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THE ROLE OF EMERGING ADULT AND PARENT FINANCIAL
BEHAVIORS, CRITERIA AND ASSISTANCE ON THE
MARITAL HORIZONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

by

Laura Jo Nelson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University

Master of Science

Department of Marriage, Family and Human Development
Brigham Young University

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Laura Jo Nelson in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF EMERGING ADULT AND PARENT FINANCIAL BEHAVIORS, CRITERIA AND ASSISTANCE ON THE MARITAL HORIZONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

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Recent studies indicate that financial independence is important to the transition to adulthood. This study, grounded in a marital horizon theory of emerging adulthood, examines the role of emerging adult and parent financial patterns on emerging adults' marital horizons. Correlations, stepwise-regressions and a MANOVA were conducted using a sample of 403 emerging adults and 326 parents that were recruited from five college sites across the United States. Results demonstrated that significant differences existed between finances and emerging adults' marital horizons. Specifically, emerging adults with higher financial criteria and who received more parental financial assistance were more likely to report not being ready for marriage. These findings support the notion that finances significantly influence an emerging adult's marital horizon.

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The Role of Emerging Adult and Parent Financial Behaviors, Criteria and Assistance on the Marital Horizons of Emerging Adults

In previous generations, marriage was regarded as the definitive transition to adulthood (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Recent research suggests, however, that the majority of young people today no longer consider marriage to be an important marker for becoming an adult (Nelson & Barry, 2005). Instead, young people report more internally-defined qualities, such as accepting responsibility for themselves and becoming autonomous decision-makers, as the contemporary criteria for adulthood (Cheah & Nelson, 2004). With most young people no longer associating marriage with the transition to adulthood and a notable rise during the last two decades in the average age at which people first marry (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2005), contemporary scholars have largely disassociated marriage from the study of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Carroll et al., 2007; Cere, 2000; Glenn & Marquardt, 2001; Hall, 2006; Whitehead & Popenoe, 2001), scholars have typically considered marriage to be a part of later adult development, rather than an important feature of emerging adulthood.

However, recent theoretical work examining the transition from emerging adulthood to young adulthood has emphasized the need to better understand the developmental processes of how young people make commitments to adult systems, such as marriage (Tanner, 2006). Furthermore, recent research suggests that young people's views of marriage, such as their desired age for marriage and the relative importance they place on getting married, are associated with risk-taking behaviors and couple formation

patterns during emerging adulthood (Carroll et al., 2007; Manning, et al., 2007).

Therefore, the meaning of marriage in young people's lives may prove to be a significant predictor of how and when emerging adults transition into young adulthood; thus impacting trajectories of individual development (e.g., identity development, adult status, career directedness, etc) and family formation patterns (e.g., sexuality, cohabitation, fertility rates, etc.).

Focus of the Proposed Study

Although research suggests a link between emerging adults' views toward marriage and their current attitudes and behaviors, little is known about how emerging adults develop their personal views about when and how marriage should come into their lives. One area of needed investigation is the role that emerging adult financial behaviors and criteria, as well as parent financial criteria and assistance, may play in shaping and influencing emerging adult children's marital horizon. Of particular interest may be parents' patterns of financial assistance with their emerging adult children, as well as both emerging adult and parents financial criteria for marriage readiness. Carroll and colleagues (2008) recently found that patterns of parent financial assistance were associated with emerging adults' perceptions of transitioning to adulthood; as well as their attitudes and behaviors during the transition to adulthood. However, no research exists on whether parent financial assistance levels are associated with young people's attitudes about marriage, specifically in the areas of ideal marital timing, relative importance of marriage, and the criteria for marriage readiness. The focus of this study will be to begin to fill this gap by examining associations between emerging adult financial behaviors and criteria, as well as parent financial criteria and assistance and the

marital horizons of emerging adult children. The over-arching purpose of this proposed study will be to better understand if and how parents influence their emerging adult children's attitudes toward marriage and their subsequent trajectories through the transition to adulthood.

Literature Review

Emerging Adulthood

For most young people in contemporary Western societies, the years from the late teens through the twenties are a time of significant change and importance. Arnett (2006) asserts that contemporary patterns involved in the transition to adulthood in American society, and in other industrialized societies, have created a distinct period of the life course that is unique to the current generation. He proposes a "theory of emerging adulthood" which "recognizes the years from (roughly) 18 to 25 as a distinct period of the life course, different in important ways from the adolescence that precedes it or the young adulthood that follows it" (Arnett, 2006, p 4). While Arnett (2006) emphasizes commonalities that set emerging adulthood apart as a unique developmental period, he recognizes that there is widespread diversity in the trajectories and life experiences of young people during this time in life. Because of this, he has stated that "an understanding of subgroup and individual differences is essential to a complete understanding of emerging adulthood" (Arnett, 2006, p 15). A grounding tenet of the current study is that variation in approaches to marriage may provide a useful conceptual lens to distinguish subgroup differences in developmental pathways between adolescence and young adulthood.

Parenting During Emerging Adulthood

There is an abundance of research on parenting during childhood and adolescence, but fewer studies have focused on parenting during emerging adulthood. There is some indication that the parent-child relationship continues to be important during emerging adulthood, especially during times of transition (Bartle-Haring, Brucker, & Hock, 2002; O’Conner, Allen, Bell, & Hauser, 1996). For example, Collins and Val Dulman (2006) found that emerging adults are just as likely to identify their parents as they are their friends or romantic partners as the primary individuals from whom they seek advice and support. Furthermore, the well-being of emerging adults has been found to be closely tied to their ongoing relationships with parents, regardless of whether they still live with parents or have left home (Cooney & Kurz, 1996; Umberson, 1992). Parent and family relationships have also been found to influence emerging adults’ psychosocial development, health and risk-taking behavior, identity, and capacity for intimacy (Aquilino, 2006).

Research suggests that parents are particularly influential in their emerging adult children’s lives with regard to the formation and internalization of values (Grusec, 2002). Internalization is theorized to be a natural developmental process in which children (as well as adolescents and adults) “progressively integrate societal values and proscriptions into a coherent sense of self” (Grusec, 1997, p 136). Internalization concerns the “processes by which individuals acquire beliefs, attitudes, or behavioral regulations from external sources and progressively transform those external regulations into personal attributes, values, or regulatory styles” (Ryan, Connell, & Grolnick, 1992, p 139). While

most of the research on the transmission of values from parents to children has been conducted with adolescents and younger children, there is evidence to show that values learned in youth are displayed through emerging adulthood (Frensch, Pratt, & Norris, 2007). Research with emerging adults suggests that while peers tend to be influential in the day-to-day aspects of life (e.g., clothes, music, daily activities, etc.), parents tend to be influential when it comes to lifetime decisions, such as a career, college, religion, and family (Zarit & Eggebeen, 2002). Additional evidence of the transmission of values is found in the high levels of congruence between parents and adolescent and emerging adult children in their reported values and behaviors related to religion, education, and risk-taking behaviors (Bjarnason, Thorlindsson & Sigfusdottir, 2005; Dickie, Ajega & Kobylak, 2006; Sandefur, Meier & Campbell, 2006).

