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Race-Ethnic Differences in Marital Quality and Divorce*

Jennifer Roebuck Bulanda Susan L. Brown Race-Ethnic Differences in Marital Quality and Divorce*

Jennifer Roebuck Bulanda Susan L. Brown

Department of Sociology and Center for Family and Demographic Research Bowling Green State University Bowling Green, OH 43403 (419) 372-2294 Phone (419) 372-8306 Fax

RUNNING HEAD: Race-ethnicity, Marital Quality, and Divorce

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Abstract

Blacks report lower marital quality and face a higher risk of marital dissolution than Whites, but

little is known about how Hispanics compare to these two groups. We examine five dimensions

of marital quality as well as marital dissolution for Blacks, Whites, and Mexican Americans

using data from the National Survey of Families and Households (N=6,231). Mexican

Americans and Whites have similar levels of marital quality, whereas Blacks report poorer

marital quality than these two groups. Blacks face higher odds of marital disruption than either

Mexican Americans or Whites, but this is because of Blacks' lower marital quality. Consistent

with the paradox of Mexican-American nuptiality, we conclude that aspects of Mexican

American culture may play a role in preserving marital quality and stability for this group despite

their precarious economic situation.

KEY WORDS: Divorce, ethnicity, marital dissolution, marital quality, race

Race-Ethnic Differences in Marital Quality and Divorce

Although prior research has documented race-ethnic differences in union formation and dissolution patterns and their determinants, we know little about racial and ethnic differences in the *quality* of intact marriages and how these differences may affect subsequent divorce. We also lack a clear understanding of how marital quality and its predictors may vary by race-ethnicity. Including Blacks and Hispanics in research on marital quality not only expands our knowledge of marital dynamics, but may also aid in understanding race-ethnic differences in divorce patterns. Using data from the first two waves of the National Survey of Families and Households, we extend research on Black-White differences in marital quality and divorce by including Mexican Americans.

The Significance of Race-Ethnicity

Race-ethnic differences in union formation and dissolution trends have received much attention over the past decade. Blacks are less likely to desire marriage and to get married and are more likely to divorce than Whites (Cherlin, 1998; Sweeney and Phillips, 2004; South, 1993). The marital behavior of Hispanics is more similar to that of Whites than Blacks; Hispanics, and especially Mexican Americans, have higher rates of marriage, more positive attitudes toward marriage, and lower rates of union dissolution than do Blacks (Bean and Tienda, 1987; Oropesa et al., 1994; Raley et al., 2004). The fact that Hispanics and Blacks are similar in their experiences of economic disadvantage, yet Mexican Americans resemble Whites in their family formation behaviors has been termed "the paradox of Mexican American nuptiality," and suggests that both structural factors as well as cultural factors may play a role in minorities' differential marital rates and outcomes (Oropesa et al., 1994; Raley et al., 2004).

The little research that has directly examined Blacks' marital quality has found that Blacks have poorer marital quality than Whites, on average (Broman, 1993; Trent and South, 2003). Researchers have not been able to explain this difference. Almost no research has examined the marital quality of Hispanics in comparison to that of Blacks and Whites (Amato et al., 2003) despite the fact that Hispanics now constitute the largest minority group in America (United States Census Bureau, 2001) and comprise a greater share of marrieds than Blacks (Amato et al., 2003). The Hispanic population more than doubled in size between 1980 and 2000 (Hobbs and Stoops, 2002). Consequently, Hispanics now represent a slightly larger share of the U.S. population than do non-Hispanic Blacks (12.5 versus 12 percent), and this difference is projected to increase in the coming decades (Hobbs and Stoops, 2002). The proportion of marrieds that are Hispanic has also increased, doubling between 1980 and 2000 (Amato et al., 2003). A solid research base on marital quality and its antecedents for Hispanics is long overdue.

Marital quality not only gauges the dynamics of a marriage, but has important consequences. It is a significant predictor of overall happiness and well-being (Aldous and Ganey, 1999; Ren, 1997), and is associated with a greater risk of divorce (Previti and Amato, 2003; Schoen et al., 2002). Blacks experience a greater likelihood of divorce than Whites or Hispanics (Bean and Tienda, 1987; Oropesa et al., 1994; Sweeney and Phillips, 2004), which may be attributable to Blacks' lower levels of marital quality. Further, few studies of divorce have incorporated Hispanics, whose divorce rates are lower than Blacks' but similar to Whites' (Bean and Tienda, 1987; Oropesa et al., 1994). To our knowledge, this study is the first to examine how race-ethnic differences in marital quality may be linked to race-ethnic differences in divorce.

The conceptual framework guiding this exploratory analysis of Mexican Americans' marital quality is derived from the paradox of Mexican American nuptiality. As the paradox emphasizes the competing influences of structural and cultural factors in marriage formation and dissolution, we examine whether and how these two types of factors are related to race-ethnic differences in marital quality and divorce. We distinguish between factors that represent potential *structural* differences between Blacks, Whites, and Mexican Americans, and those that represent potential *cultural* differences between various race-ethnic groups. Research on differential marriage patterns between Mexican Americans and Whites suggests that it is essential to consider both structural and cultural factors simultaneously (Raley et al., 2004).

Structural Factors

Structural, or economic, factors are integral to the formation and maintenance of intimate unions (Becker, 1991; Lichter et al., 1992; Ruggles, 1997). Financial independence and stability are widely viewed as a prerequisite for marriage, especially for men (Becker, 1991; Oppenheimer, 1988; Smock, 2004). The relatively low proportions currently- and ever-married among Blacks is often explained as arising from the scarcity of what Wilson (1987) termed "marriageable men," namely, men with stable earnings. Although not the sole reason why Blacks are less likely to get and stay married than Whites (Trent and South, 2003), economic resources are important to understanding race differences in marriage, marital quality, and divorce (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991; Lichter et al., 1992; Ruggles 1997).

The socioeconomic disadvantages faced by Blacks and Hispanics are pronounced. Black and Mexican American couples are much more likely to be poor than are White couples. For instance among two parent families in which only fathers are employed, 8% of Whites are poor versus 23% of Blacks and 35% of Hispanics (Casper and Bianchi, 2002). Blacks and Hispanics

have lower levels of educational attainment than do Whites; whereas 85% of Whites have completed high school, the corresponding figures for Blacks and Hispanics are 80% and 57%, respectively (Stoops, 2004). Blacks and Hispanics also have lower levels of income than do Whites. While the average income for Whites who work full-time is \$42,707, the average income is \$32,686 for Blacks and \$26,749 for Hispanics (Fronczek, 2005). Blacks and Hispanics also have much higher poverty rates than do Whites (Fronczek, 2005). And, spells of unemployment are considerably more common among Blacks and Hispanics at 6.9% and 5.5%, respectively, than Whites at 3.0% (Clark and Weismantle, 2003).

