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Parental Divorce and LDS Young Adult Attitudes Toward Marriage and Family Life

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PARENTAL DIVORCE AND LDS YOUNG ADULT ATTITUDES
TOWARD MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

by

Sarah D. Finney

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Brigham Young University
December 1998
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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Sarah D. Finney

This thesis has been ready by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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Robert F. Stahmann, Chair

Date 10/26/98
Mark H. Butler

Date 10/26/98
James M. Harper
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ABSTRACT

PARENTAL DIVORCE AND LDS YOUNG ADULT ATTITUDES TOWARD MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

Sarah D. Finney
Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Master of Science

This study examined the influence of parental divorce on the attitudes of young adult members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) toward marriage and family life. A sample of 180 students from three universities completed self-report questionnaires measuring various attitudes toward aspects of marriage and family life. The results indicated that parental divorce alone was not a significant predictor (p.<.05) of young adults’ attitudes toward marriage and family life. The one difference found was that young adults’ coming from divorced families-of-origin were less attracted to the idea of commitment and sacrifice involved in a marriage than those coming from intact families-of-origin. Limitations, implications for future research and clinical implications were also discussed.
I would like to thank all those who have made it possible for me to successfully complete my thesis and graduate program. I extend great appreciation to Dr. Bob Stahmann, my committee chair, for his unending patience and support. His humor, kindness and wisdom have served to keep me grounded. Thanks also to Drs. Mark Butler and Jim Harper, my committee members, for their help with my thesis.

My thanks also to the faculty and staff of this graduate program, for the experience, kindness and support they have offered to me. Of particular mention are Drs. Leslie Feinauer and Wendy Watson, for their excellent balance of the personal and professional--these women will long stand out as role models for me.

Of special mention is my dearest cousin, Jodi Call, whose talents and efforts in managing the organizational hazards of this thesis have been invaluable. Her chuckles at my late night disasters, as well as her help in cleaning them up are greatly appreciated.

Finally, my deepest love and appreciation goes to my family. To my parents, a thousand thanks for each of the thousand acts of love and sacrifice offered to me as your daughter. Most of all, thank you for giving me permission to be myself. Hugs and love to my brothers and sisters Megan, Kieran, Terri, Erin, Benoit, Grogs, and Jem. Thanks also to Brad and Michelle. You are the people who have helped me to remember the best tool I bring to this field--my heart. I love you all very much.
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Chapter I
Introduction, Theoretical Background, and Statement of Purpose

Approximately 1.2 million couples divorce each year, affecting over 1 million children yearly (U.S. Census Bureau, 1995). As the divorce rate continues to grow, increasingly large numbers of children continue to be affected by divorce and the ensuing disruption of their families. Extensive research is available on the possible short and long-term effects of parental divorce on children. However, certain areas have yet to be studied on a far-reaching scale. One such area includes the possible influence a parental divorce may have on attitudes formed by young adults toward specific aspects of marriage and family life (Jennings, Salts & Smith, 1991). Further investigation of the effects of parental divorce is important for continued understanding and contribution to the field of divorce and the family. The purpose of this study was to examine the connection between parental divorce status and young adults' attitudes toward marriage and family life.

A number of studies have examined the consequences of parental divorce for later well-being in adulthood (Amato, 1988; Cooney, 1986; Nock, 1982). These studies tend to show that parental divorce has little impact on levels of psychological well-being and adjustment in adulthood. However, more recent work questions this conclusion (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991; Marlar & Jacobs, 1992; Wallerstein, 1986, 1991). Though parental divorce may have a minor impact on adult well-being, researchers wonder if it might have a more substantial effect on attitudes toward marriage and family life (Amato, 1988; Carson & Pauly, 1990; Jennings, Salts & Smith, 1991; Wallerstein, 1989).
Theoretical Background

Amato (1988), and Wallerstein (1991) suggest that differences in attitudes toward marriage and family life for children who have experienced a parental divorce may only become apparent when they reach young adulthood—the stage of the life cycle in which the young adult begins their family formation. At this stage, the attainment of a relatively stable personal identity as well as the establishment of intimacy are key tasks for the young adult (Erikson, 1963; Snarey, 1993). However, disruption of the family through the experience of parental divorce may indeed have a negative effect on achieving these developmental tasks as the child of divorce approaches young adulthood.

