

Measuring Cohabitation

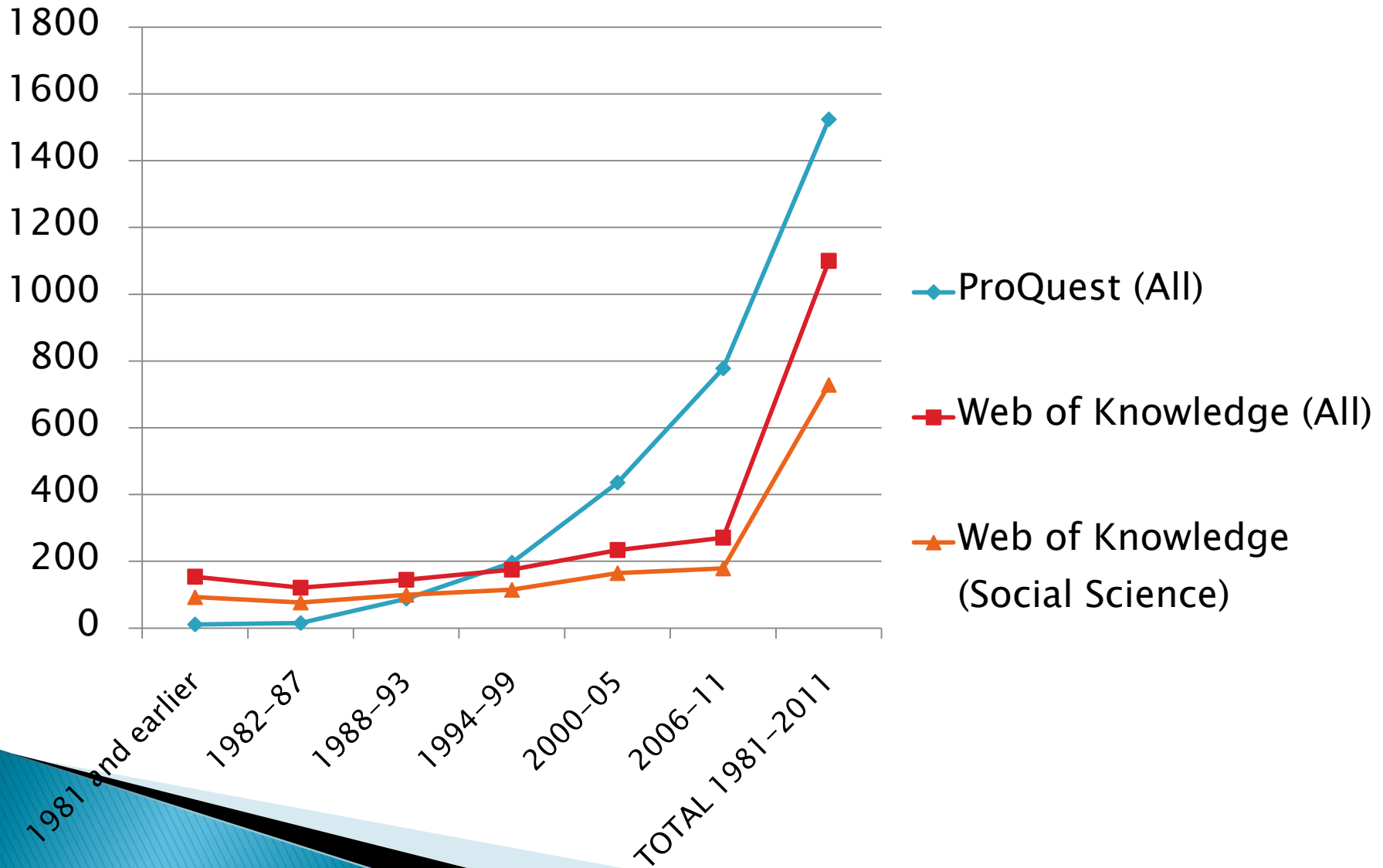
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Number of Peer-Reviewed Articles about Cohabitation



Background

- ▶ Started with ~1 500 articles
 - Published in peer-reviewed journals
 - Published between 2000–present
 - Focused on US populations
 - Key word in **title** or **abstract** (cohabitation, cohabit, cohabitor, cohabiter, cohabiting)
- Ended up with N=438 (economics, population studies, sociology, policy, psychology)

What we excluded

Busquet N, Leveille N.C., Feron C. 2009. What triggers reproductive life? Effects of adolescent cohabitation, social novelty and aggression in a monogamous mouse. *Ethology* 115:87.