Economic instability is stressful for husbands and wives and may weaken the quality and stability of marriages (Conger et al., 1991). Economic factors are positively related to marital quality and negatively associated with divorce (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991; White and Rogers, 2000). However, some studies find that objective measures of economic situation (e.g., income and employment) appear to be less salient to marital quality than subjective measures (e.g., job satisfaction and perceived economic hardship) (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991; White and Rogers, 2000). Other studies find that income is either not related, or only weakly related, to marital quality (White and Rogers, 2000). Further, recent studies that directly examine Black-White differences in marital quality show that economic factors are unable to attenuate racial differences (Adelmann et al., 1996; Broman, 1993; Trent and South, 2003).

A small body of work suggests that economic factors may play a more prominent role in Black the quality and stability of marriages. The economic situation of Blacks and Hispanics is especially precarious, with a poor job market and low returns to education, particularly for Black men (Vega, 1990; Wilson, 1987). Black women appear to especially emphasize the economic viability of a potential mate (Bulcroft and Bulcroft, 1993; Wilson, 1987), and financial issues

appear especially important to Blacks' marital quality (Orbuch et al., 1993). Blacks are more likely to be involved in shift work, which is negatively associated with marital quality and positively associated with divorce (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991; White and Keith, 1990). Economic factors are most closely tied to marital quality among lower class Black men (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991). Further, job satisfaction appears especially important to marital quality for Blacks (Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, 1991).

In contrast, the role of economics in Mexican American marriages appears quite different from that in Black marriages. Despite being economically disadvantaged, Mexican Americans' union formation patterns are similar to that of Whites (Raley et al., 2004). Mexican Americans express more pronuptial attitudes and have higher rates of marriage than Blacks even though they share similar economic circumstances (Oropesa, 1996; Oropesa et al., 1994). Apart from Bean et al.'s (1977) study that uses data from 1969 to show women's labor force participation is negatively associated with marital quality among Mexican Americans, no recent research has examined the link between economics and marital quality for this group. It is unclear whether the negative association documented by Bean et al. is evident among a more recent sample since women's labor force participation has become normative. Thus, the associations between economic factors and marital quality among Mexican Americans have not been fully investigated, making this exploration in our study an important contribution. Although some research finds that education and employment are not particularly salient to divorce for Mexican Americans (Phillips & Sweeney, 2005), other research finds that low levels of socioeconomic status among Mexican Americans (particularly among Mexican immigrants) lower the risk of divorce (Bean et al., 1996).

Cultural Factors

Cultural differences in marriage may also influence marriages. Prior research has established the importance of family in Mexican American culture (Keefe, 1984; Vega, 1990). In Hispanic culture, familism is emphasized over individualism (Umana-Taylor and Fine, 2003), extended-kin networks are prevalent (Keefe, 1984), and family is the preferred source of help and advice (Markides et al., 1986). Further, Hispanics socialize their children to value marriage and family. Hispanic girls are taught throughout their childhood that marriage and a family are paramount (Blea, 1991). These ideas are coupled with the importance of the teachings of the Catholic Church for Hispanics, which underscores the centrality of family and a stable marriage (Maldonado, 2000).

Indeed, Mexican Americans have higher rates of union formation and express more pronuptial attitudes than do Blacks, even though both groups have similar levels of economic deprivation (which is negatively associated with marriage) (Oropesa et al., 1994; Oropesa and Gorman, 2000). The "paradox of Mexican American nuptiality" may be attributable to the fact that Hispanic culture stresses a collectivistic orientation towards marriage (Oropesa et al., 1994). This collectivistic orientation may preserve marital quality and stability for Hispanics, despite their disadvantaged economic situation (Oropesa and Gorman, 2000). This paradox is consistent with Hispanics' more favorable health and mortality outcomes when compared to Whites and Blacks, despite their more disadvantaged economic situation, which some research has attributed to more the more cohesive familial ties among Hispanics (Williams, 2002). Additionally, it suggests that cultural factors may play a more salient role than structural factors in the marital behavior of Hispanics.

The family formation behaviors of Mexican Americans appear similar to those of Whites, and quite different from Blacks. This pattern is consistent with classic assimilation theory, which predicts immigrants adopt the dominant culture, becoming more similar to Whites over time (Gordon, 1964). Rosenfeld (2002) found support for this theory in his analysis of Mexican American intermarriage between 1970 and 1990. His results were not consistent with segmented assimilation theory, from which one would expect Mexican Americans to assimilate to the Black underclass because the two groups face economic disadvantage, residential segregation, and discrimination. Mexican Americans are not as marginalized as Blacks are in the marriage market. Rather, Mexican Americans are more likely to intermarry than Blacks, supporting the conclusion that Mexican Americans exhibit the classic assimilation pattern, whereas Blacks retain greater social distance from Whites (Qian and Cobas, 2003; Rosenfeld, 2002; Wildsmith, 2004). Further supporting the idea that foreign-born and native-born Mexican Americans differ in their marital behavior, Raley et al. (2004) find that only foreign-born Mexican Americans have higher marriage rates than do Whites.

While marriage appears highly central for Mexican Americans, some research has suggested that the marital relationship is less central for Blacks than for Whites or Mexican Americans. Instead of emphasizing the primacy of the spousal relationship in family life, Blacks have a greater reliance on the broader family unit, including the extended kin network, and family life that extends beyond the marital household (Littlejohn-Blake and Darling, 1993). Further, previous research has documented the greater level of independence that Black women are socialized into, which may make Black women less reliant on marriage (Dixon, 1993). Neither the reliance on extended family networks nor the greater independence of Black women are meant to suggest a weaker family orientation; in fact, they likely represent the unique

strengths of the Black family. However, they may also represent ways in which marriage may offer fewer rewards for Blacks, in turn influencing marital quality and stability.

It remains unclear exactly what role culture plays in race-ethnic differences in marital behavior. Accounting for the familistic culture among Mexican Americans does not explain the earlier age at marriage for Mexican Americans as compared to Whites (Raley et al., 20004). Nonetheless, Raley et al. (2004) suggest that culture may be important to ethnic differences in marriage patterns and emphasize the need for future research to focus on specific aspects of culture. We examine several cultural factors, including social support, religion, and attitudes about marriage and gender.

Intergenerational transfers are positively associated with marital quality and negatively associated with divorce, although previous research has not examined whether this relationship is differs by race-ethnicity (Adelmann et al., 1996; Timmer and Veroff, 2000). Whites appear more likely to receive financial kin support than are Blacks and Hispanics (Lee and Aytac, 1998), whereas Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be involved other types of kin support (Ruggles, 1994; Vega, 1990). Further, social relationships with others are positively associated with marital quality, but only when the spouse is also involved in these friendships (Bradbury et al., 2000; Lee, 1988). Religiosity, another source of social support, is positively associated with marital quality (Amato et al., 2003), and those who are Catholic or attend church regularly exhibit lower divorce rates (Call and Heaton, 1997; Teachman et al., 2002). Hispanics are much more likely to be Catholic than Whites or Blacks, and religion is more central in the lives of Hispanics and Blacks than Whites (Sherkat and Ellison, 1999; Maldonado, 2000).

