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ABSTRACT

Using an innovative factorial vignette design embedded in an Internet survey, this study explores attitudes toward the desirability of intergenerational co-residence in response to economic hardship. Americans are more supportive of taking in an unmarried, older mother than an adult child in economic need. The family status of the adult child matters, with greater support for co-residence with a single adult child than with a partnered adult child. Support for co-residence is much weaker if the adult child is cohabiting rather than married to the partner, although groups with greater exposure to cohabitation make less of a distinction between marriage and cohabitation. The presence of a grandchild does not affect Americans' views about extending help in the form of co-residence. There is much more support for sharing a home if the duration of the co-residence is known and will be for only a short time. Respondents invoke both universalistic family obligations and particularistic qualities of family relationships to explain their attitudes.

Families provide an important safety net for their members in times of economic hardship. The current economic situation, with high levels of housing foreclosures and widespread job loss, creates pressures for intergenerational co-residence, at least for temporary periods, in response to economic crises. Twenty percent of adults say they have had trouble paying the rent or mortgage in the past year, an increase from 14 percent in 2008 (Pew Research Center 2009a). Sharing a household with family members is a time-honored strategy for stretching thin resources (Anderson 1971; Hareven 1990) by sharing the costs of rent and utilities, food, and housework. These cost savings are possible for unrelated roommates, but living with family members is much more common than living with roommates because of the trust, shared values, and knowledge of one another's preferences that family membership implies. The life-long connection between family members provides reassurance that individuals will pay back the help they receive if the donor falls on hard times. Parent-child bonds have this potential for long-term reciprocity, as do marital bonds in societies where marriage lasts a life time.

Americans are likely to view parent-adult child co-residence as an appropriate response to the economic downturn. Older parents who have trouble making ends meet or whose health deteriorates may move in with an adult child who has a steady income or who can provide care (Choi 2003; Costa 1999; McGarry and Schoeni 2000). Over half of adults think that adult children have a responsibility to have their older parent live with them (Pew Research Center 2005). Two thirds of adults believe that it is not a bad idea for older parents to live with their adult children (authors' calculations from the 2008 General Social Survey). Young people and more recent cohorts have been increasingly likely to view co-residence favorably (Fischer and Hout 2006).

Young adults who have recently entered the labor market also may rely on the family safety net by moving back home if their hours are cut or temporary jobs end before they have found stable employment (Furstenberg et al. 2004; Kaplan 2010). The recession has hit young adults especially hard: One in ten adults age 18 to 34 reports that they moved back in with their parents due to the recession (Pew Research Center 2009b).

The responsibility to help a parent or child in need is markedly greater than for other kin or friends (Rossi and Rossi 1990) but parents' and children's responsibilities to each other are not mirror images (Bengtson 2001). When children are young, parents provide for most of their needs, including providing a home. Even when children grow up, parents continue to help children with time and money (Hogan, Eggebeen, and Clogg 1993; Schoeni and Ross 2004). Yet a fundamental task of parenthood is to rear children to be independent adults who form their own families. When children become adults, parents may expect children to reciprocate by helping them emotionally if not economically (Hagestad 1986). However, transfers are still more likely to flow down than up the generational ladder (Bengtson 2001).

Change in the demography of U.S. families challenges the effectiveness of the safety net parents and children provide for each other. Sweeping shifts in couple relationships including cohabitation, delayed marriage, and childbearing outside marriage combine with high rates of marital disruption to alter the connections between parents and children. Ties to non-biological, step-kin have expanded at the same time that biological ties are less often bolstered by the contractual obligations of legal marriage (Bianchi et al. 2008). Uncertainty about whether or not new types of family relationships will last a life time and ambiguity about the obligations they entail raise new questions about the obligations parents and children feel they have toward each other, including the obligation for co-residence in response to economic need.

Little is known about whether parents and children have different beliefs about whether co-residence is an appropriate form of help once children are grown. Rossi and Rossi's (1990) path breaking study of family obligations did not include questions about help in the form of co-residence. Data from the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) suggest that Americans have more favorable attitudes about adult children moving back in with parents than about older parents moving in with their adult children (Goldscheider and Lawton 1998) but these data were collected almost 20 years ago.

The most commonly used public opinion data on intergenerational co-residence currently come from a single statement question asked in the General Social Survey (GSS): "As you know, many older people share a home with their grown children. Do you think this is generally a good idea or a bad idea?" (GSS 1973-2008; National Opinion Research Center 2008). The question ignores the family context of the grown children, does not specify the reason the older parent needs help, and only taps one direction of need – the older generation's need to move in with the younger generation. The elderly generation has become increasingly able to live independently from children, but in recent decades the opposite may be true for young adults who are financially dependent on parents for longer periods (Furstenberg et al. 2004; Settersten and Ray 2010).

In this paper, we report new findings from a study of attitudes about the desirability of parents and adult children living together in response to financial difficulties. We build on past research using vignettes to study family obligations (Coleman and Ganong 2008; Nock, Kingston, and Holian 2008; Rossi and Rossi 1990) and use the vignette methodology to investigate whether or not people think it is a good idea for parents and adult children to live together. The factorial design of the vignette is ideal for eliciting attitudes about aspects of a

hypothetical situation that alter individuals' judgments about obligations (Nock et al.). We vary several dimensions of the vignette, including who needs help, the anticipated duration of co-residence, and the adult child's union and parental status, to investigate how other family roles affect intergenerational obligations. The vignette was included in an Internet survey in which we included an open-ended follow-up question asking respondents why sharing a household would be (un)desirable or, if respondents were uncertain, on what other factors their decision rested.

BACKGROUND

The Slow Launch into Adulthood

Young adults today remain longer in their parents' households before striking out on their own than in the recent past (Hill and Holzer 2007). The weak economy and difficulty of finding stable employment has contributed to the delay in leaving home (Pew Research Center 2009b). Higher rates of college attendance have extended the period of financial dependence on parents (Schoeni and Ross 2004). It is common for young adults to return to the parental home for at least a short period after college or military service, until they can obtain (civilian) jobs and afford to live independently (Settersen and Ray 2010). Family transitions such as marriage that used to mark adulthood and residential independence occur later in life (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) and may be less central to defining when adulthood begins today than in the past (Furstenberg 2010). The combined trends of delayed marriage, longer periods of school enrollment, and increased difficulty of establishing stable employment mean that young adult children remain longer in a stage sometimes referred to as "emerging adulthood" – not fully launched, yet not fully dependent (Furstenberg et al. 2004). This is occurring both in higher income families where young adult children delay family transitions as they remain in school

longer and in lower income families where young adults have difficulty finding jobs good enough to support marriage and residential independence.

The transition to parenthood also occurs at older ages, although the delay is much longer for individuals from affluent than economically disadvantaged families (Wu, Bumpass, and Musick 2001). Individuals, especially those with limited economic resources, are increasingly likely to become parents outside of marriage. Although close to half of nonmarital births are to cohabiting couples (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008), these relationships are very unstable (Carlson and McLanahan 2010), so that women who become mothers outside of marriage are soon single parents. The economic vulnerabilities of single mothers and their children are well-known. Grandparents sometimes provide help through co-residence in response to their adult child's need and the needs of their grandchildren (Bryson and Casper 1999; Pebley and Rudkin 1999).