There has been relatively little research to date that looks directly at the transmission of values related to marriage between parents and their children. The research that has been done suggests that parents may play an important role in shaping their adult children's views about marriage, as well as their emerging adult children's perceptions of personal readiness for marriage (Larson, 1988; Snyder, Velasquez, Clark, & Means-Christensen, 1997). For example, research has demonstrated that parental attitudes, behaviors, and values significantly impact emerging adults' attitudes and beliefs about marriage (Axinn & Thornton, 1992; Heaton, 2003). Also, research has found that emerging adults who feel that their parents support and approve of their chosen partner are more likely to feel ready to marry (Holman & Li, 1997). In a recent study of emerging adults and their parents, Olson, Carroll, Nelson, Willoughby, and Miller (2008) found that while there are significant differences between parents and their children with

regards to marital attitudes, namely, parents views of marriage were moderately correlated with the views of their emerging adult children, and patterns of marital delay among emerging adults may be supported, and perhaps encouraged, by parents.

Parent Financial Assistance

Parent financial assistance is increasingly being identified as a key factor in the transition to adulthood. Arnett (2006) found that both emerging adults and their parents strongly agreed that financial independence and accepting personal responsibility for one's self are vital parts of the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Arnett, 2006). Nelson and colleagues (2007) likewise found that 93% of emerging adults said that becoming financially independent from parents was necessary to become an adult; 82% of mothers and 75% of fathers agreed with this criterion. In the same study, it was found that parents and emerging adults overwhelmingly agreed, with a 98% average, that accepting responsibility for your actions was a criterion for adulthood.

Reported in another study, conducted by Schoeni and Ross (2005), emerging adults were more successful in establishing themselves economically when familial financial assistance was available during the transition through emerging adulthood. They estimated that, on average, parents provide roughly \$38,000 in material assistance – housing, food, educational expenses, or direct cash – during the transition to adulthood. This averages over \$2,200 each year from ages 18 to 34; although, the actual dollar amount of assistance diminishes with age. They also reported that there was substantial variation among young adults in the amount of assistance they received from their families. Young adults in the top quartile of family incomes received three times more material assistance than children in the bottom quartile. Overall, the evidence from this

study suggests that children with more financial advantages have a smoother transition to financial independence.

Despite the professed importance of financial independence as part of the transition through emerging adulthood, many emerging adults find it difficult to sustain an adequate income. A study conducted by Bell, Burtless, Gornick, and Smeeding (2005) explored levels of income adequacy in emerging adults. Income adequacy was defined as having “sufficient wage and salary income to live on their own at-or-above the national poverty threshold in a given year” (p 36). Using a multi-national dataset, these scholars found that during the time period from 1985 until 2000, many emerging adults experienced a decline in income adequacy. However, young adults who lived more independently sustained bigger losses in income adequacy than emerging adults who continued to live with their parents or be claimed as a part of their parents’ household. These scholars also found that emerging adults who lived as heads of household or as spouses in households containing two or more people saw a larger drop in income adequacy than emerging adults who remained in their parents’ households. However, the drop was typically smaller than the drop experienced by independent emerging adults living alone.

Other research also suggests that many young people are not prepared for the financial responsibilities that come with adult life. Clarke, Heaton, Israelsen, and Eggett (2005) found that adolescents reported feeling only adequately taught and moderately prepared to perform financial tasks. Bowen (2002) found there was no statistically significant relationship between parents’ financial knowledge and that of their teenager. However, there is also evidence that parents are important in determining whether an

emerging adult has healthy financial behaviors. Emerging adults whose parents provide more financial advice are more likely to perform positive financial behaviors such as paying bills on time, comparison shopping and maintaining balance in a bank account (Xiao, Shim, Barber & Lyons, 2007). Likewise, if an emerging adult believes these behaviors are approved by their parents, they are more likely to perform them (Xiao et al., 2007).

Many parents want to see their child have the best possible chance of success and success is often linked to educational attainment (Baum & Payea, 2004). In a study by Carroll and colleagues (2008), nearly 70% of parents reported paying most or all of their children's tuition, 65% books, 58% housing, 59% daily expenses, and 28% of their recreation. In the same study, over 50% of parents reported paying between \$5,000 and \$30,000 towards their emerging adult's education and almost 30% reported paying \$30,000 or more each year. Parents were also asked when they should stop providing financial support for their children, and 3% of parents reported biological markers for ceasing financial support (e.g., child reaches age 18, 21, or 25). The most common reason for stopping financial support was when the child had a full time job (49% of parents). Twenty-three percent of parents said financial support should stop when the child graduates from college. In addition, 6% of parents reported that parental financial assistance should never stop

While parental financial involvement may be important for an emerging adult's education, it may also have potential negative outcomes. Researchers have found that in adolescence, teens who had limited or minor connection of responsibility to parents but easy access to their parents' finances or spending money earned from paid employment,

were more likely to act in negative ways (Luthar & Becker, 2002). When most of the money obtained from paid employment went to personal activities and possessions, it was termed by Bachman (1993) as Premature Affluence: “Affluent” because of the amount of discretionary income in their possession and “premature” because of the adolescent’s inability to sustain that much discretionary spending once they have taken on the burden of paying for their own necessities. Premature Affluence has been connected with a decrease in the likelihood that the adolescent would report being financially stable in young adulthood (Bachman, 1993). Premature Affluence seems not only to affect those who work during the school year but is also a challenge for those from affluent families (Luthar, 2003).

Carroll and colleagues (2008) analyzed work hours and risk behaviors of emerging adults in one study and it was found that those who were highly dependent on their parents for financial support reported working less than those that were interdependent or independent. Likewise, for risk behaviors, drinking, binge drinking, marijuana use, and smoking, those who reported being financially independent from parents reported lower levels of drinking and binge drinking than did those who were interdependent or dependent. A number of analyses were also conducted to determine whether the parent-child relationship differed as a function of parental financial involvement; there were no statistically significant differences on parental warmth, psychological control, or knowledge.