Black men and women are less likely to desire marriage, are less likely to agree that marriage is for life, and perceive fewer benefits associated with marriage than their White and

Hispanic counterparts. In contrast, Hispanics are the most pronuptial group (Oropesa, 1996; Oropesa and Gorman, 2000; South, 1993; Trent and South, 1992). Further, a wealth of literature ties the manner in which gender is enacted in families (often in the form of household labor) to marital quality (Coltrane, 2000). It appears that Blacks have more egalitarian gender ideologies than do Whites and Hispanics, suggesting better marital quality (Coltrane, 2000; Vega, 1990). Nonetheless, whereas Black men are especially open to the role of women in the workforce, some research has found that they exhibit very conservative gender ideology with respect to women's roles in the home, which may undermine marital quality (Blee and Tickamyer, 1995). Finally, some have suggested that an individualistic orientation may lead to an increased likelihood of dissolving a marriage when it is not personally fulfilling (Ruggles, 1997). Research has indicated that Hispanics have a more collectivistic than individualistic orientation (Umana-Taylor and Fine, 2003), meaning that Hispanic spouses may be more positive about the quality of their marriages and less likely to divorce.

Other Factors Associated with Marital Quality

Several other characteristics are related to marital quality and therefore represent important control variables. Premarital cohabitation, remarriage, and parental divorce are all linked to lower marital quality and greater marital instability (Amato et al., 2003; Amato and Booth, 1991; Booth and Edwards, 1992; Feng et al., 1999; Raley and Bumpass, 2003; Thomson and Colella, 1992; but see Nock, 1995). Blacks are more likely to cohabit premaritally and to have experienced a parental divorce than Whites or Hispanics (Bean and Tienda, 1987; Teachman et al., 2000). Marital duration is negatively associated with marital quality and dissolution (Clarke, 1995; Glenn, 1998). Marital quality is negatively related to the presence, type, and number of children in the household, although shared children increase marital stability

(Twenge et al., 2003). Blacks are more likely to have children of only one partner in their households, which is associated with lower marital quality and higher odds of divorce (Teachman et al., 2000; White and Booth, 1985). The age at which one marries is negatively associated with marital stability, and Hispanics are much more likely to marry at young ages (Oropesa and Landale, 2004; Raley and Bumpass, 2003). Further, age itself is important, as one of the few studies examining marital satisfaction among Mexican Americans find that marital satisfaction declines with age for Mexican American women (Markides et al., 1999). Inequity in household labor has negative consequences for marital quality and raises the risk of divorce for women (Frisco and Williams, 2003; Hochschild, 1989). Black husbands are more likely than White or Hispanic husbands to help with household labor, although women still perform the majority (Coltrane, 2000). Finally, negative spousal behavior, such as drinking and drug use, is linked to lower levels of marital quality and increased marital instability, and some research has found that married Blacks are more likely than Whites to report such problems (Adelmann et al., 1996).

Marital Quality and Divorce

Social exchange theory suggests that the decision to either divorce or remain married is calculated by comparing rewards to the current marriage, barriers to divorce, and alternatives to the relationship. Research has found that rewards to the relationship (specifically, marital quality) are much more salient to divorce than are barriers or alternatives (Knoester and Booth, 2000; Previti and Amato, 2003). Indeed, marital quality is negatively associated with divorce (Knoester and Booth, 2000; Previti and Amato, 2003; Schoen et al., 2002). However, research has neglected to consider whether race-ethnic differences in marital quality may be able to account for race-ethnic differences in marital dissolution, as social exchange theory would

suggest. It is possible that the lower levels of marital quality that Blacks experience may mean fewer rewards to their marriage, translating into higher rates of divorce.

Hypotheses

We expect that Blacks will have lower levels of marital quality and greater chances of divorce than Whites due to both structural and cultural factors. Among Mexican Americans, it is less clear whether structural or cultural factors are more salient and therefore we test competing hypotheses. Since a poor economic situation may be a significant hardship that undermines the marital relationship, Mexican Americans may have lower marital quality than Whites. In contrast, cultural factors, including the collectivistic, pro-nuptial attitudes held by Mexican Americans, may strengthen marital quality by buffering the negative effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, this group may have levels of marital quality that are higher than Blacks and more similar to that of Whites. As suggested by these hypotheses, we examine whether the effects of structural and cultural factors are different across race-ethnic groups by testing for interactive effects between the indicators of structural as well as cultural factors and race-ethnicity.

Specifically, the paradox of Mexican American nuptiality suggests that cultural factors will have a pronounced effect on the marital quality of Mexican Americans, whereas the effects of structural factors will be comparatively modest.

Method

We use data from the 1987-1988 and 1992-1994 waves of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH). In the first wave, 13,017 respondents were interviewed, and 10,008 of these original respondents were re-interviewed at the second wave (Sweet and Bumpass, 1996). The response rates for the first and second waves are 74% and 77%, respectively (Sweet and Bumpass, 1996). The NSFH data set is advantageous as it contains oversamples of Blacks and

Hispanics, includes measures of multiple dimensions of marital quality, and allows the use of longitudinal data to examine marital dissolution. Further, NSFH data provide a much larger sample size than has been previously used to assess racial differences in marital quality.

Because race-ethnicity is the focal independent variable in this study, analyses are limited to non-Hispanic Blacks (hereafter Blacks), non-Hispanic Whites (hereafter Whites), and Mexican Americans. Prior research on family formation and dissolution trends has established that there is variability among Hispanic groups (Oropesa, 1996), and combining these groups together into a "Hispanic" category for analysis may confound the results. Although the NSFH includes information on Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics, these groups are not large enough for individual analyses.

As we are interested in marital quality, the initial sample of 13,007 respondents was limited only to the 6,618 respondents currently married, resulting in a loss of 6,130 respondents (47.1%). The analysis is also limited to those who report being White, Black, or Mexican American, resulting in a loss of an additional 259 respondents (2.0%). Excluding interracial couples eliminated 194 respondents (1.5%) from the sample, and the 170 respondents (1.3%) with missing data for all of the marital quality measures were also excluded. The sole case with a missing response for age was deleted, as were the 22 (0.16%) with missing data for duration of the marriage. The final sample size is 6,231 respondents, of which 316 are Mexican American, 743 are Black, and 5,172 are White. The analysis of marital dissolution is then limited to those respondents who were re-interviewed at the second wave, or who died or were widowed between waves, resulting in the loss of 949 respondents (15.2%). The analysis of divorce includes information from 5,282 respondents, of which 225 are Mexican American, 585 are Black, and

4,472 are White. Apart from divorce, which is measured at wave two, all variables are ascertained at wave one.