Cohabitation: An Ambiguous Kin Relationship

Cohabiting unions in young adulthood may interfere with parents' and children's willingness to move in with each other in response to economic difficulties. Cohabiting relationships, like those in a stepfamily, have ambiguously defined rights and responsibilities. Both are incomplete institutions (Cherlin 1978; Nock 1995). Obligations between cohabiting partners and between the cohabiting couple and their parents are even less clearly defined than those in stepfamilies because cohabiting unions lack the formal rules and expectations that are part of state-recognized marriage. Compared to married couples, cohabiting couples spend less time with both sets of parents and are less emotionally close to their parents (Aquilino 1997; Hogerbrugge and Dykstra 2009). Cohabitors also are less likely to exchange help with parents and less likely to consider parents as part of their emergency support system than their married counterparts (Eggebeen 2005).

Uncertainty about the stability of a cohabiting relationship may explain why cohabitors are less engaged than married people are with their parents. If a relationship is unlikely to last, parents may be reluctant to give money or share a home with their adult child and the child's cohabiting partner when resources are scarce and reserved for "real" family members. Most Americans do not consider cohabiting couples to be a family (Powell, Bolzendahl, Geist, and Steelman 2010, Figure 2.1). However, if the couple has a child together, they are much more likely to be defined as a family, in part because people see the child as a signal that the couple are "in it for the long haul" (Powell et al.).

Because cohabitation is more common and, perhaps more accepted by some groups, members of these groups are likely to see the family obligations of those in cohabiting relationships as more clearly defined than others do. Individuals who are themselves in a cohabiting relationship may think of their own situation when they make judgments about whether or not intergenerational co-residence would be an appropriate response to economic hardship. More recent cohorts also have much more experience with cohabitation (Bumpass and Sweet 1995). Although all race-ethnic groups have participated in the rise in nonmarital cohabitation, Mexican Americans, the largest Hispanic ethnic group in the United States, have a history of consensual unions as surrogate marriages for disadvantaged women (Castro Martin 2002; Oropesa 1996). This cultural background may reduce ambiguity about cohabiting family members' intergenerational obligations. Finally, individuals with less education are more likely to have cohabited (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008) and to have cohabiting family members because of the perceived economic requirements of marriage. This greater exposure probably reduces uncertainty about when cohabiting couples should be involved in intergenerational exchanges.

Need and Family Support

Individuals may be unwilling to make an open-ended commitment to share a household even when they recognize a clear obligation to help a family member. Americans value their privacy. The long run trend toward smaller households and the rise in individualistic values suggest that helping a parent or child by living together is undesirable as a long-term solution to economic problems, although living together is an acceptable short-term strategy.

How much a parent or child needs help also affects attitudes about whether moving in together is appropriate. Adult children are more obligated to open their homes to their elderly parent when the parent has limited financial resources and no one else to whom he or she can turn, according to respondents in a telephone survey of U.S. adults (Coleman and Ganong 2008). Adult children also feel more obligated to help a biological parent than to help a stepparent. Even when a parent has great need, the degree of relatedness affects the obligation to live together. Obligations to stepparents are contingent on the quality of the parent-child relationship, in contrast to respondents' rationales for obligations to biological parents, which respondents frame as the categorical duty to help a family member (Coleman and Ganong).

Individuals' own circumstances affect their attitudes about whether or not it is appropriate for parents and adult children to live together. Less educated adults are more likely than their highly educated counterparts to express reservations about parents and adult children living together (Fischer and Hout 2006, Figure 4.13; Goldscheider and Lawton 1998, Table 2). This may reflect their more limited space to house additional family members. Variation by education could also be due to education differences in family composition. Less educated families are more likely than those who are highly educated to include members who are cohabiting (Kennedy and Bumpass 2008), which may introduce ambiguity into parents' and

children's attitudes about obligations and reduce intergenerational help (Eggebeen 2005).

This Study

Our broad goal in this study is to improve understanding of adult children's and parents' perceived obligations toward each other. We have three specific goals: 1) To introduce an innovative vignette approach to measuring attitudes about when parents and adult children should live together; 2) To assess how the family responsibilities of adult children – whether they have a partner or spouse and/or a child – affect attitudes about parents' and adult children's obligation to support one another; 3) To explore the rationales respondents provide for their attitudes about whether or not intergenerational co-residence is a desirable response to economic hardship.

We developed a vignette about co-residence in response to economic need and use a factorial design that varies who needs housing (adult child or parent) and whether the need is indefinite or for three months. We also vary three dimensions of the adult child's characteristics: union status (married, cohabiting, single), whether the child is a parent, and gender. A closed-ended follow-up question asks whether co-residence is a good idea, bad idea, or whether it depends on other factors. An open-ended follow-up question asks respondents to explain their judgments. We use responses to the closed-ended questions to describe the conditions that affect whether parents and children think co-residence is (un)desirable and how respondents' own characteristics affect attitudes about co-residence. We code open-ended responses on "why" co-residence is desirable or not to identify motivations and additional conditions that affect attitudes about parent-child obligations.

Previous research and theory provide a basis for our hypotheses. When a child needs help, we expect that attitudes about the desirability of co-residence will depend on the child's

family status. A single adult child may be viewed as someone not yet fully launched and still eligible for parents' assistance in periods of financial difficulty, given the slow transition to adulthood. If the adult child has entered into a relationship – either marriage or cohabitation – the prospect of co-residence entails sharing a residence not only with an adult child but also with someone else with whom a parent may not be as comfortable. The norm of nuclear family independence also suggests that people believe that young adults should be able to support themselves before marrying or moving in with a partner. In the vignettes where the prospect is offering to share housing with an adult child and an unmarried partner, there may be especially strong reluctance to co-reside because of general disapproval of cohabitation or uncertainty about the commitment and longevity of the relationship. Finally, we expect the presence of a grandchild to increase support for co-residence because the shared housing helps a young child who bears no responsibility for the economic hardship. Norms of equal treatment of children lead to the expectation of no or limited gender differences in willingness to extend co-residence to an adult child. However, if mothers and daughters are more comfortable with each other than mothers and daughters-in-law are, we would expect more reluctance to share housing with a married or cohabiting son than daughter.

What about when it is the mother who needs assistance? We expect the adult child's family situation to matter here as well. Single children may be perceived as less able to extend support to a parent than partnered adult children, given the perception that single, young adults are not fully launched themselves and are often still economically insecure. At the same time, the prospect of taking in a parent is complicated when an adult child is married or cohabiting because the child's partner might not be eager to reside with a mother-in-law. When a grandchild is present, there is the possibility for exchange – housing for the mother in exchange

for childcare for the grandchild – but there also are greater housing constraints. This mix of factors makes it difficult to form expectations for how support for co-residence varies by children's marital and parental characteristics when it is the mother who needs help.