Marital Horizon Theory

Using a family life cycle perspective, Carroll and colleagues (2007) have proposed a *marital horizon theory* of emerging adulthood. The term “horizon” refers to

“the extent of one’s outlook, experience, interest, [and] knowledge” (Neufeldt, 1988).

The idiom “on the horizon” is used to refer to something that has not yet happened, but is “within view, not too far away” (Ammer, 1997). Therefore, the meta-concept marital horizon refers to a person’s outlook or approach to marriage in relation to his or her current situation. Carroll and colleagues (2007) suggest that there are at least three interrelated, yet distinct, components that constitute and define an emerging adult’s marital horizon, namely: (1) the relative *importance of marriage* in one’s current life plans, (2) the *desired timing of marriage* in the life course, and (3) the *criteria for marriage readiness* or the types of preparation one believes are needed before being ready to marry. The central thesis of this theory is that emerging adults’ perceptions of marital importance, timing, and readiness are central factors in determining subgroup differences in the length of emerging adulthood and the specific behaviors that occur during this period in the family life cycle.

In a study testing the first two factors of marital horizon theory (i.e., marital importance and desired marital timing), Carroll and colleagues (2007) found that young people who have relatively close marital horizons (i.e., those who desire marriage in their early twenties) and those who have more distant marital horizons (i.e., those who desire marriage in their middle twenties or later) differ in their sexual values and behaviors, substance use patterns, and family formation values. Specifically, it was found that emerging adults with close marital horizons reported less permissive sexual behavior and lower rates of drinking, binge drinking, drunkenness, and drug use. These results were found despite controlling for age, religiosity, dating status, impulsivity, and extroversion. The results of this first study suggest that changes in lifestyle patterns previously

assumed to be associated with the transition to marriage may in fact be initiated when young people anticipate marriage in their near future.

In a follow-up study, Carroll and colleagues (2008) examined the criteria for marriage readiness among emerging adults. Results from this study indicated that there is considerable difference among emerging adults on their criteria for marriage readiness compared to their criteria for adulthood. In particular, emerging adults placed a higher priority on interpersonal competence, familial capacities, and role transitions as marriage readiness criteria. These findings suggest that the process of becoming an adult involves a shift from being taken care of by others (e.g., parents) to being able to care for one's self; whereas, marriage readiness involves a shift from being responsible for only one's self to that of being able to take care of others (e.g., spouse and children).

Research Questions

The current study was designed to better understand how financial behaviors, criteria, beliefs and assistance influence emerging adult's attitudes toward marriage and their subsequent trajectories through the transition to adulthood. Specifically, three questions will be addressed:

1. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults' reported importance of marriage in relation to education attainment?
2. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults' desired age for marriage?

3. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults' reported marriage readiness status?

Work done by Carroll and colleagues (2008) recently found that patterns of parent financial assistance were associated with emerging adults' perceptions of transitioning to adulthood; as well as their attitudes and behaviors during the transition to adulthood. They also found that the process of becoming an adult involves a shift from being taken care of by others to being able to care for one's self; whereas, marriage readiness involves a shift from being responsible for only one's self to that of being able to take care of others. Based on these findings, and grounded in the marital horizon theory, we anticipate that parent financial assistance plays an important role in the timing and transitions of marriage for emerging adults. Specifically, we expect that individuals who are in the process of, or who have already become, financially independent from parents will more likely be prepared to make the shift from caring for themselves to being able to take care of others.

This study is exploratory in nature and therefore takes into account a variety of variables pertaining to both an emerging adult and the parent finances (e.g. criteria, expectations, types of assistance and \$ amount). In this study we seek to determine which variables have a significant impact on the emerging adult's importance of marriage in regard to education, desired age for marriage and their marital horizon. We expect that emerging adults with higher financial criteria for marriage and those receiving substantial parental financial assistance will most likely have a more extended marital horizon. We anticipate that the type of assistance and actual dollar amount will most likely be

associated with importance of marriage, desired age for marriage and marital horizon because of the significant impact that the dollar holds in determining life choices.

Method

Participants

Participants for the current study will be drawn from a study of emerging adult college students and their parents entitled “Project READY” (Researching Emerging Adults’ Developmental Years). This project is an ongoing, collaborative, multi-site study that is being conducted by a consortium of developmental and family scholars. The proposed sample used in this study consisted of 403 undergraduate and graduate students (250 women, 153 men) and their parents (as reported by 326 mothers) recruited from five college sites from across the United States. Response rate varied by site (ranging from 50% to 75%), with an overall response rate of approximately 63%. The mean age of study participants was 20.0 years, ($SD = 1.78$, $range = 18-26$) for emerging adults and 48.8 years ($SD = 4.41$, $range = 38-64$) for mothers. Eighty-four percent of the participants were European American, 4% were African American, 6% were Asian American, 2% were Latino American, and 3% indicated that they were “mixed/biracial” or of another ethnicity. Participants reported a variety of religious affiliations: Roman Catholic, 40%; Conservative Christian, 14%; Liberal Christian, 16%; other faiths (e.g., Jewish, Greek Orthodox), 4%; Atheist/Agnostic, 6%; and, no affiliation, 20%. Ninety-one percent of emerging adults reported living outside of their parents’ home in an apartment, house, or residence hall. Nine percent reported living in their parents’ home. From the subset of the selected sample whose parents participated (81%), 14% of parents reported a yearly income less than \$50,000, 14% reported a yearly income between

\$50,000 and \$75,000, 21% reported a yearly income between \$75,000 and \$100,000, and 52% reported a yearly income over \$100,000.

Procedure

Participants completed the Project READY questionnaire via the Internet (see <http://www.projectready.net>). The use of an online data collection protocol facilitated unified data collection across multiple university sites and allowed for the survey to be administered to emerging adults and their parents (parent participation was not required) who were living in separate locations throughout the country. After receiving IRB approval from all five sites, participants were recruited through faculty's announcement of the study in undergraduate and graduate courses. Undergraduate courses were primarily Introduction to Psychology courses or large general education courses of the like in an attempt to access a broad range of students. Professors at the various universities were provided with a student handout that had a brief explanation of the study and directions for accessing the online survey. Interested students then accessed the study website with a location-specific recruitment code. Informed consent was obtained online, and only after consent was given could the participants begin the questionnaires. Each participant was asked to complete a survey battery of 448 items. Sections of the survey addressed topic areas such as background information, family-of-origin experiences, self-perceptions, personality traits, values, risk behaviors, dating behaviors, prosocial tendencies, and religiosity. Most participants were offered course/extra credit for their participation. In a small number of cases (E5%), participants were offered small monetary compensation (i.e., \$10 gift certificates) for their participation.