<u>Dependent Variable – Marital Quality</u>

We follow Johnson et al.'s (1986) conceptual model of marital quality, which includes five distinct dimensions - marital happiness, conflict, problems, perceived instability, and interaction. It is important to consider these dimensions separately, rather than combining them into measures of positive and negative marital quality, as these characteristics are distinct indicators of the construct (Johnson et al., 1986). Indeed, in our sample, the correlation between positive indicators of marital quality (marital happiness and interaction) is relatively low (0.32), as is the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.48$). Likewise, marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability are separate outcomes; all of the correlations among these variables are less than 0.40, and the Cronbach's alpha is low ($\alpha = 0.47$). Marital happiness is the response to a single question asking how happy the respondent is overall with the marital relationship, on a scale from (1) very unhappy to (7) very happy. *Marital interaction* is the response to a question asking how often the couple spent time alone in the past month, ranging from (1) never to (6) almost every day. Marital disagreements is a scale composed of five items concerning how often the couple disagrees about household tasks, money, spending time together, sex, and the inlaws. Each item is coded from (1) never to (6) almost every day, and responses to the five items are then added together to form a scale, with higher values indicating more disagreements (α = 0.75). Marital problems is a scale ($\alpha = 0.53$) that gauges how often disagreements are discussed calmly (reverse coded), how often the couple argues heatedly or shouts, and how often fights result in hitting or throwing things at one another. Each is coded on a scale from (1) never to (5) always, and the responses to the three items are added together to form a scale, with higher

numbers indicating more problems. *Perceived marital instability* is the response to a single item asking what the respondent feels the chances are that he or she will eventually separate from or divorce his or her spouse, and is coded from (1) very low to (5) very high chance. Finally, if the respondent is separated or divorced (hereafter both groups are referred to as divorced) by reinterview, *divorce* is coded (1); otherwise, respondents still married are coded (0). Although single-item indicators are not ideal, we are limited by our data in terms of indicators of marital happiness, interaction, and perceived instability. Several studies using NSFH data have also relied on these same single-item measures, facilitating comparisons across studies (e.g., Brown, 2004; Brown and Booth, 1996; King and Scott, 2005; Nock, 1995; Skinner et al., 2002; Thomson and Colella, 1992; Ward and Spitze, 1998).

<u>Primary independent variable – Race-ethnicity</u>. The primary independent variable race-ethnicity is coded as three dichotomous variables, *White* (the reference category), *Black*, and *Mexican American*.

Control variables. Remarriage is a dummy variable indicating the respondent is not in his or her first marriage. Premarital cohabitation is a dichotomous variable coded one if the respondent cohabited with his or her spouse prior to marriage. Biological parents not married is a dichotomous variable indicating that the respondent's biological parents were not married when the respondent was age 19 (or when he or she left home). Female is a dummy variable for the respondent's sex, coded one if the respondent is female. Marital duration is the number of months the couple has been married; for those with values of zero (situations in which the interview presumably was conducted in the same month as the marriage began), one month is imputed. Age married is the age at which the respondent reports marrying his or her current spouse. Number of children indicates the total number of children under 18 who are present in

the household. There are four mutually-exclusive dummy variables indicating the type of children present in the household. Biological children indicates that the biological children of both spouses are the only children present in the household. Step-children indicates that there are children in the household who are the biological children of only one spouse. Other children is a dummy variable indicating that there are children that are not the biological offspring of either spouse present in the household. Finally, *no children* indicates that there are no children present in the household, and is used as the reference category in analyses. Husband's household labor is the proportion of total household labor that the husband performs. This value is derived by dividing male respondent reports of their own household labor or female respondent's reports of their husband's household labor hours by the total number of hours the respondent reports himself or herself and his or her spouse engaging in household chores. As some respondents reported doing over 20 hours of housework a day, responses higher than the 95th percentile, 75 hours per week, are coded to that value prior to calculating the proportion of household labor performed by the husband (see South and Spitze, 1994). Finally, the variable substance abuse indicates whether either spouse (as reported by the respondent) has a problem with drugs and/or alcohol.

Structural Factors. Education is the number of years of education. Income is the couple's total income, and is logged to minimize the effects of skewness. Wife's proportion of income is the proportion of the total household income that results from the wife's earnings.

Past unemployment is a dummy variable indicating the respondent has been unemployed during the past year. Current employment status is measured by a set of dummy variables which take into account the hours respondents reported working at a first job as well as a second job; full-time (used as the reference category) indicates that the respondent is working thirty hours or

more per week; *part-time* indicates the respondent works at least one hour a week, but less than thirty hours; *unemployment* indicates the respondent is not currently working but has looked for work in the past four weeks; and *not working* indicates the respondent is not working, but is also not looking for work, including respondents such as retirees and homemakers. *Job satisfaction* is conceptualized as the response to the statement, "The job I do is one of the most satisfying parts of my life." The responses are a scale from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree, and are then reverse coded so that higher scores indicate more job satisfaction. The *irregular work* variable is a scale of four items indicating whether the respondent's hours of work vary, days of work vary, whether the work schedule alternates between shifts, and whether the respondent's job required him or her to be away overnight more than 24 times in the past year (an average of more than two nights per month). A response of yes to each of these four questions was coded as one, and the answers to the four items were then added together to form a scale, with higher scores representing an increasingly irregular work schedule.

Cultural Factors. Financial kin support is a dummy variable indicating that the respondent has received a gift or loan of \$200 or more from friends or relatives not living in the household. Other kin support is coded as a scale from zero to five designed to measure how much kin support the respondent is receiving with babysitting or child care; transportation; repairs; work around the house; or advice, encouragement, or moral support from any relative over the past month. Responses of yes are coded as one and responses of no coded as zero for each item, and then are added together to measure the amount of other kin support the respondent is receiving. The social relationships variable is a scale composed of the answer to four questions asking how often the respondent spends a social evening with relatives, a neighbor, the people he or she works with, and friends who live outside his or her neighborhood.

The responses to each question range from (0) never to (4) several times a week. The responses to each question were added, with the total ranging from zero to sixteen. Religious affiliation is assessed with five mutually-exclusive dummy variables, Catholic, fundamentalist Protestant, mainline Protestant, other religion, and no religion (used as the reference category). Protestant denominations are separated into the two groups using Smith's (1990) continuum, with fundamentalist Protestants including denominations such as Church of God and Southern Baptist, and mainline Protestants including both moderate and liberal denominations such as Methodist and Episcopalian (Xu et al., 2005). Finally, religious attendance measures how often the respondent reports attending religious services, with responses ranging from (1) never to (5) weekly. The *negative attitude toward marriage* variable is the response to the statement, "It's better for a person to get married than to go through life being single." Responses were scaled from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. The *individuality* variable is measured as the response to the statement, "In a successful marriage, the partners must have the freedom to do what they want individually." Responses range from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree, and were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect more individualistic attitudes. Although this question is not an ideal measure of a respondent's collectivistic or individualistic orientation in marriage, it is the only measure available in this data set. Finally, gender ideology is a scale composed of the responses to three statements ($\alpha = 0.780$). The first statement, that preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed, is coded on a scale from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. The other two items ask whether the respondent approves or disapproves of: (1) mothers who work full-time when their youngest child is less than five years old, and (2) mothers who work part-time when their youngest child is less than five years old. These items are coded on a scale from (1) strongly approve to (7) strongly disapprove. The latter two items were first reverse coded, and the three items were then standardized before being added together to form the gender ideology scale. Higher scores on this scale reflect more liberal gender role attitudes.