The contemporary GSS data on whether it is a good or bad idea to extend co-residence to an older parent suggests a fair amount of support for helping a parent in need. In addition, norms of reciprocity suggest that children are obligated to repay parents for their past help. Evidence on attitudes from the NSFH, however, suggests that Americans are more willing to help a child than to help an older parent. This is consistent with findings in a large body of research showing that parents continue to help children financially long after they are launched into adulthood. Thus we do not predict whether who needs help affects the desirability of co-residence. No matter who needs assistance, respondents should be more willing to extend co-residence when there is a time limit on the arrangement than when the commitment is open-ended and for an indefinite duration.

DATA AND METHODS

Sample

This paper uses data obtained through an innovative collaboration between the Marriage and Family Research Center at Bowling Green State University and Knowledge Networks, which maintains a panel of potential respondents for Internet surveys. We proposed questions that were included in the Knowledge Networks panel in August 2009. Knowledge Networks (KN) uses a national probability sample that combines address list sampling with random digit dialing sampling to ensure more complete coverage of the U.S. population than would be possible using a single sampling frame. KN provides Internet access and a laptop to individuals

in households that do not already have Internet access. Those who already have Internet access are given points redeemable for cash as incentives for their participation. Individuals who agree to participate in the KN panel complete an initial demographic profile that determines eligibility for inclusion in specific studies (Callegaro and DiSogra 2008). KN recruits panel members by email to participate in studies, which are about 10-15 minutes long. Respondents typically complete one survey a week.

Field work for our study was conducted using the panel defined by the dual frame list in the second half of August 2009. Of the 4,478 individuals initially selected for the study, 69.9 percent completed the survey. The sample we use includes 3,129 respondents age 18 and older.[1] KN provides a study-specific post-stratification weight to adjust the data to the distributions provided by the Current Population Survey. We use these weights in our statistical analyses.[2] Table 1 shows respondents' characteristics and includes the unweighted numbers of cases. Over a third of the sample did not have Internet access prior to their participation in the KN panel.

Table 1

Vignette Manipulation

We used the General Social Survey (GSS) question about sharing a home as the framework for our experimental manipulation using vignettes. We presented each respondent with a short vignette about co-residence in response to economic need that varies five dimensions of the context: who needs housing (adult child or parent); the anticipated duration of

[1]We excluded 3 cases with missing data on the dependent variable.

[2] Standards for calculating response rates for Internet surveys of probability samples are still new and are not as well established as for telephone surveys. Callegaro and DiSogra (2008) provide guidance on how to calculate response rates and include an example of the KN response rate components for a 2006 survey. This survey was conducted before KN expanded their sampling frame to include an address-based list, so the rates may not be the same as for the 2009 panel. In 2006 the household recruitment rate was .326; the household profile rate (the proportion of households in which a potential respondent completed a profile) was .568; and the completion rate for the study they described was .845.

co-residence (three months or indefinitely); three dimensions of the adult child's characteristics: union status (married, cohabiting, single); whether the child is a parent of a young child; and gender. An example of a vignette is:

> John's older mother is having financial trouble and she has lost her home. She needs a place to live for the next three months. John lives nearby with his wife and their young child. Do you think it is generally a good idea or a bad idea for John's mother to move in with John and his family?

Each respondent was shown one vignette in which the five dimensions of the context were randomly combined. After the vignette, we asked respondents whether it was generally a good idea or bad idea for the mother to move in with the adult child (or the child to move in with the mother). We used the same response categories as for the GSS question (good, bad, it depends, don't know), with the exception that the Internet screen explicitly presented "it depends" and "don't know" as response choices. The GSS records those responses only if a respondent volunteers them. We included these as regular response options to learn more about the context for attitudes about co-residence.

After their initial response about the desirability of co-residence, respondents were then asked why it was a good (bad) idea. If respondents said "it depends" or "don't know," they were asked on what their opinion depended, or what made them unsure. Respondents typed their explanations in a text box. We discuss the coding procedures for these open-ended responses below. Table 2 shows the wording for the vignette and the unweighted distributions for the dimensions we varied across vignettes.[3] There are nearly equal numbers of vignettes with each characteristic of the situation. The five dimensions imply 48 random combinations. The factorial design of the vignettes provides a simple random sample of different hypothetical family

[3] The wording in Table 2 illustrates the vignette structure when the mother needs help. We do not show the parallel wording for when the adult child needs help. As the table indicates, the adult child needs help in half the cases, and the mother needs help in the other half.

conditions. The dimensions are uncorrelated because their values are randomly assigned.

Table 2

Our sample size of about 3,100 cases meant that varying further dimensions would have resulted in too few cases per cell (unique combination of characteristics) to support multivariate analyses. The five dimensions we vary ensure approximately 65 cases for each cell. Therefore the vignette holds constant that the parent is an older, unmarried mother. The absence of a spouse means that children are more likely to be called on to help. We chose to vary the adult child's marital and cohabiting status rather than the parent's biological or step status as Coleman and Ganong (2008) did because of our interest in cohabitation. Cohabitation is more common in the child generation than the parent generation of respondents.

There is ambiguity about the appropriate term to describe a cohabiting partner (Manning and Smock 2005) even though over two thirds of adults 15-44 have cohabited (Goodwin, Mosher, and Chandra 2010, Tables 13, 14). We refer to cohabiting partners as "boyfriend" or "girlfriend."[4] The open-ended responses indicate that respondents understood these terms to refer to a cohabiting partner.

The Internet survey is ideal for an exploration of how the adult child's family situation affects attitudes about intergenerational co-residence. Compared to telephone survey respondents, those who answer Internet surveys drawn from probability samples are less likely to provide socially desirable responses and less likely to satisfice when they respond to more complex questions (e.g., select midpoint responses), perhaps because the Internet allows respondents to proceed at their own pace and think before responding (Chang and Krosnick 2009). The opportunity for respondents to think about their answers about the desirability of intergenerational co-residence and their reasons for their opinions is a strength of our study.

[4] We are grateful to Wendy Manning for advice on this issue.

Covariates and Quantitative Analysis

We report descriptive statistics and then estimate multinomial logistic regressions of vignette responses about the desirability of co-residence on the five dimensions of the vignette and the respondents' characteristics. "It depends" is the omitted category of the dependent variable.

Vignette characteristics include the circumstances of co-residence – who needs help (parent, adult child) and how long the parent and child would live together (three months, indefinitely) – and the characteristics of the adult child – union status (married, cohabiting, single), parental status (has a young child or not), and gender. Respondents' characteristics include: age in years, gender, race-ethnicity (non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, Hispanic, non-Hispanic other or multi-racial), highest level of schooling completed (less than high school, high school, some college, college or more), employment status (employed, unemployed, not in the labor force), low income household (income in the two lowest quintiles defined by the sample distribution), union status (married, cohabiting, widowed, divorced or separated, single), whether the respondent lives with children under age 18[5], whether the respondent lives in a metropolitan statistical area, region of residence (Northeast, Midwest, South, West), and whether the household had Internet access prior to participating in the KN panel. We also control for whether the vignette was randomly assigned to come before or after three closed-ended questions about intergenerational relationships like those in large omnibus surveys.