Dalesman, S., Rundle, S. 2010. Cohabitation enhances the avoidance response to heterospecific alarm cues in a freshwater snail. *Animal Behavior* 79:173.

Johnson, J.C. 2005. Cohabitation of juvenile females with mature male promotes sexual cannibalism in fishing spiders. *Behavioral Ecology* 16:269.

Johnson, J.C., Kitchen K, Andrade M. 2010. Family affects sibling cannibalism in the black widow spider *Latrodectus hesperus*. *Ethology* 116:770.

Jordi M.L., Jordi P., David H.W. 2003. Mating patterns in late-maturing female Mediterranean tarantulas may reflect the costs and benefits of sexual cannibalism. *Animal Behavior* 66:469.

Sharon D., Dirk, B. 2004. Associations between first encounters and ensuing social relations within dyads of two species of lacertid lizards. *Behavioral Ecology* 15:930.

What we excluded, continued

Outside of general family scholarship

Did not use US populations (given our topic here at the

Geared toward therapy

Law briefs

Books/book chapters



Examples of Included Articles

Amato, P. R. (2000). "The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children." Journal of Marriage and Family 62(4): 1269–1287.

Bumpass, L. and H. H. Lu (2000). "Trends in Cohabitation and Implications for Children's Family Contexts in the United States." Population Studies—a Journal of Demography 54(1): 29–41.

Cherlin, A. J. (2004). "The Deinstitutionalization of American Marriage." Journal of Marriage and Family 66(4): 848.

Finer, L. B. and S. K. Henshaw (2006). "Disparities in Rates of Unintended Pregnancy In the United States, 1994 and 2001." Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health 38(2): 90.

Gibson–Davis, C. M., K. Edin, et al. (2005). "High Hopes But Even Higher Expectations: The Retreat From Marriage Among Low–Income Couples." Journal of Marriage and Family 67(5): 1301.

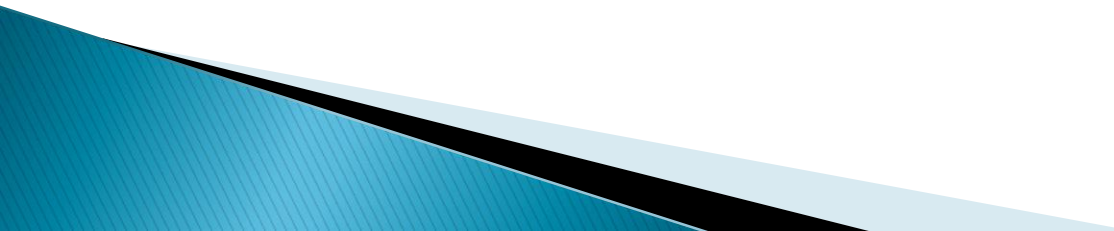
Hofferth, S. L. and K. G. Anderson (2003). "Are All Dads Equal? Biology versus Marriage as a Basis for Paternal Investment." Journal of Marriage and Family 65(1): 213.

Seltzer, J. A. (2000). "Families Formed Outside of Marriage." Journal of Marriage and the Family 62(4): 1247–1268.