According to Erikson (1963), young adulthood (typically ages 19-30) is one of eight psychosocial developmental stages in the human life cycle. In this stage, achieving intimacy is the key psychosocial task for the young adult, and it involves establishing intimacy outside of the family, specifically in heterosexual relationships. Attitudes toward courtship and marriage which have been formed earlier may influence current decisions about courtship and marriage (Snarey, 1993).

In American society, the task of establishing intimacy parallels the social expectation of marriage or equivalent forms of commitment (Snarey, 1993). Mature intimacy entails “the capacity to commit [oneself] to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises” (Erikson, 1963, p. 165). The prior attainment of a stable personal identity is a logical presupposition to the achievement of mature intimacy, as it involves “the mutual verification through an experience of finding oneself, as one loses
oneself, in another” (Erikson, 1968). This leads one to wonder what effect a parental divorce may have on the development of a reasonably stable personal identity, as issues of trust, closeness and sharing may have arisen through the experience.

A parental divorce may disrupt the achievement of intimacy in young adulthood. It seems likely that parents who provide a loving model of marital intimacy with their spouse promote their adult children’s successful attainment of personal identity and intimacy (Snarey, 1993). In the absence of this model of marital intimacy, young adults may develop negative attitudes toward intimacy, and consequently, develop more negative attitudes toward marriage and family life than those young adults never experiencing a parental divorce (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991).

Bowen’s theory addressing “undifferentiated family ego mass” also contributed much to the theoretical reasoning for the research question addressed in this study. Specifically, Bowen’s theory asserts that a parental divorce may negatively effect young adults’ attitudes toward marriage and family life. Bowen (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) suggested a model by which families pass on patterns of relating. The basic concept implies that the patterns of relating in one’s family-of-origin become the template over which the individual emerging from that family traces their life.

Undifferentiated family ego mass [refers] to emotional oneness or fusion in families. Lack of differentiation in the family-of-origin leads to an emotional cutoff from parents, which in turn leads to fusion in marriage. The less the differentiation of self prior to marriage, the greater the fusion between spouses’ (ibid p 369).
Using divorce and intactness as markers along the continuum of cut-off and fusion, one should be able to predict relating processes by family-of-origin patterns. This study attempted to use the marker of family-of-origin intactness as a predictor of marital attitudes of the adults emerging from these families. According to family projection process, young adults emerging from divorced families should tend to have a similar pattern of relating. This pattern may also manifest in negative attitudes and beliefs about marriage and family life that have been influenced through the experience of a parental divorce.

However, previous studies relating to parental divorce and young adult’s attitudes towards marriage and family life have yielded differing results, making it difficult to find conclusive evidence in either direction. In one study, Amato (1988) looked at adults from a national survey which provided a representative sample of the Australian population in the 18-34 age group. Those who experienced parental divorce as children were compared with respondents who grew up in continuously intact families on eight measures of attitudes toward marriage and family life. Compared with respondents from intact families, those from divorced families held more negative attitudes toward their families-of-origin. However, few differences emerged between the groups in their attitudes toward the advantages and disadvantages of marriage. Examination of individual items from a family values scale showed that adults from divorced families-of-origin held relatively complex views of marriage; they valued marriage but were aware of its limitations and were tolerant toward its alternatives.

In a smaller study, data were collected on 94 undergraduate students from the same college with or without histories of parental divorce during the first 18 years of their life.
Measures used were the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory and the "ideal form" of the Family Environment Scale (Carson & Pauly, 1990). Few differences were found between the two groups in ideals and future aspirations about marriage and family life. The researchers asserted that "parental divorce may have a more long-term effect on the behavioral and emotional development of children and adolescents than on the cognitive appraisals or verbal attributions they make about their own future marriages and families" (p. 33).