Themes and Coding of Open-Ended Responses

We use the open-ended responses explaining why respondents said co-residence was (un)desirable to shed light on the results of our quantitative analyses. We combined deductive

[5] A disadvantage of the KN data is that they cannot identify respondents who are parents. The data identify only parents of minor children in the household and parents who have an adult children living elsewhere. We do not know if a parent and adult child are living together.

and inductive approaches to develop codes for the open-ended responses. First we identified motivations for helping family members, drawing on sociological and economic theory as well as the Coleman and Ganong (2008) findings about obligations to help parents. Then we added codes based on themes that emerged from our review of the open-ended data. We repeated this process three times, focusing on the first reason respondents provided. When we reached consensus that there were no new themes emerging, two researchers independently coded all of the remaining cases (n = 2,166) that had not been used to develop the coding scheme (160 respondents left the open-ended question blank).

The analysis we report identifies 12 reasons and a residual "other" category: relationship quality, family obligation, resource constraints, short-term exchange, responsibility for needing help, (in)dependence, cohabitation differs from marriage, mother's health, housing constraints, saves money, duration of co-residence, if everyone agrees. The "other" category consists largely of indeterminate responses such as "because" or "she needs help." The inter-rater reliability was high (kappa = 0.83). When the two coders disagreed, a third researcher independently assigned a code. In 85 percent of these cases, the third coder served as tie breaker, and the remainder, in which all three coders disagreed, were assigned the "other" code. We recoded all of the cases used to develop the coding scheme (n = 803) following the same procedure.

RESULTS

Attitudes toward Co-Residence and Respondents' Qualitative Explanations

In Table 3 we show the distribution of attitudes toward intergenerational co-residence and how respondents' explanations for their attitudes vary depending on their views of co-residence. The vignette elicited positive evaluations from 30 percent of respondents. Over half, however,

report that the desirability of co-residence depends on other factors than those specified in the vignette. Twelve percent say it is a bad idea for an older mother and adult child to live together to alleviate economic hardship. Very few say that they do not know if it is a good or bad idea.

Table 3

The second panel of Table 3 shows the distribution of reasons respondents gave to explain their vignette answers. The table shows the distribution for the full sample (far right column) and by vignette response. A third of respondents referred to the quality of family relationships and concerns about people getting along well or conflict. Responses such as "It depends on if they get along" (ID 1890) and "it could create a lot of conflict" (ID 2328) illustrate this concern. Family obligation is the second most common explanation, but only 15 percent gave responses like "family should take care of family" (ID 2341) and "thats [sic] what a family does" (ID 3193).

There are significant differences in the reasons by vignette responses. Among those who say co-residence is a good idea, almost half explain their views by saying that sharing a home is a family obligation. Another 12 percent think that family members can help each other by trading housing for help of another type in a short term exchange. For example, one respondent viewed co-residence as desirable because the older mother who needed housing could "help with her grandchild" (ID 2762).

Co-residence was seen as undesirable because it would create conflict (23 percent), e.g., "family will always hurt you when you live together" (ID 1064) or it "will strain relationships" (ID 1165). Other respondents thought that co-residence would violate the norm of nuclear family independence (28 percent). One respondent put it this way: "With very few exceptions, it is never a good idea for either parent(s) from either side to live in the same house. You're [sic]

are never comfortable even in your own home when you have someone other than your immediate marriage family living with you" (ID 706).

The fact that 32 percent of those who said co-residence is undesirable explained their negative evaluation by referring to the adult child's cohabiting relationship suggests that the new demography of U.S. families may affect the effectiveness of the family safety net. This percentage understates the negative view of cohabitation because only a third of respondents had vignettes with a cohabiting adult child (see Table 2). In vignettes with a cohabiting adult child, almost half (47 percent) explained their negative reaction to co-residence by referencing the cohabiting union. Those who said co-residence is a bad idea because the adult child is cohabiting gave responses like: "Because they are not married" (ID 2759); "shows her approval of their living arrangement" (ID 709); "Because Mary & her boyfriend could break up @ any givin time, they are not permanint [sic]" (ID 1580). None of those who said co-residence is a bad idea explained their responses by referring to family obligations or exchanges. No respondent, for example, said anything like "just because he's her son, doesn't mean she should take him in."

Over half of those who gave a contingent response to the vignette, saying that "it depends," referred to the quality of the family relationships. Relationship quality was also a common explanation for those who gave a "don't know" response to the vignette, but over a third of "don't know" responses gave explanations that fell into the residual category, other. Many of these repeated that the respondent simply did not know if it was a good or bad idea. Those who gave "don't know" responses to the vignette were also much more likely to leave the open-ended item blank in the Internet survey than were individuals who gave any other vignette response (33 vs. 5-7 percent, respectively; not shown).

Table 4 shows how judgments about the desirability of co-residence for the family in the vignette vary by respondents' characteristics. Consistent with previous research, younger people are more likely to think that living with a parent is a good idea (Coleman and Ganong 2008; Rossi and Rossi 1990). Women's and men's attitudes are very similar even though the vignette parent is a mother. Respondents who identify themselves as Hispanic view co-residence as more desirable than non-Hispanic Whites (36 vs. 28 percent), but the race-ethnic differences overall are not statistically significant. Because Hispanics have higher rates of nonmarital cohabitation than non-Hispanic whites, we examine this difference in greater detail in the multivariate analysis.

Table 4

Respondents with at least a high school education are more likely to provide contingent responses than are those who have not completed high school. Among respondents without a high school degree, 47 percent say "it depends" compared to 55 percent of those who are college educated. Respondents who did not complete high school have relatively high rates of "don't know" answers which suggests that they found it harder to understand or evaluate the hypothetical vignette than other respondents. Their open-ended follow-up responses often included a repetition of "don't know," or references to the respondent's own situation (e.g., "I live alone and don't want to live with my son") or random strings of letters, all of which suggest they had difficulty with the vignette and follow up question.

Those with low household incomes are less likely to say co-residence is a good idea than higher-income respondents. Respondents who are living with children, most of them their own children, and those in urban areas are more likely to think co-residence is desirable.

Multivariate Analyses of Attitudes about Intergenerational Co-Residence

Effects of Context on Judgments about Co-Residence. Table 5 reports the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis of whether co-residence is a good or bad idea regressed on the vignette dimensions and respondent characteristics. The reference category is "it depends." We show odds ratios and Z-statistics. The results indicate that the context for intergenerational co-residence affects its perceived desirability. Respondents hold more favorable attitudes toward having an unmarried older mother move into an adult child's home than toward having an adult child move into a mother's home. The odds that respondents view co-residence as a good idea (vs. "it depends") are only 70 percent as great if the child needs help as if the mother needs help. We also examined the contrast between "good idea" and "bad idea," and respondents are significantly more likely to say that it is a good idea to provide housing help to an unmarried mother than to an adult child (results not shown).[6] Respondents see short stays as more desirable than indefinite stays. In the open-ended responses to vignettes that included the three-month need for housing, 12 percent of respondents who said living together would be a "good idea" highlighted the short, time-limited duration of co-residence. In contrast, only two percent of those who said an "indefinite stay," is a good idea referred to the duration of co-residence in their explanations. When an indefinite stay was viewed positively, respondents were more likely to justify their views by the possibility of an exchange between the generations than when a short stay was viewed positively (not shown).