After participants completed the personal information, they had the option to send an invitation to their parents to participate in the study via email. The email invitation included an assigned password and a link to the parents' version of the questionnaire. The parents were directed to click on the link and enter the password. Once the password was entered, an Informed Consent Form appeared and parents then followed the same protocol as the children. If parents did not have an e-mail address, mailing addresses were obtained and questionnaires were mailed to them with self-addressed, pre-paid envelopes (this occurred in less than 1% of the cases). Parents completed a shorter battery of 280 items similar to the ones their children completed.

Measures

Importance of education before marriage. In order to assess the first research question, emerging adults and their parents were asked to respond to the following statement; "My educational pursuits or career development come before marriage at this time in my life." Parents and emerging adults responded on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*).

Ideal age for marriage. In order to assess the second research question, emerging adults and their parents were asked, "What is the ideal age (in years) for an individual to get married?"

Marriage readiness status. To assess the third research question, emerging adults were asked "Do you think that you are ready to be married?" Response options included "yes" "no" and "*in some respects yes, in some respects no.*"

Emerging adult financial behaviors. To assess the current financial behaviors of emerging adults, they were asked two open-ended questions; "How many hours per week

(on average) do you spend in paid employment.” and “What is your current gross income before taxes and deductions?” They also were asked how true the statement “I am financially independent from parents” was for them personally. Emerging adults responded to the last question on a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not true at all*) to 3 (*very true*).

Emerging adults' expectations for marital finances. Emerging adults' expectations about marital finances were also assessed by asking emerging adults if they agreed with the following three statements: “In a marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control over his/her finances;” “For a man, become capable of supporting a family financially;” and “For a woman, become capable of supporting a family financially.” Emerging adults responded on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*).

Financial criteria for marriage. To assess parent and emerging adult's financial criteria for marriage, both parents and emerging adults were asked how important it was to be: financially independent from parents and others, no longer living in parents' household, finished with education, settled into a longer term career, purchased a home, and employed full time. Parents and emerging adults responded on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all important*) to 4 (*very important*).

Using principal axis factor analysis, Carroll and colleagues (*in press*) have demonstrated that the Emerging Adult Financial Criteria Scale has a valid factor structure and internal consistency within the scale. With the current sample, the Emerging Adult and Parent Financial Criteria scales again demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .75$ for emerging adults and $\alpha = .73$ for parents).

Parents' attitudes about providing financial support. Parents' attitudes about providing financial support to their emerging adult were assessed by asking parents if they agreed with the following three statements: "Adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves," "I would continue to support my child financially if he/she got married," and "I would continue to support my child financially after he/she graduated from college." Parents responded on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*).

Parent financial assistance. To assess the level of parental financial assistance, parents were asked how much they paid for their child's tuition, school expenses (books, supplies, etc.), rent/housing expenses, daily expenses (food, clothing, etc.), and entertainment/recreation. Parents responded on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*none*) to 4 (*all*), with higher scores representing parents providing more financial assistance for that particular aspect of their child's life. Parents were also asked two open-ended questions "How much financial support (estimated total dollar value) do you provide for your child each year?" and "What is your family's current gross income before taxes and deductions?"

Analysis Plan

The analysis for this study includes three steps. In the first step, emerging adults' financial behaviors, expectations and criteria, along with parents' financial criteria, expectations, and assistance will be examined through frequencies and means. In addition, correlations will be conducted for emerging adult and parent financial assistance and criteria for marriage with the two dependent variables: importance of marriage and desired age of marriage. The second step includes stepwise multiple regressions to

determine what variables may predict a decrease in importance of marriage and an increase in the desired age for marriage. The final step will use a MANOVA to compare emerging adults' status of marriage readiness to parental financial criteria, expectations and assistance, as well as emerging adult financial behaviors, expectations and criteria.

Results

The focus of this study was to better understand how finances influence emerging adults' attitudes towards marriage by examining associations between parent and emerging adult financial behaviors, criteria, and expectations with marital horizons of emerging adults. As noted in the analysis plan, descriptive and correlations, stepwise multiple-regressions and a MANOVA were conducted to better understand the relationship between finances and emerging adults' marital horizons.

Descriptives for Dependent Variables

As shown in Table 1, overwhelmingly, both emerging adult men (90%) and women (89%) agreed, on at some level, with the statement "My educational pursuits or career development comes before marriage at this time in my life." (men $M = 4.8$, $SD = 1.29$; women $M = 4.82$, $SD = 1.22$). Approximately half of emerging adult men (55%) and women (65%) reported their ideal age of marriage between 24 to 26 years of age (men $M = 25.48$, $SD = 2.12$; women $M = 25$, $SD = 1.91$). Sixteen percent of emerging adult men reported their ideal age for marriage between 18 and 23 years of age and 17% of emerging adult women reported their ideal age for marriage between 21 and 23 years of age. This means that 29% of emerging adult men and 18% of emerging adult women reported their ideal age for marriage somewhere between 27 and 31 years of age. When asked, "Do you think that you are ready to be married?" 69% of both emerging adult men

and women responded “no” and 25% of men and 27% of women responded “in some respect yes, in some respect no.” Only 7% of men and 4% of women reported that they were ready to be married.

Emerging Adult Financial Behaviors, Criteria and Expectations

Frequency levels were calculated for men and women in order to better understand current emerging adult financial behaviors. These analyses revealed that approximately half of both men and women (51% for men, 49% for women) reported working, on average, less than 5 hours a week. Just under half (38% for men, 41% for women) worked between 5 and 20 hours a week and a limited number of men and women reported working 20 hours or more (11% for men, 10% women). Only 4% of women and 9% of emerging adult men reported being financially independent of their parents (men $M = 1.5$, $SD = .65$; women $M = 1.38$, $SD = .56$) (see Table 1), with the majority of emerging adult men and women (75% for men, 78% for women) reporting making a personal income of \$5000 or less per year.

Next, frequency levels for emerging adult men and women’s financial criteria were calculated. Forty-eight percent of women and 41% of men reported that the items found in the emerging adult set of financial criteria (i.e., financial independent from parents and others, no longer living in parents’ household, finished with education, settled into a longer term career, purchased a home, and employed full time) were “not at all important” or “not very important” for marriage. Whereas 52% of women and 59% of men reported that these items were “fairly important” or “very important” for marriage (men $M = 3.01$, $SD = .56$; women $M = 2.93$, $SD = .55$).