Plan of Analysis

Those respondents missing responses to all five of the marital quality questions were already removed from the sample. Those with missing values on some (but not all) of the marital quality items were included only in the analyses for which they had valid responses. For the analysis of divorce, the mean marital quality by race-ethnicity is imputed for any missing data. Typically, less than 5% of the sample was missing data on the various independent variables (although 12% of cases are missing data on household income). For those missing data on dichotomous independent variables, the respondent is coded as being in the modal category. Where there were missing values for education, household income, job satisfaction, social relationships, religious attendance, negative attitude toward marriage, and individuality the mean by race-ethnicity is imputed, as previous research shows race-ethnic differences in these factors. Missing values for husband's contribution to household labor and gender ideology were replaced with the mean for the respondent's gender and race-ethnicity, as these factors appear to vary both by gender and race-ethnicity.

The data are analyzed in several steps to determine whether the hypotheses are supported. First, bivariate analyses test for significant race-ethnic differences in the means for all dependent and independent variables. Then, each dimension of marital quality is regressed on the independent variables to examine race-ethnic differences net of the structural and cultural factors associated with marital quality. We also consider potential interactions between race-ethnicity and the structural and cultural factors. Finally, the hazard of divorce during the time between the

first and second waves of the NSFH is estimated using event history analysis. As time is measured in months, which can be considered a continuous measure of time, the Cox proportional hazards model is used (Cox, 1972). Those who were married continuously are censored at the interview date, and those who died between waves were censored at the date of their death. For the small number of cases (n=39) in which the respondent died but no date of death is available, the mid-point between interview waves is imputed. Bivariate analyses use the individual weight available in the NSFH to correct for oversampling and ensure that the results are nationally representative. However, use of weights in regression analysis may introduce bias and are therefore not used in multivariate analyses (Winship and Radbill, 1994).

Results

Bivariate Analysis

Weighted means and unweighted standard deviations of all variables are shown in Table 1.

Mexican Americans report significantly less marital interaction and fewer marital problems than Whites, on average, whereas there are no differences between these two groups on the other three dimensions of marital quality or in the percentages who divorce. Blacks have significantly lower levels of marital happiness and marital interaction, on average, and higher levels of marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability than Whites. Relative to Blacks, Mexican Americans report higher levels of marital happiness, fewer marital problems, and less perceived instability, on average. Blacks are more likely to experience the dissolution of their marriage, on average, than either Whites or Mexican Americans. Whereas, on average, 14% of Blacks' dissolve their marriages between the two waves, the comparable figures for Mexican Americans and Whites are 8% and 9%, respectively.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

As expected, Blacks and Mexican Americans are much more economically disadvantaged than are Whites, with lower incomes and higher rates of unemployment, on average. Both Blacks and Mexican Americans have more children in their households, are more likely to have children who are not their own in their household, receive less financial kin support, and express a less individualistic orientation to marriage than Whites, on average. Mexican Americans are much more likely to be Catholic, and Blacks are much more likely to be Fundamentalist Protestant than are Whites; both Mexican Americans and Blacks have higher levels of religious involvement than Whites, on average. Further, Mexican Americans married at a younger age, have a less negative attitude toward marriage, and have a more conservative gender ideology than the other two groups, on average. Blacks are more likely to have non-married parents while growing up and to have cohabited prior to marriage than Whites or Mexican Americans.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 2 shows the regression analysis of all five indicators of marital quality on the full set of independent variables. Initially, we added the structural and cultural factors separately, but the effects of race-ethnicity on marital quality were similar to those obtained in the full models. For ease of presentation, Table 2 shows the full models only, but we discuss important individual sets of predictors where necessary. Model 1 reveals that Blacks report less marital happiness than either Whites or Mexican Americans. Mexican Americans and Whites report similar levels of marital happiness. Model 2 shows that Blacks have less marital interaction than Whites, but again there is no significant difference between Whites and Mexican Americans. Although the Black-White difference in marital interaction cannot be explained, separate analyses (not shown) find that duration of the union and the number and type of children in the household significantly

reduces the coefficient, as Blacks have been married for shorter periods of time, have more children present in their households, and are more likely to have biological, step, and other children in their households than are Whites. Although marital interaction was lower for Mexican Americans than Whites at the bivariate level, there is no longer a significant difference after adding the control variables. Separate analyses (results not shown) find that controlling for marital duration and number and type of children reduces the difference in marital interaction between Whites and Mexican Americans to nonsignificance, as Mexican Americans have been married for shorter durations, have more children present in their households, and are more likely to have biological or other children in their households.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Blacks report significantly higher levels of marital disagreements than either Whites or Mexican Americans, whose interaction levels do not differ from one another (see Model 3). This difference persists despite including all of the control variables, although duration and the type of children in the household significantly reduces the Black-White difference (result not shown), as Blacks have been married for a shorter duration and are more likely to have biological, step, or other children in their households. Model 4 shows that Mexican Americans report fewer marital problems than either Blacks or Whites, net of all controls, and that the Black-White difference in marital problems remains after inclusion of all independent variables. Model 5 reveals that Blacks have higher levels of perceived instability than either Mexican Americans or Whites, net of the controls. Mexican Americans and Whites do not differ in terms of perceived marital instability.

Few of the economic factors are related to marital quality, and these factors do not account for race-ethnic differences. Several of the cultural factors, including social relationships,

religious participation, and attitude toward marriage, emerge as the most consistent predictors of marital quality. Social relationships are positively related to marital happiness, interaction, and disagreements, and negatively related to marital problems. Religious participation is positively related to marital happiness and interaction, and negatively related to marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability, while having a negative attitude toward marriage predictive of lower marital happiness and interaction, on average, and higher marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability. Notably, however, the inclusion of these cultural factors does not explain or significantly reduce race-ethnic differences in marital quality. Although economic and cultural factors do not account for race-ethnic differences in marital quality, several of the control variables included in the analyses are important to race-ethnic differences in marital quality. Marital duration and children in the household reduce to nonsignificance the difference in marital interaction between Mexican Americans and Whites, and also reduces the Black-White differences in marital interaction and disagreements to nonsignificance. Marital duration is negatively related to marital happiness, disagreements, problems, and instability, and positively related to marital interaction. Having children in the household is predictive of lower marital happiness and interaction, on average, and higher marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability.

In supplemental analyses (not shown), we examined interactions between race-ethnicity and the structural and cultural factors to assess whether these factors operate differently across race-ethnic groups. We interacted race-ethnicity with each of the structural factors to see if socioeconomic status may have a different association with marital quality according to one's race-ethnicity. There were no significant interactions between Mexican American ethnicity and any of the structural factors across marital quality. However, there were significant interactions

between being Black and income and between being Black and education for both marital disagreements and perceived instability such that lower education and income had more detrimental influences on the marital quality of Blacks than Mexican Americans or Whites. Further, significant interactions between being Black and past unemployment revealed that previous unemployment was more detrimental to Blacks' marital quality in terms of marital happiness, marital problems, and perceived instability. These results are consistent with the paradox of Mexican American nuptiality, in which economic disadvantage appears to be more deleterious for the marital behavior of Blacks than Hispanics (Oropesa et al, 1994). We also tested interactions between each of the cultural variables and race-ethnicity. Contrary to our expectations, none of the interactions between Mexican American ethnicity and cultural factors was significant across marital quality. One interaction was significant for Blacks; having a negative attitude toward marriage was more positively related to all three negative aspects of marital quality (disagreements, problems, and perceived instability) for Blacks. Finally, we also tested potential interactions between gender and race-ethnicity. Results show that Black women report greater marital disagreements than do Black men. However, there are no interactions between gender and race-ethnicity for any of the other indicators of marital quality.