Table 5

The family circumstances of the adult child also affect attitudes about co-residence. Respondents viewed co-residence with a single adult the most favorably. Compared to responses that "it depends," the odds of "good idea" are 1.5 times greater when the child is single than for a married child. Respondents are also much less likely to view co-residence as a bad idea (vs. it

[6] All tables available on request.

depends) when the decision involves an adult child who is single. In contrast, when adult children are living with a boyfriend or girlfriend, respondents are much more likely to say it depends than to say that it is a good idea, compared to when adult children are married. Respondents are also considerably more likely to say that it would be a bad idea (vs. it depends). The odds of responses of "bad idea" are almost three times as high when the adult child is cohabiting as when the child is married.

Whether the adult child has a young child of his or her own does not affect attitudes about co-residence. Even when it is the adult child who needs help, having a grandchild does not increase the likelihood of a response that co-residence would be a "good idea." That is, the interaction of adult child needs help by adult child is a parent is not statistically significant (not shown). Open-ended responses shed a little light on why having a grandchild who needs help does not affect the desirability of co-residence. The slightly higher rates of "other" responses for "good" and "bad" idea" in vignettes with a grandchild hint that respondents are more ambivalent when a grandchild also needs help. They worry about conflict over who will have childrearing authority but recognize that children benefit from being close to their grandmother.

The gender of the adult child does not have a statistically significant effect on attitudes about the desirability of co-residence, but the odds ratio for gender of child is close to statistical significance for one of the contrasts with "it depends." Respondents are less likely to say it is a bad idea for an adult son than an adult daughter and mother to live together. We investigated whether the son's marital or cohabiting status affected the desirability of co-residence differently than a daughter's union status because of difficulties in the mother-daughter-in-law relationship, but this interaction was not statistically significant (Wald test $p = .41$). A few respondents said that it would be difficult for two women to share a kitchen, but these comments did not include

remarks about the in-law relationship.

Demographic Variation in Attitudes about Co-Residence. Respondents' own characteristics are also associated with attitudes about intergenerational co-residence as suggested by the patterns in Table 4. Age is associated with lower odds of thinking that co-residence is a good idea (vs. it depends), as well as lower odds of good idea vs. bad idea (not shown). Men and women do not differ in their attitudes about the desirability of intergenerational co-residence, another pattern consistent with the zero-order association in Table 4. Table 5 also shows that Hispanic respondents' attitudes are more favorable than those of non-Hispanic Whites, who are more likely to say that the desirability of co-residence depends on other factors, although the difference is not quite statistically significant ($Z = 1.89$).

Respondents' education is associated with attitudes about co-residence, but here the differences are more evident in the contrast between thinking that sharing a household is a bad idea and the contingent "it depends" response. Those who did not complete high school are more likely than the college-educated to say that it is a bad idea for the mother and adult child to live together (vs. "it depends"). This is consistent with the GSS finding that Fischer and Hout (2006) report. The less educated are also much more likely to say that they "don't know" than that it depends on other aspects of the situation. This education difference in vignette responses aligns with our earlier observation that respondents who said they did not know were ones who had trouble with the open-ended follow-up question and often gave unclear responses or left the response lines blank.

Low household income is associated with less favorable attitudes and greater odds of providing a contingent response. Although the odds ratio for the association between low income and good idea (vs. it depends) is statistically significant, the p-value for the global Wald

test is only significant at the .08 level. Employment status is not associated with attitudes about co-residence. In analyses not shown here we also examined whether or not home owners, who are likely to have more housing space, viewed co-residence more favorably than those who do not own homes. There were no such differences. Including the home ownership variable in the analysis did not appreciably alter the coefficients for other parameters in the model.

Although we expected that respondents' own family circumstances would affect their attitudes about co-residence, neither their union status nor living with minor children is associated with views about the desirability of parents and adult children living together. Where the respondent lives also has little effect on whether co-residence is seen as desirable, although for reasons we cannot explain, those in urban areas (MSAs) are more likely to say they "don't know" than that their attitude depends on other factors.

Motivations For Helping Mothers and Adult Children

The finding in Table 5 that respondents think helping a mother by offering co-residence is a better idea than helping an adult child by co-residence is intriguing in light of Goldscheider and Lawton's (1998) evidence that helping adult children was favored in an earlier period. Respondents' explanations for their attitudes provide insight into the motivations for the two directions of intergenerational help. Table 6 shows that respondents are much more likely to explain their favorable attitudes toward co-residence with an older mother who is experiencing economic need by referencing family obligations than they are to cite obligations when the adult child needs help, 59 vs. 35 percent, respectively. When an adult child needs a place to live, exchanging help or making it possible for an adult child to save money are much more common motivations than when the older mother needs help. The distribution of reasons co-residence would be a bad idea also depends on who needs help. Respondents are almost three times as

likely to express concerns about how co-residence would affect the quality of family relationships when the mother needs help than when the child does (35 vs. 13 percent, respectively). The open-ended data suggest that this is due to concerns about the effects on relationship quality of the role transition from having authority over the household, typically the parent's right, to living in a home where the child holds more authority.

Table 6

How Uncertainty about Duration of Co-residence Affects Attitudes

We investigated whether the greater acceptance of co-residence when the mother needs help (than when the adult child does) extends to thinking it would be a good idea for her to stay with the adult child indefinitely. The interaction of the duration of co-residence by whether the mother or adult child needs help was statistically significant for the contrast between "good idea" and "it depends" ($Z = 2.13$). The Wald test for the joint significance of the interaction was also significant ($p = .05$). This result is shown in Table 7, in which we report the predicted probabilities of attitudes about the desirability of co-residence by who needs housing help and whether or not the stay would be for an indefinite period. The probabilities are from a model like that in Table 5 with the addition of the interaction of these vignette characteristics. Other variables are evaluated at the sample means.

Table 7

When the parent's stay is for three months, the probability of a positive evaluation is .41, whereas if the stay would be for an indefinite period, the probability of a positive evaluation is only .24. Respondents are more likely to say that their evaluation depends on other factors when the stay would last indefinitely. If the adult child needs help with a place to stay, the probability that respondents think sharing a household is a good idea is similar to that when the mother

needs to stay for an indefinite period, between .22 and .27.

What Clarifies Obligations If an Adult Child Is Cohabiting?

We investigated several factors we thought would clarify the ambiguity about the obligations associated with cohabiting relationships. We first asked if respondents' attitudes about cohabitation were more favorable and less qualified if the adult child in the vignette and his or her boyfriend/girlfriend had a young child. There was no evidence that respondents distinguished between cohabiting couples who were living alone and those who had a child together, in contrast to Powell et al.'s (2010) finding that Americans are much more likely to view a cohabiting couple with a child as a "real family." The Wald test for the joint significance of the interaction between the adult child's cohabiting and parental status was not significant ($p = .60$; not shown). We also explored the effect of having a young child on attitudes about living with an adult child in a cohabiting relationship when the adult child needed help. That interaction was also statistically insignificant (Wald test $p = .47$; not shown).

