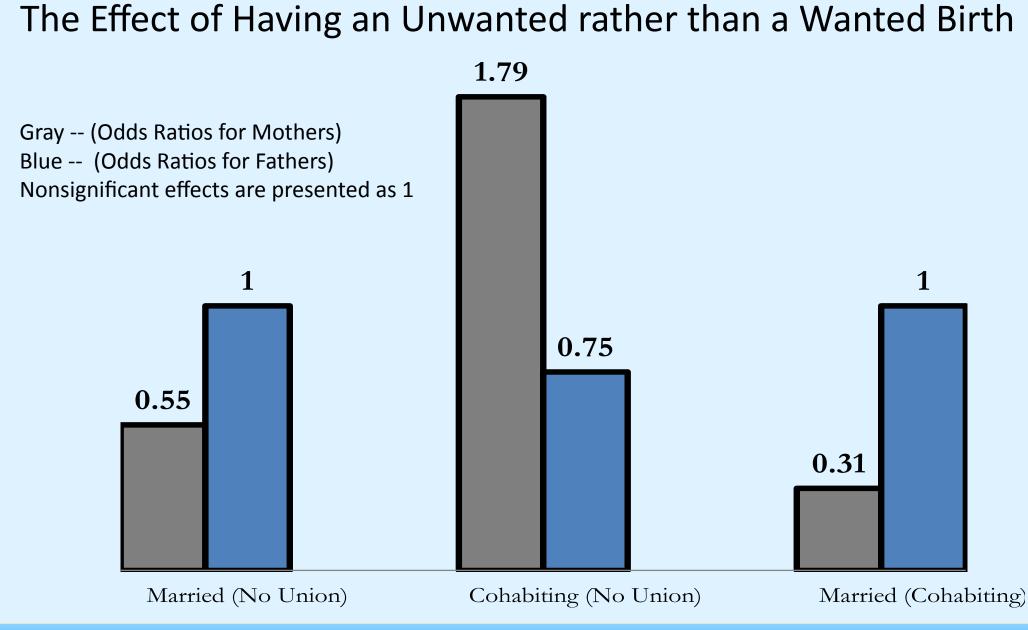
Experiencing a wanted birth increases mothers' odds of entering directly into marriage and reduces their odds of cohabitation. However, for fathers, having a wanted birth increases the odds of entering any type of union rather than remaining single.

The Effect of Having an Unwanted rather than a Mistimed Birth Gray -- (Odds Ratios for Mothers) Blue -- (Odds Ratios for Fathers)

Cohabiting (No Union) Nonsignificant effects are presented as 1 Mothers who reported having an unwanted birth are less likely to cohabit than remain single, but if they form a union, they are more likely to marry than cohabit. Fathers experiencing an unwanted birth are less likely to form marital but not cohabiting unions.

Experiencing an unwanted birth increases mothers' odds of entering a cohabiting union and reduces their odds of entering directly into marriage. Conversely, for fathers, experiencing an unwanted birth does not affect the odds of marrying and reduces the odds of cohabiting.

Cohabiting (No Union)



The Effect of Having an Wanted rather than a Mistimed Birth

Gray -- (Odds Ratios for Mothers)

Blue -- (Odds Ratios for Fathers)

Nonsignificant effects are presented as 1

## **Conclusions and Limitations**

#### Gender Differences

- Mothers report a lower odds of forming any type of union.
- Early models suggest mothers report a higher odds than fathers of entering into marriage rather than cohabitation.

However, net of controls, mothers report a higher odds than fathers of cohabiting compared to marrying.

#### Gender and Intendedness

- Mothers who report a mistimed birth appear to transition rather quickly into cohabiting unions.
- In contrast, fathers who report a mistimed birth report a lower odds of forming unions.

#### Limitations

- Limited to first birth within 5 years of interview
- Intendedness meanings may vary across gender
- Could not determine if union was with biological parent or a new partner
- Child coresidence likely drives gender differences, but we cannot adequately tease out effects of child's current residence status on union formation.

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