Table 3 shows the hazard models predicting divorce. Model 1 reveals that Whites and Mexican Americans experience lower odds of divorce than Blacks. The likelihood of marital dissolution is 1.45 times greater for Blacks than Whites. Whites and Mexican Americans do not differ in their odds of divorce. This pattern of findings persists net of the inclusion of control variables, structural factors, and cultural factors at the first wave.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Model 2 introduces the marital quality measures. The inclusion of these measures reduces the race-ethnic difference in the odds of divorce to nonsignificance. Four of the five dimensions of marital quality independently predict divorce in the full model. Marital happiness and interaction are negatively associated with divorce, whereas marital problems and perceived instability are positively linked with divorce. It appears that the lower marital quality that Blacks experience accounts for their higher rates of divorce. Whites and Mexican Americans, however, do not differ in terms of the likelihood of divorce.

Discussion

We use data from the NSFH to compare marital quality and marital dissolution among Whites, Blacks, and Mexican Americans. Our first hypothesis is partially supported; Blacks report poorer marital quality, on average, than Whites, net of structural and cultural factors. Specifically, Blacks exhibit lower marital happiness and interaction as well as higher marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability, on average, than do Whites. Blacks are also more likely to divorce than are Whites. However, the inclusion of structural and cultural factors associated with race-ethnicity or marital quality does not account for the poorer marital quality of Blacks relative to Whites. Our inability to account for the Black-White difference in marital quality is not unique; no other study to date has been able to reduce these differences to nonsignificance (Broman, 1993; Trent and South, 2003).

Importantly, we are able to identify why Blacks face odds of separation or divorce that are roughly 1.45 times that of Whites: poorer marital quality. Once we account for the five dimensions of marital quality (all of which have independent effects on the likelihood of divorce), the higher risk experienced by Blacks drops to that of Whites. Put differently, the relatively low levels of marital quality reported by Blacks have important consequences for

subsequent marital stability. This finding is consistent with our expectation, based on social exchange theory, that marital quality is an especially salient reward to marriage and therefore an important predictor of divorce. It seems Blacks are at greater risk of marital dissolution because they tend to be in lower quality marriages.

With regards to the competing hypotheses about Mexican Americans, our analyses indicate that the marital quality of Mexican Americans and Whites is quite similar, with no significant differences in marital happiness, interaction, disagreements, or perceived instability among the groups. In fact, Mexican Americans report fewer marital problems, on average, than do Whites. Further, Mexican Americans report higher marital happiness and lower marital disagreements, problems, and perceived instability, on average, than do Blacks. Mexican Americans also have a lower risk of divorce than Blacks, and are not significantly different from Whites in terms of marital dissolution. Although Mexican Americans experience a disadvantaged economic context similar to Blacks, their levels of marital quality and divorce parallel those of Whites.

Our findings are consistent with the paradox of Mexican American nuptiality (Oropesa et al., 1994; Raley et al., 2004). Although Mexican Americans have levels of economic disadvantage similar to, or even greater than, that of Blacks, they have levels of marital quality and divorce outcomes similar to those of Whites. Indeed, it is notable that economic factors are rarely related to marital quality in our models. Our findings also support the idea that cultural factors are particularly relevant to understanding the marital quality and stability patterns of Mexican Americans. Although a more individualistic orientation toward marriage and religiosity do not account for race-ethnic differences in marital quality, there does appear to be some aspect of Mexican American culture that preserves marital quality in this economically disadvantaged

minority group. In supplemental analyses (not shown) we include a control for foreign-born status to examine the influence of nativity on race-ethnic variation in marital quality. Inclusion of this variable reduces the coefficient for Mexican American ethnicity to non-significance in the regression of marital problems, and also accounts for the significant difference in marital disagreements between Mexican Americans and Blacks. Thus, it appears that only foreign-born Mexican Americans have lower levels of marital problems than Blacks and Whites, and only foreign-born Mexican Americans have lower levels of marital disagreements than Blacks. However, as there is only a small sample of Mexican Americans who are foreign-born in the analysis, this finding should be interpreted cautiously. Still, it is consistent with previous work suggesting that Mexican Americans are assimilating to the dominant White culture in American society (Qian and Cobas, 2003; Rosenfeld, 2002) and that foreign-born Mexican Americans exhibit the most pronuptial behavior (Raley et al., 2004).

Our study finds that economic factors do not appear to play a large role in race-ethnic differences in marital quality. None of the individual economic factors are significant predictors of marital interaction or marital problems. Further, neither income, unemployment, nor being employed part-time is a significant predictor of marital happiness, interaction, disagreements, problems or perceived instability in the full models. This is consistent with prior research finding that economic factors do not explain race-ethnic differences in marital quality (Adelmann et al., 1996; Broman, 1993).

There are some limitations of this study. First, our measures of marital happiness, interaction, and perceived instability are all measured by the response to a single item. Single-item scales are often unstable and we acknowledge that multiple-item scales are preferable. The questions available in the NSFH preclude construction of multiple-item scales for some

dimensions. We note that many other studies have used these same single-item measures of marital quality from the NSFH, making our results comparable those (e.g., Brown and Booth, 1996; King and Scott, 2005; Nock, 1995; Skinner et al., 2002). A related point concerns our measure of individualism, which is also limited to a single-item measure. This measure has been used by others in research on marital quality (e.g., Thomson and Colella, 1992), but admittedly it probably does not adequately tap the respondent's level of collectivistic or individualistic orientation to marriage.

Second, the Hispanic sample in the NSFH is mostly English-speaking, which may represent a more assimilated Hispanic group. However, NSFH data represents the only source of data with a large enough Hispanic sample for analysis that also has detailed measures of marital quality as well as measures of the structural and cultural characteristics of interest. As such, this study represents an initial exploration of Hispanic marital quality. Third, the initial wave of the NSFH data is now more than fifteen years old, which raises the question of whether patterns documented using these data are valid for today's marriages. From Amato et al.'s (2003) comparison of marrieds from samples drawn in 1980 and 2000, it appears that marital happiness and divorce proneness have not changed much, although marital interaction has declined over time. Importantly though, changes in the race-ethnic composition of the married population are *not* related to shifts in these three dimensions of marital quality. As the purpose of our analysis is to examine race-ethnic variation in marital quality and divorce, we can be more confident that the differences we document are applicable to today's marriages.

Third, we acknowledge that the sample of Blacks in our study may be a select group.

Blacks are less likely to marry than are Whites or Mexican Americans (Cherlin, 1998). As such, the married Blacks in this sample may be selective of those who perceived marriage as especially

rewarding. If a selection effect were operating, it may be reasonable to expect that these Blacks would exhibit higher marital quality than other groups that are not as select; the fact that they have lower marital quality than Whites or Mexican Americans is therefore especially notable.