Additionally, frequency levels for emerging adult men and women's response to the question "In marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control over his/her finances" was calculated. A little under half (47%) of men and (39%) of women disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, while a little more than half (53%) of men and (61%) of women agreed (men $M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.17$; women $M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.04$). Nearly all men (93%) agreed on some level that prior to marriage it was important for a man to be capable of supporting a family financially ($M = 3.57$, $SD = .66$) and 77% agreed on some level that prior to marriage it was important for a woman to be capable of supporting a family financially ($M = 3.11$, $SD = .85$). Similarly, most women agreed on some level (92%) that prior to marriage it was important for a man to be capable of supporting a family financially ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .66$) and 88% agreed that prior to marriage it was important for a woman to be capable of supporting a family financially ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .72$).

Parent Financial Criteria, Expectations and Assistance

Frequency levels and means for parent financial criteria were also calculated and 32% of parents reported that the items found in the parent set of financial criteria (i.e., financial independent from parents and others, no longer living in parents' household, finished with education, settled into a longer term career, purchased a home, and employed full time) were "not at all important" or "not very important" for marriage. Whereas 68% parents reported that these items were "fairly important" or "very important" for marriage ($M = 2.97$, $SD = .54$).

Parents also overwhelmingly (88%) agreed on some level that "adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves" ($M =$

4.87, $SD = 1.04$). Similarly, 78% of parents disagreed on some level with the statement “I would continue to support my child financially if he/she got married” ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.09$). However, only 55% of parents disagreed in some form to the statement “I would continue to support my child financially after he/she graduated from college” ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.07$).

According to Table 2, well over half (68%) of emerging adult’s parents are paying “most” to “all” of their child’s tuition. Just below that at 62%, parents are paying “most” to “all” school expenses. A majority of parents (67%) also report paying for “most” to “all” rent or housing expenses as well; while over half (57%) of parents report paying for “most” to “all” car/car payments. Fifty-eight percent of parents also provide “most” to “all” daily expenses for their emerging adult, while only 26% of parents provide “most” to “all” entertainment and recreation costs. When parents were asked how much financial support (estimated in total dollar value) they provided each year to their child, 23% provided under \$5,000 per year, 34% of parents provided between \$5,000 and \$19,999 per year, 32% between \$20,000 and \$49,999, and 11% of parents provided above \$50,000 per year to their emerging adult.

Question 1. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults’ reported importance of marriage in relation to education attainment?

As shown in Table 3, significant correlations were found between emerging adult financial behaviors, criteria, and expectations as well as parent financial criteria, expectations and assistance and importance of marriage. For females, a positive association was found between placing education and career development before

marriage at this time in life and their financial criteria for marriage ($r = .15, p < .05$). Likewise, positive associations were found between placing education and career development before marriage and expectations for marital finances. (“In a marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control over his or her personal finances ($r = .17, p < .01$) and “For a woman, it is important to become capable of supporting a family financially” ($r = .13, p < .05$)).

However, a negative association for females was found between financial independence from parents ($r = -.19, p < .01$) and a decrease in the importance of marriage, meaning that financial independence from parents is associated with an increase in the importance of marriage. A moderate positive association was also found for females between placing educational and career development before marriage at this time in life and their parent’s yearly gross income ($r = .15, p < .05$).

For men, a positive association was found between placing educational and career development before marriage at this time in life and their financial criteria for marriage ($r = .20, p < .01$). Likewise for men, a positive association was found between placing education and career development before marriage and agreement prior to marriage, it is important for both a man ($r = .26, p < .01$) and a woman ($r = .17, p < .05$) to be capable of supporting a family financially.

In order to determine the independent contribution of financial behaviors, criteria and assistance on emerging adults’ reported importance of marriage, a stepwise regression analyses was performed. For all regressions, age and gender were entered on the first step, with parental and emerging adult criteria and financial behaviors on the

second step. Two-way gender interactions were also explored, but were not statistically significant so were eliminated for parsimony.

In Step 1 of the regression analysis predicting importance of marriage, age and gender did not account for a statistically significant amount of total variance (see Table 4). Variables used to measure emerging adult financial behaviors and criteria, as well as parent financial criteria and assistance were entered in Step 2. These variables significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for; with agreement to the statement “In a marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control over his/her personal finances,” ($\beta = .12, P. < .05$), related positively in the importance of education over marriage ($R^2 = .13, F(19, 269) = 1.98, P. < .01 .008$).

Question 2. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults’ desired age for marriage?

Table 3 shows correlations of emerging adult financial behaviors, criteria and expectations, along with parent financial criteria, expectations and assistance with emerging adults’ desired age for marriage. For females, a positive association was found between reported ideal age of marriage and expectations for marital finances (“In a marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control over his/her finances” ($r = .20, p < .01$) and prior to marriage it is important “for a woman, to be capable of supporting a family financially” ($r = .20, p < .01$)). Parent’s agreement that they would continue to support their child financially after graduating from college ($r = .18, p < .01$) was also positively associated with a female desired age for marriage. Similarly, parents’ financial assistance in areas of car ($r = .17, p < .05$), daily expenses ($r = .17, p < .05$), and

entertainment/recreation ($r = .19, p < .01$) were positively associated with female emerging adults' desired age for marriage.

For men, a positive association was found between reported ideal age for marriage and their financial criteria for marriage ($r = .21, p < .01$). Also for men, ideal age for marriage was positively associated with the actual dollar amount of financial assistance received from parents ($r = .26, p < .01$). However, ideal age for marriage for men was negatively associated with financial independence from parents ($r = -.21, p < .01$).

In order to determine the independent contribution of financial behaviors, criteria, and assistance, on emerging adults reported desired age for marriage another stepwise multiple-regression analyses was performed in the same manner as described above. Two-way gender interactions were also explored, but were not statistically significant so were eliminated for parsimony.

In Step 1 of the regression analysis predicting desired age for marriage, age and gender accounted for a statistically significant ($R^2 = .027, F(2, 287) = 3.96, p < .05$) amount of total variance with age positively related ($\beta = .12, p < .05$) to desired age for marriage and gender (coded as 1 for male and 2 for female) negatively related ($\beta = .11, p = .06$) to desired age for marriage (see Table 4). Variables entered in Step 2 significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for; with hours worked each week ($\beta = .16, p < .05$), capability for a woman to support a family financially ($\beta = .17, p = .01$) and overall dollar amount of financial assistance received from parents ($\beta = .24, p = .01$) positively related and parents disagreement to supporting a child financially after

marriage ($\beta = .18, p < .01$) and financial assistance with school expenses ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) negatively related to desired age for marriage ($R^2 = .20, F(19, 268) = 3.20, p < .01$).

Question 3. How are financial behaviors, expectations, attitudes and criteria of emerging adults and parents associated with emerging adults' reported marriage readiness status?