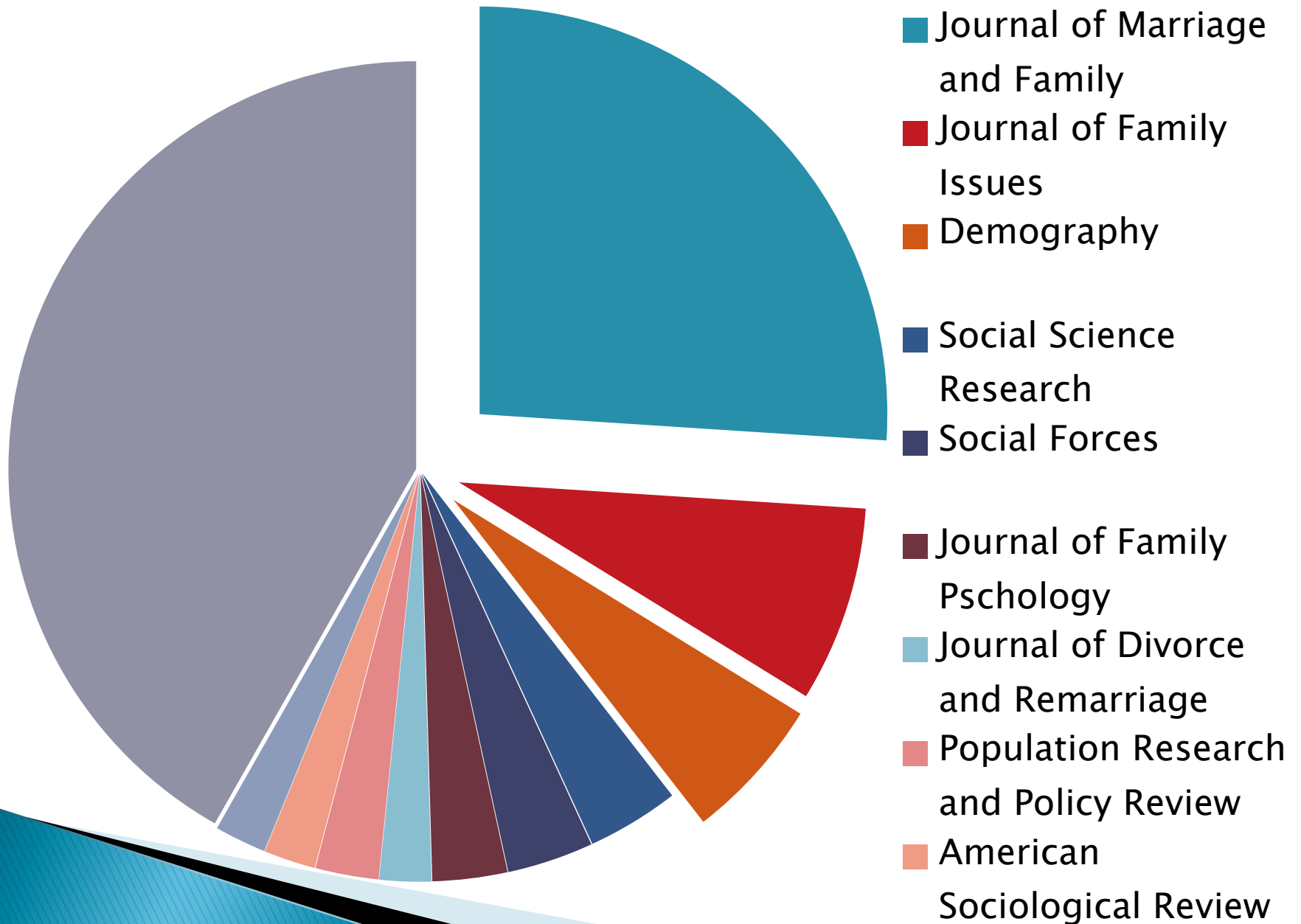
Smock, P. J. (2000). "Cohabitation in the United States: An Appraisal of Research Themes, Findings, and Implications." Annual Review of Sociology 26: 1–20.

Treas, J. and D. Giesen (2000). "Sexual Infidelity among Married and Cohabiting Americans." Journal of Marriage and the Family 62(1): 48.


Half used data from following surveys:

- ▶ American Community Survey (ACS)
 - ▶ Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE)
 - ▶ **Current Population Survey (CPS)**
 - ▶ Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)
 - ▶ Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort (ECLS-K)
 - ▶ **Fragile Families and Child Well Being (FFCWB)**
 - ▶ **National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)**
 - ▶ **National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79)**
 - ▶ National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97)
 - ▶ **National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG)**
 - ▶ US Census Bureau (Census)
 - ▶ Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
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Cohabitation Publications by Journal (2000–11)