Finally, we are not able to take the experience of racism and discrimination into account in this study. One study examining race differences in marriage found that, when using a sample of young adults enlisted in the military, there were no longer Black-White differences in union formation (Lundquist, 2004). This finding is attributed to the lack of discrimination in a total institution such as the military (Lundquist, 2004). Black-White differences in marital quality may also be due to the stress of racism and discrimination. Further, we acknowledge that research does not fully understand whether what constitutes a "quality marriage" is distinct across race-ethnic groups, as the overwhelming majority of research on marital quality has focused on Whites. It is possible that Blacks define a quality marriage differently than do other race-ethnic groups. Subsequent work should further explore this possibility.

Future research on racial and ethnic differences in marital quality could benefit from the use of couple-level data. We use data only from one spouse, but the experiences of both spouses may help us to better understand the contours of race-ethnic differences in marital quality. One of the few studies using couple-level data to examine race differences in marital quality finds that the differences persist following the transition to parenthood; however, this study includes only a small, nonrepresentative sample of Blacks (N=58) and examines only the first two years of marriage (Crohan, 1996). Use of a larger, representative sample to examine couples' marital quality over the course of a marriage could yield further insight into why race-ethnic variation in marital quality exists.

Finally, although our study extends prior research on racial differences in marital quality and dissolution by incorporating Mexican Americans, we acknowledge that other race-ethnic groups remain at the margins of family research. In particular, we know very little about the marital behaviors and experiences of other Hispanic groups or various Asians. Moreover, for many race-ethnic groups, generational status may play a significant role in marital behaviors (Arias, 2001; Gordon, 1964; Rosenfeld, 2002). As mentioned above, our modest sample size of Mexican Americans does not permit us to make firm conclusions about the significance of foreign-born status for marital quality and dissolution.

Previous research has consistently documented a race difference in marital behaviors, with Blacks experiencing poorer marital quality and higher odds of separation and divorce than Whites, on average (Broman, 1993; Cherlin, 1998; Trent and South, 2003). Yet the marital behaviors of Hispanics have received comparatively little attention, despite the doubling in the proportion of marrieds who are Hispanic between 1980 and 2000 (Amato et al., 2003). In this study, we extend prior work on Black-White differences in marital quality and divorce by incorporating Mexican Americans. We find that Mexican Americans and Whites do not differ across multiple dimensions of marital quality and both groups report higher average levels of marital quality than Blacks. Importantly, we also demonstrate that marital quality is consequential for race-ethnic differences in marital success. The higher odds of divorce experienced by Blacks are attributable to their poorer marital quality.

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Table 1. Weighted Means and Unweighted Standard Deviations for All Variables

	Mexican Americans		Blac	<u>ks</u>	Whites	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
Dependent Variables						
Marital Happiness	6.10 ^^^	1.30	5.74***	1.46	5.99	1.34
Marital Interaction	4.71***	1.58	4.71 ***	1.57	5.02	1.38
Marital Disagreements	8.91	4.50	9.25 ***	4.53	8.58	3.61
Marital Problems	5.31 *** ^^^	1.66	5.87 *	2.00	5.69	1.74
Perceived Instability	1.29 ^^^	0.62	1.53 ***	0.90	1.31	0.69
Divorce (Time 2)	0.08 ^^	0.30	0.14***	0.35	0.09	0.31
Control Variables						
Female	0.50	0.50	0.47	0.50	0.50	0.50
Education	9.08 *** ^^^	4.12	11.81 ***	3.20	13.03	2.84
Remarriage	0.11	0.33	0.22	0.41	0.20	0.42
Premarital Cohabitation	0.16	0.37	0.24 ***	0.43	0.18	0.42
Biological Parents not Married	0.28 ^^^	0.44	0.46	0.50	0.25	0.44
Duration (Months)	197.57 ***	153.53	213.34 ***	167.24	254.85	186.98
Age Married	23.52 *** ^^^	7.54	26.24 ***	8.74	25.13	8.63
Number of Children in Household	1.92 *** ^^^	1.72	1.39 ***	1.55	1.00	1.33
No Children in Household	0.25 *** ^^^	0.44	0.37 ***	0.48	0.51	0.50
Biological Children in Household	0.58 *** ^^^	0.49	0.43	0.50	0.40	0.49
Stepchildren in Household	0.07	0.27	0.10	0.32	0.05	0.29
Other Children in Household	0.11	0.25	0.11	0.27	0.04	0.19
Husband's Household Labor	0.31	0.24	0.33 **	0.24	0.30	0.21
Substance Abuse	0.03	0.20	0.04	0.18	0.04	0.20
Structural Factors						
Income (logged)	18857.85 *** ^^^	16714.85	28187.55 ***	27144.99	37140.68	45614.23

Wife's Proportion of Income	0.27 * ^^^	0.33	0.40 ***	0.34	0.31	0.33
Past Unemployment	0.13 *** ^	0.35	0.08	0.28	0.08	0.28
Employed Full-time	0.58	0.50	0.64 ***	0.48	0.55	0.50
Employed Part-time	0.03 ***	0.19	0.05 ***	0.19	0.09	0.28
Unemployed	0.05 ***	0.20	0.04 ***	0.19	0.02	0.13
Not Working	0.34	0.48	0.28 ***	0.45	0.35	0.47
Job Satisfaction	3.66 *** ^^^	0.81	3.39	0.96	3.39	0.88
Irregular Work Time	0.21 *** ^^	0.71	0.38	0.89	0.43	0.94
Cultural Factors						
Financial Kin Support	0.14 ***	0.35	0.15	0.35	0.25	0.45
Other Kin Support	1.07	1.49	1.01	1.33	1.05	1.28
Social Relationships	6.24 *** ^	3.40	5.74	3.19	5.55	2.64
Religious Participation	3.30 ***	1.05	3.34 ***	1.19	2.82	1.35
Catholic	0.81 *** ^^^	0.39	0.06	0.23	0.24	0.42
Mainline Protestant	0.03 *** ^^^	0.17	0.18	0.39	0.35	0.48
Fundamentalist Protestant	0.08	0.25	0.69 ***	0.47	0.23	0.43
Other Religion	0.03 ***	0.18	0.04 ***	0.20	0.10	0.29
No Religion	0.06	0.23	0.03 ***	0.18	0.07	0.27
Negative Attitude to Marriage	2.11 *** ^^^	0.97	2.51	1.04	2.44	1.06
Individuality in Marriage	3.56 **	1.09	3.46 ***	1.09	3.73	0.97
Gender Ideology	9.09 *** ^^^	2.35	10.98 ***	2.51	10.03	2.49
N	316		743		5, 172	

Significantly different from Whites: p < .05. p < .01. p < .001. Significantly different from Blacks: p < .05. p < .01. p < .001. Note: All variables are measured at time 1, except divorce (which is measured at time 2).