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the differences between groups in financial behaviors criteria and assistance. Independent variables were gender (men and women) and marriage readiness status (no, in some regards no and in some regards yes, and yes). Means and standard deviations for financial behaviors, criteria and assistance are presented in Table 5. The main effect for gender was not statistically significant, $F(19, 267) = .80, p = .70$, while the main effect for marriage readiness status $F(38, 536) = 2.56, p < .000$, was statically significant. The interaction between gender and marriage readiness status was not statistically significant.

Based on posthoc comparisons using Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) (see Table 5) those that were ready for marriage reported the lowest level of agreement to the phrase "In a marriage, it is a good idea for each spouse to maintain control of her/her personal finances" $F(2, 285) = 3.16, p < .05$. Likewise, those that were ready for marriage also had parents with the highest level of agreement to the phrase "I would to continue to support their child financially if he/she child got married" $F(2, 285) = 5.57, p < .01$ and who provided the least amount of financial support in the area of car/car payments, $F(2, 285) = 6.35, p < .01$. These findings were significantly different that those who reported not being ready for marriage or being ready in some regards.

Those who reported not being ready for marriage were significantly different than the two other groups in their reported financial independence from parents, $F(2, 285) = 6.29, p < .01$, parent financial assistance received for rent/housing expenses, $F(2, 285) = 5.20, p < .01$, and overall dollar amount of financial assistance received, $F(2, 285) = 12.02, p < .001$. Those not ready for marriage were less financially independent from parents and received more parent financial assistance with rent/housing expenses, as well as overall dollar amount of assistance each year when compared to those that reported being ready for marriage, either in some regards or completely.

Posthoc comparisons also revealed that all three groups differed significantly from one another other in the amount parent financial assistance they received for tuition, $F(2, 285) = 5.72, p < .01$, school expenses $F(2, 285) = 11.35, p < .01$, and daily expenses $F(2, 285) = 6.89, p < .01$; with those not ready for marriage receiving the most financial assistance. Those that reported being ready in some regard received less assistance than those that reported not being ready but more than those who reported yes to being ready for marriage. And those reporting being ready for marriage receiving less financial assistance than the other two groups. All three groups differed significantly as well, in their financial criteria for marriage readiness, $F(2, 285) = 6.82, p < .01$, with those not ready for marriage reporting the highest level of agreement with the financial criteria for marriage and those being ready reporting the lowest level of agreement.

Discussion

This study suggests that emerging adults with the highest set of financial criteria for marriage and who are currently receiving the most financial support from their parents are likely to have a distant marital horizon. Emerging adults with a closer marital

horizon are likely to not be as financially dependent on parents and have a more moderate set of criteria and expectations for finances within a marriage. Based on this study, it is possible that an emerging adult's marital horizon may become closer as they work towards financial independence from parents and have a more moderate level of expectations and criteria for finances within a marriage.

It is interesting to note that the only emerging adult financial behavior to be significantly associated with importance of marriage and desired age for marriage was financial independence from parents. This independence from parents was associated with an increase in the importance of marriage for women and decreased desired age of marriage for men. It may well be argued that importance of marriage for women increases when the responsibility of sustaining an adequate income shifts from parents to the female emerging adult. These findings fit well with Bell and colleagues (2005) research that found emerging adults who lived in households containing two or more people saw a larger drop in income adequacy than adults who remained in their parent's households, but the drop was typically smaller than the drop experienced by independent young adults living alone. For men, financial independence from parents may mean they have made the shift of being taken care of by others (e.g., parents) to being able to care for one's self and are therefore more ready to take on responsibilities of caring for others (e.g., spouse and children) (Olson et al., 2008) and therefore report a closer marital horizon.

Findings from this study would also suggest that even more important for emerging adults than working and having a personal income is the attainment of

education and career development. The importance placed on education is most likely because emerging adults in college adhere to the notion that success in life is linked to education attainment (Baum & Payea, 2004) and are therefore focusing more on education than making money at this time in their life.

Those that were more likely to report that being independent from parents, finished with education, settled into a longer term career, purchased a home, and employed full time as highly important to being ready for marriage, were also more likely to place education as more important than marriage and, for men, increased their desired age of marriage. This desire for education as a means of increasing an individual's odds of being successful in life, particularly in the area of finances, might also influence why emerging adults, in general, had moderate to high criteria for marriage readiness and expectations for finances within a marriage. These high expectations for finances within a marriage, namely the ability of each the man and the woman to be capable of supporting a family financially, as well as separation of personal finances within a marriage, might also be interpreted as a "need to be ready for divorce in order to be ready for marriage" mentality. It makes sense that if an individual needs to be prepared financially for a divorce before being prepared for marriage then that individual would have an extended marital horizon which allows time to gain personal financial security through education and career development. Results from this study would suggest that generally emerging adults subscribe to this mentality. This appears to be a shift from previous generations who viewed marriage as a means of financial security found by joining efforts of two individuals.

It is interesting that many of the parent financial criteria and attitudes did not play a significant role in emerging adult marriage readiness status, specifically: family income, parent's financial criteria for marriage, belief that adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves, and continued financial support after their emerging adult child graduates from college. It is anticipated that these variables still play an important role in the marital horizons of emerging adults but it is likely an indirect one, which in this study, was manifest through actual parent financial assistance. This may mean that parents influence their emerging adult's marital horizon not by professing their beliefs about the proper time to marry but by sending the message inadvertently through their continued financial support.

Over half of all parents studied provided most to all financial assistance in areas of tuition, school expenses, rent/housing, car/car payments, and daily expenses. It is possible, that this same half of emerging adults are living in a state of financial dependence similar to adolescence and that this state of financial dependence could be created by parents with the intent of freeing up the emerging adult from financial challenges and allowing them to be more involved in their college experience; just like a parent of an adolescent would not allow their child to work during the school year in order to be involved in extracurricular school and community activities. This mindset, while it may provide benefits to adolescents may or may not provide the same set of benefits to an emerging adult. These results suggest that at least some work hours in each week helps emerging adults prepare to be ready for marriage. It is also probable that some work hours each week might help emerging adults prepare for other areas of adult

life such as career readiness. Future research is needed to determine if financial dependence in emerging adulthood provides the same benefits as it does in adolescence.