Respondents' own circumstances, particularly their exposure to cohabitation and whether or not they are members of subgroups that are more accepting of cohabitation are likely to foster more definite, favorable attitudes toward intergenerational co-residence when the adult child is living with a boyfriend or girlfriend. We examined differences by whether the respondent was in a cohabiting union, age, Hispanic ethnicity, and education. To do this we included a series of interaction terms in models, building from the multinomial logistic regression summarized in Table 5. We entered each interaction term or set of interaction terms by itself. Table 8 shows the predicted probabilities of each response category for selected contrasts evaluated at the sample means for other variables.

Table 8

We showed in Table 5 that individuals who are themselves in a cohabiting union do not differ from married persons in their attitudes about parents and adult children living together. The results of a test of the interaction of respondent's cohabitation status by whether or not the adult child in the vignette was in a cohabiting relationship indicate that cohabiting and married respondents are equally likely to say "it depends" (Wald test p = .24; not shown). That is, cohabitors do not seem to have clearer ideas about the kin obligations of a cohabiting adult child than do those who are married.

Because cohabitation has increased rapidly over the past forty years, we expected that younger respondents would have both clearer (i.e., fewer qualified responses) and more favorable views toward cohabiting couples than would older respondents. The results in Table 8 are only partly consistent with these expectations. Older and younger respondents view co-residence with a married adult child more favorably than with a cohabiting child. However, the married vs. cohabiting difference in favorable responses is much greater for older adults than for younger adults. For 70 year olds the probability of saying co-residence is a "good idea" is .27 if the adult child is married, more than three times the probability of "good idea" (.08) if the child is in a cohabiting relationship. For 30 year olds the probability of "good idea" when the adult child is married is only 1.5 times the probability for when the adult child is cohabiting (.34/.22).[7]

We also expected that Hispanics would be less likely to distinguish between adult children who were cohabiting and those who were married because consensual unions are more common and traditionally accepted among Hispanics. Indeed we find that Hispanics think intergenerational co-residence is equally desirable for married and cohabiting adult children (.31). In contrast, Whites are significantly more likely to consider co-residence favorably for a

[7]We re-estimated the model with "bad idea" as the reference category. The age difference in "good" and "bad" attitudes when the adult child is cohabiting (vs. married) is statistically significant (Z = 2.82).

married versus cohabiting adult child (.29 vs. .14). Compared to non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanics also are less likely to provide a contingent, "it depends" response when the adult child is cohabiting than Whites are (.46 vs. .62).[8]

We found in preliminary analyses that attitude differences are more pronounced between respondents who had not completed high school and those with at least a high school education. Table 8 shows results from a model with an interaction between education (less than high school vs. more education) and union status of the adult child. Among respondents who did not complete high school, the predicted probabilities of saying that co-residence is a good idea are about the same whether the adult child is married or cohabiting (.25 vs. .21). For better educated respondents, the probability of evaluating co-residence positively is twice as high for a married adult child as for a cohabiting adult child (.31 vs. .15).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

About a third of Americans believe that it is a good idea for parents and adult children to share a home when one of them needs a place to live due to economic hardship, according to attitudes expressed in our Internet survey with vignettes. This willingness to share is not absolute. Attitudes about doubling up depend on who needs help, how long the help is needed, and whether the adult child is still single or is married or cohabiting. The desirability of co-residence also depends on aspects of the context omitted from the vignette. Over half of respondents said that whether or not co-residence is a good or bad idea would depend. Their open-ended responses highlight the importance of relationship quality for evaluations of the

[8] Even when "it depends" and "don't know" responses are combined, Hispanics are less likely to respond in a way that indicates uncertainty [(.46 + .05) = .51] when the adult child in the vignette is cohabiting than Whites are [(.60 + .03) = .63].

desirability of co-residence. Although these qualitative responses suggest that family responsibilities depend on particularistic aspects of the parent-child relationship, our findings also demonstrate the significance of a more universalistic interpretation of family roles.

Respondents were more likely to view living together as a good idea when the mother needs help than when the adult child does because, to paraphrase respondents' words, this is what families are supposed to do. When an adult child needs help, respondents are less likely to explain their positive views by invoking family obligations and more likely to say it is a good idea if the adult child compensates the mother by helping around the house as part of a short-term exchange or if sharing a home allows the adult child to save money. Respondents may be ambivalent about transfers to adult children because of the two conflicting norms of always providing for family members in need, on one hand, and raising children to be independent and stand on their own two feet, on the other hand. This ambivalence is consistent with Pillemer et al.'s (2007) finding that mothers express mixed feelings toward an adult child when the mother gives more help than she receives from the child. Whether it is the mother or child who needs help, attitudes toward intergenerational co-residence are much more favorable when the stay is for a short period, as we hypothesized. Certainty that the period of co-residence is time-limited is of sufficient concern to respondents that they mention it as a reason for their assessment of the (un)desirability of co-residence. Indefinite stays are equally undesirable regardless of which generation needs help. That the relative desirability of helping a mother vs. a child depends on the context of co-residence illustrates the importance of knowing what respondents assume about the parents and children in general agree/disagree attitude questions such as those in the National Survey of Families and Households and the General Social Survey.

Perhaps guided by the norm that parents are responsible for launching children into adult

roles, respondents express more favorable attitudes toward helping a single adult child than a child who has already taken on the adult role of spouse or cohabiting partner. Respondents do not appear to consider whether the adult child needing help is also the parent of a young child. The lack of attention to grandchildren's needs puzzled us in light of previous research on the importance of grandparents when grandchildren experience family crises (Furstenberg and Cherlin 1986). Some respondents' expressed concern that the grandmother and adult child might have disagreements about childrearing. Helping grandchildren without interfering with parents' authority may be more difficult when help is in the form of co-residence instead of financial contributions or occasional babysitting.

We find support for our expectation that ambiguity about the responsibilities of cohabitation would affect attitudes about how desirable it is for parents and adult children to live together. When the adult child is living with a cohabiting partner, moving in with the adult child's mother or having the mother move in with the cohabiting couple is viewed much less favorably than when the adult child is single or married. Close to half of respondents whose vignettes included a cohabiting adult child said they thought co-residence between a parent and a cohabiting couple was a bad idea because the couple was unmarried. Respondents whose demographic characteristics suggest that they have had more exposure to cohabitation and therefore may have clearer ideas about the role of cohabiting partners in the family network are less likely to distinguish between cohabiting and married adult children. Hispanics and respondents with less than a high school education report equally favorable attitudes about co-residence regardless of whether the adult child in the vignette is cohabiting or married. The union status difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites occurs because fewer Hispanics say that "it depends" when they are asked to evaluate the desirability of co-residence with a

cohabiting adult child. The education difference also results from fewer responses indicating a need for additional information about the family's situation.

Younger respondents are less likely to distinguish between married and cohabiting adult children compared to older respondents, but co-residence with a married adult child is viewed more favorably regardless of the respondent's age. Respondents who are cohabiting at the time of the survey do not differ from those who are married in their contingent responses about the desirability of intergenerational co-residence with a cohabiting adult child. We suspect that this is because current status is a poor indicator of lifetime exposure to cohabitation. Married respondents include a mix of individuals, some of whom have previously been in cohabiting relationships and some of whom have not. Taken together, our findings suggest that nonmarital cohabitation is still an incomplete institution despite its increased incidence.