Table 2. OLS Regression Predicting Race-Ethnic Differences in Marital Quality at Time 1 Net of Structural and Cultural Factors

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	Marital	Marital	Marital	Marital	Perceived
	Happiness	Interaction	Disagreements	Problems	Instability
Race-Ethnicity					
Black	-0.281 ***	-0.201 ***	0.588 ***	0.260 ***	0.213 ***
Mexican American	0.018 ^^	-0.079	-0.235 ^^	-0.312 ** ^^^	-0.014 ^^^
Control Variables					
Female	-0.043	0.064	-0.341**	0.125*	-0.007
Remarriage	-0.053	0.003	-0.132	0.027	0.082**
Premarital Cohabitation	-0.098*	-0.055	0.307**	0.201**	0.091***
Biological Parents not Married	-0.052	-0.091*	0.257	0.093	0.056**
Duration	-0.001***	0.001***	-0.005***	-0.001***	-0.0004***
Age Married	-0.002	0.011***	-0.066***	-0.023***	-0.005***
Number of Children in Household	-0.026	-0.071***	0.037	0.011	-0.010
Biological Children in Household	-0.249***	-0.678***	0.645***	0.159*	0.109***
Stepchildren in Household	-0.079	-0.425***	0.109	-0.024	0.074
Other Children in Household	-0.300**	-0.712***	0.559	0.359**	0.124*
Husband's Household Labor	0.134	0.159*	0.269	-0.206	0.025
Substance Abuse	-0.854***	-0.578***	2.199***	1.123***	0.506***
Structural Factors					
Education	-0.006	0.030***	0.003	-0.017*	-0.002
Income (logged)	-0.011	-0.006	-0.037	-0.015	0.001
Wife's Proportion of Income	-0.104	0.019	-0.035	0.012	0.061*
Past Unemployment	-0.088	-0.011	0.455*	0.121	0.074*
Employed Part-time	0.122	0.044	0.108	0.100	-0.054

Unemployed	-0.010	0.195	0.565	-0.119	0.016
Not Working	0.092	0.019	-0.061	0.006	-0.028
Job Satisfaction	0.033	0.012	-0.083*	0.001	-0.004
Irregular Work Time	-0.048*	-0.034	0.105	0.020	0.026*
Cultural Factors					
Financial Kin Support	0.005	0.018	0.270**	0.081	-0.021
Other Kin Support	-0.011	0.007	0.244***	-0.010	-0.002
Social Relationships	0.025***	0.048***	0.068***	-0.022**	-0.001
Religious Participation	0.083***	0.037**	-0.127***	-0.132***	-0.052***
Catholic	-0.144	-0.031	0.346	0.042	0.033
Mainline Protestant	-0.085	-0.052	0.166	-0.020	0.018
Fundamentalist Protestant	-0.063	-0.049	0.262	0.000	0.027
Other Religion	-0.162	0.046	0.555*	0.119	0.045
Negative Attitude to Marriage	-0.082***	-0.043*	0.208**	0.078***	0.053***
Individuality in Marriage	-0.032	-0.006	0.001	-0.011	0.024**
Gender Ideology	0.001	-0.005	-0.057**	0.007	-0.000
Intercept	6.517***	4.324***	10.497***	6.886***	1.351***
F	10.87***	31.47***	37.58***	13.15***	19.51***
R^2	0.058	0.148	0.180	0.072	0.104
N	6,094	6,201	5,877	5,817	5,766

p < .05. p < .01. p < .01. p < .001.

Significantly different from Blacks: p < .05. p < .01. p < .001.

Table 3. Cox Models for the Hazard of Divorce Net of Structural and Cultural Factors and Time 1 Marital Quality

	Model 1			Model 2		
	<u>b</u>	<u>Odds</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>Odds</u>	<u>SE</u>
Race-Ethnicity						
Black	0.368 ***	1.45	0.13	0.138	1.15	0.13
Mexican American	-0.209 ^^	0.81	0.24	-0.164	0.85	0.24
Control Variables						
Female	0.019	1.02	0.10	-0.010	0.99	0.10
Education	-0.043*	0.96	0.02	-0.031	0.97	0.02
Remarriage	0.499***	1.65	0.12	0.485***	1.62	0.12
Premarital Cohabitation	0.086	1.09	0.10	0.020	1.02	0.10
Biological Parents not Married	0.241**	1.27	0.09	0.146	1.16	0.09
Duration	-0.072***	0.93	0.01	-0.075***	0.93	0.01
Age Married	-0.052***	0.95	0.01	-0.052***	0.95	0.01
Number of Children in Household	0.019	1.02	0.04	0.009	1.01	0.04
Biological Children in Household	0.171	1.19	0.13	0.038	1.04	0.13
Stepchildren in Household	0.237	1.27	0.18	0.178	1.20	0.18
Other Children in Household	0.334	1.40	0.25	0.231	1.26	0.25
Husband's Household Labor	0.003	1.00	0.22	0.049	1.05	0.21
Substance Abuse	0.920***	2.51	0.14	0.647***	1.91	0.14
Structural Factors						
Income (logged)	-0.007	0.99	0.02	-0.014	0.99	0.02
Wife's Proportion of Income	0.424**	1.53	0.16	0.394*	1.48	0.16
Past Unemployment	0.111	1.12	0.13	0.047	1.05	0.13
Employed Part-time	-0.118	0.89	0.17	-0.050	0.95	0.17
Unemployed	0.150	1.16	0.21	0.139	1.15	0.22

Not Working	-0.199	0.82	0.13	-0.143	0.87	0.13	
Job Satisfaction	0.047	1.05	0.04	0.047	1.05	0.04	
Irregular Work Time	0.050	1.05	0.04	0.029	1.03	0.04	
<u>Cultural Factors</u>							
Financial Kin Support	-0.018	0.98	0.09	0.025	1.03	0.09	
Other Kin Support	0.006	1.01	0.03	0.002	1.00	0.03	
Social Relationships	0.004	1.00	0.02	0.015	1.02	0.02	
Religious Participation	-0.107**	0.90	0.04	-0.046	0.96	0.04	
Catholic	-0.022	0.98	0.16	-0.087	0.92	0.16	
Mainline Protestant	-0.070	0.93	0.15	-0.103	0.90	0.15	
Fundamentalist Protestant	0.073	1.08	0.16	0.038	1.04	0.16	
Other Religion	0.048	1.05	0.20	-0.031	0.97	0.20	
Negative Attitude to Marriage	0.082	1.09	0.04	0.024	1.02	0.04	
Individuality in Marriage	0.037	1.04	0.04	0.009	1.01	0.04	
Gender Ideology	-0.034	0.97	0.02	-0.032	0.97	0.02	
Marital Quality (Time 1)							
Marital Happiness				-0.135***	0.87	0.03	
Marital Interaction				-0.085**	0.92	0.03	
Marital Disagreements				-0.020	0.98	0.01	
Marital Problems				0.050*	1.05	0.02	
Perceived Instability				0.436***	1.55	0.05	
χ^2 503.81*** 678.08*** $^*p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .05$. ^^ $p < .05$. ^^ $p < .01$. ^^0 $p < .001$.							