Value of National Surveys

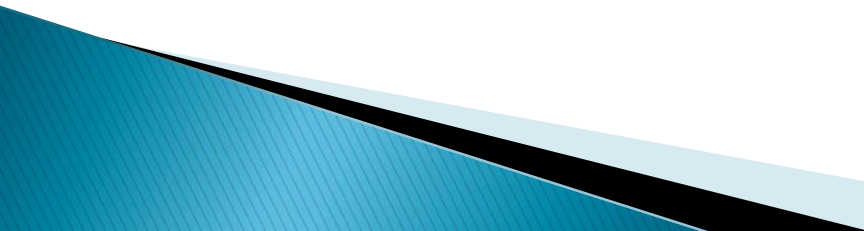
- Disparities by race, age, education, employment, immigrant status, and social class.
 - Transitions to adulthood
 - Differences in experiences
 - Challenged accepted notions
 - Systematically examined the relationship between cohabitation and individual, family, and couple level outcomes.
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Concerns with measures

How, When, and Who



How is it measured?

- ▶ Direct versus indirect questions (e.g. household roster)
 - ▶ All family members or head only?
 - ▶ Phrasing of questions
 - Sharing a 'usual' or 'single' residence?
 - Must include sexual intimacy?
 - What does 'marriage-like' mean?
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When does it take place?

- ▶ About 15% of couples have a hard time determining whether they are currently *in* a cohabiting relationship.
- ▶ Start and end dates are especially difficult to identify.
- ▶ Men and women tend to give unique dates

See Knab 2005; Knab and McLanhan 2006; Manning and Smock 2005 for more details.

Issues of “When”

Problems with accuracy of retrospective reporting.

- Relationship quality
- Relationship trajectories
- Couple attributes
- Post-partum optimism
- Fear of welfare or immigration authorities

See Hayford and Morgan (2008); Manning and Smock (2005); Teitler, Reichman, and Nepomnysaschy (2004) for more details.

Who is involved?

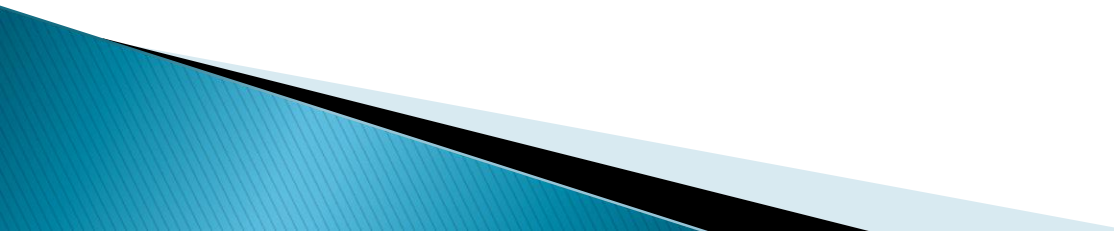
- ▶ Ambiguity about who is in the family, or what one's relationship status really is, especially as complexity increases.
- ▶ Ambiguity exists between
 - Children and parents
 - Members of the Couple

See Stewart 2005; Brown and Manning 2009; Waller and McLanahan 2005 for more details.

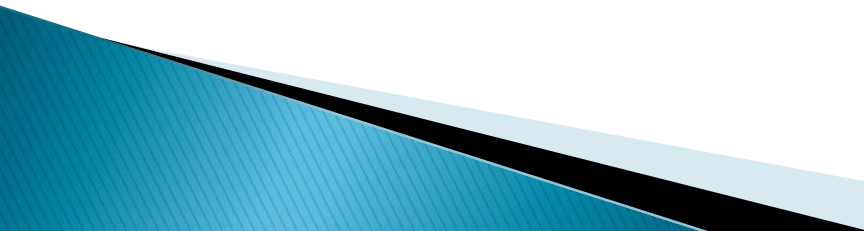
How far have we gotten?



Past recommendations

- ▶ Accurately identify cohabiting couples
 - ▶ Identify biological and social parents for each child
 - ▶ Establish histories for adults of all ages
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Recommendations

- ▶ New comparison groups needed
 - Marriage or dating?
 - ▶ Need information on same-sex couples
 - ▶ Ask about relationships from both members of the couple
 - ▶ More identifying labels and questions in the same survey
 - E.g. unmarried partner
 - Test
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Recommendations

- ▶ Use harmonization strategies to facilitate research within (e.g. Dorius, 2010) and between surveys (e.g. Amato, Meyers and Emory, 2009).
- ▶ Use publically available harmonized data (e.g. IFSS and RAND/HRS)