While parent financial criteria and attitudes did not have a direct impact on emerging adults' marital horizons, parent financial assistance did. For men, it was the actual amount of money received each year in assistance that was associated with an increase in their desired age for marriage. For women, parent financial assistance was not as much about the actual dollar amount given each year but rather the type of support provided. Female emerging adults' that received financial support in areas of rent, daily expenses, and entertainment/recreation were more likely to report a higher desired age of marriage. Also, females whose parents agreed, in some degree, that they would continue to support their child financially after graduating from college also had an increase in desired age for marriage. All of this could be connected to the fact that an overwhelming amount of emerging adults' questioned in this study agreed in some regard that it was important for a man and a woman to be capable of supporting a family financially. This financial assistance from parents for emerging adults could mean that parents are sending the message, via financial support, that the emerging adult is not capable of supporting him or herself financially and therefore certainly not ready to take on the responsibilities of caring for someone else (Olson et al., 2008).

Perhaps the most notable finding of this study was the difference between emerging adults that reported being ready for marriage, regardless of age, and those that, in at least some regards, were not. In this study, parent financial assistance is the most strongly associated measure with emerging adults' marriage readiness status; with more assistance in areas of tuition, school, rent and daily expenses associated with extended

marital horizons. It also appears that some assistance with tuition, school, housing, car and overall dollar amount helps emerging adults prepare for marriage and brings their marital horizon closer. Those with the closest marital horizon (those reporting being ready for marriage) were also likely to receive the least amount of financial assistance in areas of tuition, rent, car/car payments, daily expenses, and overall dollar amount. They were also more likely to have parents who would agree to continue providing at least some financial support even after marriage. This study suggests that parent financial assistance plays an important role in an emerging adult's trajectory through emerging adulthood.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has a number of limitations and also raises many questions for future research. First, the sample used for this study is exclusive to college-attending emerging adults and therefore the results cannot be applied to emerging adults on other non-college trajectories. Further research is needed to determine how parent financial assistance leads emerging adults into college and how it affects emerging adults that are not attending college. Second, although significant correlations were found between emerging adult behaviors and criteria, as well as parent financial criteria and assistance and importance of marriage, desired age for marriage and marriage readiness status, all correlations were only moderate in association and predictive abilities. Future studies would do well to expand variables used to determine emerging adult financial behaviors and criteria as well as parent financial criteria and assistance. It would also be helpful to have more information about emerging adults that are receiving financial support via student loans

or scholarships rather than parents. More theory as to what other factors might play a role in importance of marriage, desired age of marriage and marriage readiness status should be developed and then compared with the role of finances. In this study, parent financial criteria for marriage were not found to be directly significant to emerging adults' marriage readiness status. However, future research would be wise look at indirect effects of parent financial criteria, possibly through parent financial assistance, on emerging adult marriage readiness status. Likewise, past research suggests that emerging adults' perceived marital horizon has a significant association with current risk behaviors (Carroll et al., 2007). Future research is needed to determine the role of financial behaviors, criteria and assistance on emerging adult risk behaviors.

Despite these limitations, the current study looked at the role of financial variables on marital horizons. Specifically, this study drew attention to the important role that both parent and emerging adult finances play on an emerging adults' marital horizon. These findings have implications for parents trying to determine how much and what type of financial assistance they ought to extend to their emerging adult depending on their values of marriage, financial independence and educational attainment.

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Appendix A

Table 1
Means for Variables Studied

Variables	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Dependent Variables</i>				
Educational pursuits come before marriage	4.8	1.29	4.82	1.22
Ideal age to get married	25.48	2.12	25	1.91
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Behaviors</i>				
Hours in paid employment	8.13	10.64	8.76	13.29
Personal gross income	2.16	.84	2.05	.76
Financial independence	1.5	.65	1.38	.56
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Criteria & Expectations</i>				
EA financial criteria	3.01	.56	2.93	.55
In a marriage, good idea for each spouse to maintain control over finances.	3.63	1.17	3.76	1.04
For a man, capable of supporting a family financially.	3.57	.66	3.49	.66
For a woman, capable of supporting a family financially.	3.11	.85	3.34	.72
<i>Parent Financial Criteria & Attitudes</i>				
Parent financial criteria	3.07	.54	2.92	.54
Adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves.	4.87	1.05	4.47	1.15
I would continue to support my child financially if he/she got married.	2.8	1.09	2.86	1.04
I would continue to support my child financially after graduation from college.	3.30	1.07	3.37	1.10

Variables	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Parent Financial Assistance</i>				
Tuition	3.01	1.15	3.00	1.11
School expenses	2.98	1.18	2.97	1.05
Rent/Housing expenses	3.12	1.19	3.06	1.08
Car/Car payments	2.75	1.33	2.71	1.30
Daily expenses	2.80	1.01	2.77	.95
Entertainment/Recreation	2.05	.94	2.03	1.02
Financial support (actual \$ amount) provided each year	8.06	3.00	7.55	2.64

Table 2

Parent Financial Assistance (In Percentages)

	None	Some	Most	All
<i>Areas of Assistance</i>	(n = 326)			
Tuition	15.3	16.8	19.9	48.0
School expenses (books, supplies, etc.)	11.8	25.9	15.9	46.4
Rent/Housing expenses	13.1	19.6	13.4	53.9
Car/Car payments	29.9	13.2	11.3	45.6
Daily expenses (food, clothing, etc.)	9.3	32.4	29.3	29.0
Entertainment/Recreation	34.6	39.6	13.4	12.5

Table 3

Correlations for Importance of Marriage and Ideal Age for Marriage

Measures and variables	Educational pursuits come before marriage		Desired Age of Marriage	
	Female (n = 250)	Male (n = 183)	Female (n = 250)	Male (n = 183)
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Behaviors</i>				
Hours in paid employment	.03	.06	-.04	.03
Personal gross income	.04	.04	-.07	-.05
Financial independence	-.19**	-.05	-.09	-.21**
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Criteria & Expectations</i>				
EA financial criteria	.15*	.20**	.06	.21**
In a marriage, good idea for each spouse to maintain control over finances.	.17**	.09	.20**	-.05
For a man, capable of supporting a family financially.	.09	.26**	-.01	.10
For a woman, capable of supporting a family financially.	.13*	.17*	.20**	.10
Parent Financial Criteria and Assistance (n = 326)				
<i>Parent Financial Criteria & Attitudes</i>				
Parent financial criteria	-.03	.06	.10	.07
Adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves.	-.03	.16	-.02	.134
I would continue to support my child financially if he/she got married.	-.01	-.09	-.10	-.17+
I would continue to support my child financially after graduation from college.	-.13 ⁺	-.13	.18**	-.11