We find socioeconomic differences in respondents' attitudes about intergenerational co-residence, which are consistent with those in previous research: The highly educated hold more favorable attitudes about parents and adult children living together than those who are less well-educated. Intergenerational households are more common among those at the lower end of the socioeconomic distribution. It is possible that concerns about the loss of privacy from the experience of co-residence make people think co-residence is not a desirable solution to financial difficulties even when they think it is the right thing to do in hard economic times.

The distinction between what is desirable and what is the right way to behave may be important. In this study, we treat attitudes about the desirability of co-residence as equivalent to attitudes about what individuals should do, although the open-ended responses indicate that family obligations are only one of several motivations for co-residence. Beliefs about whether sharing a household is a good idea may differ from beliefs that family members are obliged to

share a household when one member needs help. People do things because they feel they should even when they recognize that fulfilling an obligation may come at a cost and therefore be a bad idea in some ways. We chose the language of "good" and "bad" idea because it allows us to learn more about how to interpret the trend in attitudes about co-residence available in the General Social Survey, the only data source with trend data on this attitude. Future research should investigate differences between attitudes about the desirability of sharing a household and attitudes about the obligation to share.

Anticipating how individuals will respond to the current economic recession was one motivation for our study. Our underlying model assumes that attitudes about what is desirable predict behavior, in this case, whether parents and children will share a home to alleviate economic hardship. The Longitudinal Study of Generations (LSOG) provides some evidence that adult children's attitudes about responsibilities to parents affect whether or not children help parents later in life (Silverstein, Gans, and Yang 2006). This study is a rare exception. We have little information about how felt obligations affect actual behavior when family members are in trouble. Untangling how general attitudes, personal feelings of responsibility, and helping behavior are related are important challenges for understanding the durability of the family safety net.

Attitudes about intergenerational assistance and actual provision of assistance are intertwined with individuals' views of what it means to be a "good" parent or a "responsible" child. Ascertaining how the generations view their obligations toward each other and whether, or under what conditions, they act in accord with these views remains a high priority for future research. Families have undergone rapid change in recent decades, and yet families remain the "fall back" when members experience hardship. This study takes an important first step toward

trying to understand some of the conditions that may affect family members' willingness to assist each other and offers an example of the types of questions that might be fruitfully explored in a survey framework that combines vignette methodology with open-ended and more conventional survey questions.

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Table 1. Sample Characteristics (weighted percentages, unweighted Ns)

	Percent	N		Percent	N
Age			**Low income**		
18-24	9	214	No	57	1,896
25-34	19	505	Yes	43	1,233
35-44	20	596	**Union status**		
45-54	18	549	Married	44	1,517
55-64	18	617	Cohabiting	8	215
65-74	10	423	Widowed	5	167
75 and older	5	225	Divorced or separated	15	450
Gender			Single	28	780
Female	51	1,552	**Children under 18 in HH**		
Male	49	1,577	No children	69	2,226
Race and Hispanic ethnicity			Children present	31	903
Non-Hispanic White	69	2,439	**Urban residence**		
Non-Hispanic Black	11	253	Do not live in MSA	16	542
Hispanic	13	264	Live in MSA	84	2,587
Non-Hispanic Other	6	173	**Region**		
Education			Northeast	18	564
Less than high school	12	338	Midwest	22	787
High school graduate	32	927	South	37	1,080
Some college	28	955	West	23	698
Bachelor degree or higher	28	909	**Internet access**		
Employment status			Had internet before	62	2,020
Employed	57	1,697	Did not have internet	38	1,109
Unemployed	10	257			
Not in labor force	33	1,175			

Notes: Variables are described in text. Percentages for each variable may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2. Vignette Design

Vignette

CHILD'S NAME [John / Mary]'s older mother is having financial trouble and she has lost her home. She needs a place to live **DURATION [for the next three months/ indefinitely]. CHILD'S NAME [John / Mary]** lives nearby **FAMILY STATUS [with his wife and their young child / with his girlfriend and their young child / with his young child / no fill - single].** ***Do you think it is generally a good idea or a bad idea for*** **CHILD'S NAME [John / Mary]'s mother to move in with CHILD'S NAME [and his family]?**

Vignette Characteristics	Percent (unweighted)
Circumstances of co-residence	
Who needs help	
Parent	50.4
Adult child	49.6
Total	*100.0*
Length of Stay	
3 months	49.9
Indefinite	50.1
Total	*100.0*
Characteristics of the adult child	
Union Status	
Married	34.0
Cohabiting	34.2
Single	31.7
Total	*100.0*
Parental Status	
No young child	51.1
Has young child	48.9
Total	*100.0*
Gender	
Male	49.7
Female	50.3
Total	*100.0*
Unweighted N	3,129

Notes: Variables are described in text. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Table 3. Attitudes Toward Co-Residence and Respondents' Explanations (percentages)

Vignette Responses

	Good idea	Bad idea	It depends	Don't know	Total
All respondents	30	12	54	4	100

Explanations from Open-Ended Follow-up

	Good idea	Bad idea	It depends	Don't know	Total
Relationship quality/conflict	0.7	22.7	52.6	35.4	33.1
Family obligation	48.7	0	0.2	0	14.7
Resource constraints	6.2	2.2	7.4	1.9	6.3
Cohabitation	0.1	32.1	2.0	10.0	5.2
Short-term exchange	11.7	0	2.8	0	5.1
Housing	0.1	0.1	8.2	0	4.6
Duration	7.7	1.3	3.1	3.3	4.3
(In)dependence	0	27.7	1.0	6.0	4.0
Responsibility	0.3	1.4	5.7	1.7	3.5
If agree	0.4	0.3	4.6	4.2	2.8
Mother's health	0.2	0.3	4.8	0	2.8
Saves money	8.4	0	0.4	0	2.7
Other	15.5	11.9	7.5	37.5	11.2
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100

Notes: Explanations are described in text. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Data are weighted. Unweighted N = 3,129 for vignette responses; 2,969 for explanations.

Table 4. Attitudes toward Co-Residence by Respondent Demographic Characteristics (percentages)

	Good idea	Bad idea	It depends	Don't know	Total	p value from F test
Total	30	12	54	4	100	n/a
Age						<.01
18-24	40	7	50	4	100	
25-34	35	9	52	3	100	
35-44	31	10	57	3	100	
45-54	26	12	56	6	100	
55-64	24	15	58	3	100	
65-74	30	18	48	4	100	
75 and older	22	20	55	3	100	
Gender						.87
Female	29	12	55	4	100	
Male	30	12	53	4	100	
Race and Hispanic ethnicity						.19
Non-Hispanic White	28	13	56	3	100	
Non-Hispanic Black	32	14	50	5	100	
Hispanic	36	9	51	5	100	
Non-Hispanic Other	38	9	49	5	100	
Education						<.01
Less than high school	30	16	47	7	100	
High school graduate	29	13	54	4	100	
Some college	28	10	58	4	100	
Bachelor degree or higher	33	11	55	2	100	
Employment status						.22
Employed	31	11	54	4	100	
Unemployed	32	10	56	2	100	
Not in labor force	27	14	54	4	100	
Low income						<.01
No	33	12	53	3	100	
Yes	26	12	57	5	100	
Union status						.24
Married	31	13	52	3	100	
Cohabiting	30	10	54	5	100	
Widowed	20	14	58	8	100	
Divorced or separated	27	11	58	5	100	
Single	31	11	55	4	100	
Children under 18 in HH						.04
No children	28	13	55	4	100	
Children present	34	10	53	3	100	
Urban residence						.03
Do not live in MSA	25	14	58	2	100	
Live in MSA	31	12	54	4	100	
Region						.12
Northeast	29	13	54	4	100	
Midwest	28	12	56	5	100	
South	31	14	51	4	100	
West	30	8	58	3	100	

Notes: Variables are described in text. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Data are weighted. Unweighted N = 3,129.

Table 5. Odds Ratios (OR) from a Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting Attitudes Toward Co-Residence ("It depends" is reference category)

	Good idea vs. It depends		Bad idea vs. It depends		Don't know vs. It depends		p value for joint
	OR	Z	OR	Z	OR	Z	Wald test
Vignette Characteristics							
Adult child needs help (parent)	0.70	-3.26	1.18	1.13	0.78	-0.92	<.01
Indefinite stay (3 months)	0.59	-4.84	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.00	<.01
Adult child union status (married)							<.01
Cohabiting	0.53	-4.48	2.98	6.21	1.49	1.33	
Single	1.51	3.34	0.45	-3.24	0.59	-1.47	
Adult child has young child	1.15	1.32	1.04	0.26	1.30	1.03	.47
Adult child is man (woman)	1.05	0.46	0.76	-1.86	0.69	-1.40	.12
Respondent Characteristics							
Age, in years	0.99	-2.45	1.02	3.55	0.98	-1.72	<.01
Male (female)	1.10	0.84	1.12	0.77	1.24	0.81	.68
Race and Hispanic ethnicity (Non-Hispanic White)							.16
Non-Hispanic Black	1.32	1.42	1.23	0.80	1.50	0.94	
Hispanic	1.43	1.89	0.74	-0.99	1.20	0.49	
Non-Hispanic Other	1.63	2.19	0.81	-0.54	1.77	0.94	
Education (college +)							.02
Less than high school	1.18	0.76	1.78	2.11	4.78	3.74	
High school graduate	0.99	-0.10	1.36	1.62	2.43	2.46	
Some college	0.87	-1.04	1.05	0.25	1.88	1.71	
Employment status (employed)							.62
Unemployed	0.89	-0.57	1.03	0.10	0.38	-1.94	
Not in labor force	1.07	0.49	0.99	-0.05	0.76	-0.75	
Low income	0.78	-1.98	0.81	-1.30	1.44	1.11	.08
Union status (married)							.77
Cohabiting	0.90	-0.44	0.87	-0.40	1.10	0.17	
Widowed	0.72	-1.24	0.68	-1.35	2.03	1.18	
Divorced or separated	0.92	-0.47	0.69	-1.64	1.00	0.01	
Single	0.92	-0.57	0.91	-0.44	0.73	-0.93	
Children live in household	1.01	0.11	1.06	0.26	0.71	-0.90	.81
Live in MSA	1.24	1.48	0.98	-0.12	2.25	2.33	.07
Region (Midwest)							.06
Northeast	0.96	-0.24	1.32	1.30	0.99	-0.01	
South	1.12	0.79	1.46	2.07	0.77	-0.84	
West	0.93	-0.44	0.69	-1.68	0.63	-1.32	
Controls							
Did not have internet before	0.94	-0.47	1.08	0.47	2.55	3.03	.02
Vignette asked second	1.13	1.13	1.03	0.22	0.87	-0.54	.62

Notes: Variables are described in text. Reference category is in parentheses. Data are weighted. Unweighted N = 3,129.

Table 6. Open-Ended Responses, by Who Needs Help and the Desirability of Co-Residence (weighted percentages)

Explanation	Parent Needs Help				Adult Child Needs Help			
	Good	**Bad**	**Dep.**	**Total**	**Good**	**Bad**	**Dep.**	**Total**
Relationship quality/conflict	0.3	34.8	58.6	36.0	1.3	12.7	47.1	30.2
Family obligation	59.4	0	0.2	20.1	34.9	0	0.1	9.2
Resource constraints	5.7	2.5	7.6	6.2	6.8	1.9	7.1	6.3
Cohabitation	0	25.3	1.6	3.9	0.3	37.7	2.3	6.5
Short-term exchange	8.7	0	2.0	4.0	15.7	0	3.5	6.1
Housing	0.1	0.3	7.5	4.0	0	0	8.8	5.2
Duration	7.9	2.4	2.3	4.1	7.6	0.4	3.8	4.5
(In)dependence	0	22.7	0.6	2.9	0	31.8	1.4	5.1
Responsibility	0	0.7	1.5	0.9	0.7	2.0	9.5	6.0
If agree	0.1	0	4.0	2.2	0.9	0.6	5.1	3.4
Mother's health	0.3	0.7	5.7	3.2	0	0	4.0	2.4
Saves money	3.2	0	0.7	1.4	15.2	0	0.1	4.0
Other	14.5	10.7	7.8	11.0	16.7	13.0	7.2	11.3
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N (unweighted)	485	178	803	1,502	387	196	852	1,467

Notes: Explanations are described in the text. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. "Don't know" responses not shown due to small sample sizes.

Table 7: Predicted Probabilities of Attitudes toward Intergenerational Co-Residence, by Anticipated Duration of Co-Residence and Who Needs Help

	Good idea	Bad idea	It depends	Don't know
Vignette Characteristics				
Parent needs help for 3 months	.41	.06	.52	.02
Parent needs help indefinitely	.24	.10	.62	.04
Adult child needs help for 3months	.27	.10	.60	.02
Adult child needs help indefinitely	.22	.11	.64	.02

Note: Probabilities are generated using a model based on Table 5 that contains interaction terms between who needs help and anticipated duration of co-residence. The probabilities are evaluated using the means of the other variables in the model.

Table 8: Predicted Probabilities of Attitudes toward Intergenerational Co-Residence, by Adult Child's Union Status and Respondent's Characteristics

Adult Child Union Status	Respondent Characteristics	Good idea	Bad idea	It depends	Don't know
Cohabiting	30 years old	.22	.14	.58	.05
Married	30 years old	.34	.06	.57	.03
Cohabiting	50 years old	.20	.18	.59	.03
Married	50 years old	.30	.08	.59	.02
Cohabiting	70 years old	.08	.37	.53	.02
Married	70 years old	.27	.11	.61	.02
Cohabiting	Non-Hispanic White	.14	.24	.60	.03
Married	Non-Hispanic White	.29	.09	.60	.03
Cohabiting	Hispanic	.31	.18	.46	.05
Married	Hispanic	.31	.05	.62	.02
Cohabiting	Less than HS	.21	.27	.39	.13
Married	Less than HS	.25	.14	.54	.07
Cohabiting	HS or more	.15	.23	.60	.03
Married	HS or more	.31	.08	.60	.02

Note: Probabilities are generated using three separate models based on Table 5. Each model contains an interaction between the adult child's union status and one of the three respondent characteristics: age, race-ethnicity, education. The probabilities are evaluated using the means of the other variables in the model.