Measures and variables	Educational pursuits come before marriage		Ideal age to get married	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Parent Financial Assistance</i>				
Tuition	.11	.08	-.001	.13
School expenses	.12	.14	.04	.07
Rent/Housing expenses	.13 ⁺	.06	.17*	.12
Car/Car payments	.03	.12	.14 ⁺	.06
Daily expenses	.07	.18 ⁺	.17*	.16
Entertainment/Recreation	.13 ⁺	.08	.19**	.06
Financial support (actual \$ amount) provided each year	.11	.12	.14 ⁺	.26**
Family gross income	.15*	.11	.06	.18 ⁺

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

⁺ *approaching significance*

Table 4

		<i>Stepwise Multiple-Regressions for Importance of and Desired Age of Marriage</i>	
		Educational pursuits before marriage	Desired Age of Marriage
Step	Variables	β	β
1	Age	-.105	.121*
	Gender	.009	-.109 ⁺
		$R^2 = .011$	$R^2 = .027^*$
		$F(2, 288) = 1.61$	$F(2, 274) = 3.96^*$
2	Age	-.017	.256***
	Gender	-.018	-.117*
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Behaviors</i>			
	Hours in paid employment	.127	.162**
	Personal gross income	-.013	-.050
	Financial independence	-.077	-.056
<i>Emerging Adult Financial Criteria & Expectations</i>			
	EA financial criteria	.117	.115
	In a marriage, good idea for each spouse to maintain control over finances.	.119*	.065
	For a man, capable of supporting a family financially.	.108	-.129
	For a woman, capable of supporting a family financially.	.115	.174*
<i>Parent Financial Criteria & Attitudes</i>			
	Parent financial criteria	-.056	.086
	Adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves.	-.002	-.009
	I would continue to support my child financially if married.	-.065	-.182**
	I would continue to support my child financially after graduation from college	-.004	.074

Step	Variables	Educational pursuits before marriage	Desired Age of Marriage
		β	β
<i>Parent Financial Assistance</i>			
	Tuition	.022	-.124
	School expenses	.025	-.191*
	Rent/Housing expenses	.014	.086
	Car/Car payments	-.025	.046
	Daily expenses	-.048	.075
	Entertainment/Recreation	.105	.113
	Financial support (actual \$ amount) provided each year	.012	.242**
	Family gross income	.114	.052
		$R^2 = .13^{**}$	$R^2 = .20^{***}$
		$F(19, 268) = 1.98$	$F(19, 268) =$
		$R^2 \text{ change} = .12^{**}$	$R^2 \text{ change} = .17^{***}$

Note: All β weights are standardized.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

+ *approaching significance*

Table 5
Financial Behaviors, Criteria and Assistance as a Function of Gender and Marital Readiness Status

Measures and variables	Gender		Marital Readiness Status				<i>F'</i>	<i>F</i> ²
	Men	Women	No	No and Yes	Yes			
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>			
<i>EA Financial Behaviors</i>								
Hours in paid employment	7.97 (9.67)	7.77 (9.28)	6.59a (8.73)	10.94b (10.64)	7.24a (7.54)			5.06**
Personal gross income	2.17 (.86)	2.05 (.77)	2.02 (.78)	2.23 (.86)	2.24 (.66)			2.66
Financial independence	1.53 (.69)	1.37 (.56)	1.35a (.58)	1.54b (.63)	1.82b (.73)			6.29**
<i>EA Financial Criteria & Expectations</i>								
EA financial criteria	2.95 (.55)	2.97 (.55)	3.04 ^a (.52)	2.89 ^b (.54)	2.55 ^c (.70)			6.82**
In a marriage, good idea for each spouse to maintain control over finances	3.58 (1.10)	3.77 (1.04)	3.77 ^a (1.04)	3.67 ^a (1.06)	3.06 ^b (1.20)			3.16*
For a man, capable of supporting a family financially	3.61 (.59)	3.48 (.65)	3.52 (.65)	3.58 (.59)	3.41 (.62)			.68
For a woman, capable of supporting a family financially	3.10 (.85)	3.32 (.72)	3.27 (.76)	3.22 (.78)	3.00 (.87)			.78
<i>Parent Financial Criteria & Attitudes</i>								
Parent financial criteria	3.05 (.55)	2.89 (.54)	2.95 (.54)	2.98 (.55)	2.81 (.58)			.81
Adult children should not get married until they are able to completely provide for themselves.	4.87 (1.05)	4.52 (1.10)	4.64 (1.11)	4.78 (.96)	4.18 (1.38)			2.56
I would continue to support my child financially if he/she got married.	2.81 (1.13)	2.9 (1.05)	2.74 ^a (1.07)	3.01 ^a (1.08)	3.59 ^b (.87)			5.57**

Measures and variables	Gender			Marital Readiness Status			<i>F</i> ¹	<i>F</i> ²
	Men	Women	No	No and Yes	Yes			
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>			
I would continue to support my child financially after graduation from college.	3.31 (1.10)	3.40 (1.08)	3.32 (1.10)	3.42 (1.11)	3.71 (.77)	1.02		
<i>Parent Financial Assistance</i>								
Tuition	3.00 (1.16)	3.01 (1.13)	3.15 ^a (1.07)	2.84 ^b (1.17)	2.24 ^c (1.30)	5.72 ^{**}		
School expenses	3.00 (1.16)	3.00 (1.06)	3.15 ^a (1.02)	2.88 ^b (1.13)	1.88 ^c (1.05)	11.35 ^{***}		
Rent/Housing expenses	3.09 (1.21)	3.07 (1.08)	3.24 ^a (1.08)	2.79 ^b (1.16)	2.59 ^b (1.12)	5.20 ^{**}		
Car/Car payments	2.75 (1.32)	2.73 (1.30)	2.83 ^a (1.30)	2.74 ^a (1.28)	1.71 ^b (1.05)	6.35 ^{**}		
Daily expenses	2.76 (1.02)	2.76 (.96)	2.89 ^a (.96)	2.62 ^b (.94)	2.00 ^c (1.00)	6.89 ^{**}		
Entertainment/Recreation	2.05 (.97)	2.02 (1.02)	2.12 (1.01)	1.89 (.95)	1.65 (1.00)	2.16		
Financial support (actual \$ amount) provided each year	8.04 (3.09)	7.54 (2.61)	8.31 ^a (2.78)	6.64 ^b (2.51)	6.29 ^b (2.49)	12.02 ^{***}		
Family gross income	8.82 (4.83)	8.95 (1.57)	8.98 (1.69)	8.83 (1.54)	8.24 (2.33)	1.49		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note. Means with differing letters are significantly different from one another based on LSD posthoc analyses

¹ degrees of freedom for financial behaviors, criteria and assistance by gender were 1

² degrees of freedom for financial behaviors, criteria and assistance by marital readiness status were 2