However, Gabardi & Rosen (1991) examined five hundred college students from divorced and intact families along several measures of adjustment and found that college students from divorced families had significantly more negative attitudes toward marriage than students from intact families. They suggested that adolescents and young adults may defend against their fears of failure in heterosexual relationships by rejecting the option of marriage or becoming cynical and critical about the institution of marriage. Other literature (Carson & Kelly, 1990; Greenburg & Jacob; Kelly, 1981; Long, 1987; Marlar & Jacobs, 1992) also supported the conclusion that parental divorce does bear a negative influence on young adult's attitudes towards marriage and family life.
Purpose of Study

Although much of the research literature above discussed parental divorce and young adult’s attitudes toward marriage, none considered this the primary focus of their study. This study proposed that there was a significant connection between parental divorce status and young adult’s attitudes toward marriage and family life as the main focus of research. Finally, the relationship between parental divorce and attitudes towards marriage and family life was explored in one specific population of interest-- young adults who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, attitudes were defined as values and beliefs that are deeply important to individuals and help direct their interests, goals and behavior. These attitudes may have developed through prior experiences and relationships. Many attitudes of marriage and family life are established through encounters in the family of origin, or the family into which one is born (Stone & Hutchinson, 1992).

The variables of attitudes toward marriage and family life as operationalized in this study have also been defined. Attitudes toward marriage were defined as beliefs held about the personal satisfaction that marriage may bring, as well as the perceived attractiveness of commitment and sacrifice in married life (Carson & Pauly, 1990). Attitudes toward children refer to one’s desire to have children and raise a family, expectations about the increased satisfaction the presence of children will bring for the individual, and ideas about the roles future children may have in their lives. Readiness for marriage was defined as one’s
perception of their emotional readiness for marriage; readiness for sexual intimacy in marriage; financial readiness for marriage; and general readiness to perform marital roles (Holman & Li, 1996). Realistic expectations of marriage refers to the attitudes and beliefs about how marriage will solve their problems, and the perceived satisfaction that married life will bring to an individual (Holman, Larson & Harmer, 1994).

Although there are many definitions of family, this study focused on what is generally referred to as the 'traditional' family. This traditional family includes a heterosexual married couple and their children. Intact family refers to a family in which the marital status of the original parents has been continuous, or there has been no divorce as long as children have been present. Parental divorce, or coming from a divorced family, refers to a family in which there has been a divorce during a time when children were present in the home. Finally, parental death refers to a family experience in which the marital status of the original parents has not been continuous due to the death of one or both of the original parents.

LDS refers to the shortened name for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.
Chapter II

Review of Literature

The following review of literature addresses the influence of parental divorce on four conceptual variables of marriage and family life as operationalized in this study. These variables included attitudes towards marriage; attitudes towards children; readiness for marriage, and realistic expectations of marriage. Finally, a summary of existing literature was given and a research question was offered.

It should be noted at the outset that typically, studies using the PREP-M data set have run statistical tests on the individual items contained in the PREP-M inventory rather than relying on groups of items or the PREP-M scales (Holman, 1998). This is because each item addresses a distinct topic or question which is important by itself. This item analysis approach was used in this study as explained in Chapter III, methods. However, the following literature review will combine the individual items investigated into the four conceptual variables described above in an attempt to condense and organize the literature found.

Attitudes Toward Marriage

Attitudes toward marriage include beliefs about the rewards of marriage and the personal satisfaction that marriage may bring, as well as the value of commitment and sacrifice in married life (Carson & Pauly, 1990). Similar research is inconclusive about the effects of parental divorce on attitudes towards marriage. Some findings suggest that parental divorce affects children's attitudes towards marriage, while other results show little difference
between young adults from divorced and intact families in terms of attitudes towards marriage.

Using data from a national survey, Greenburg and Nay (1982) sampled 397 college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses. The overall sample consisted of 191 men (48.1%) and 206 women (51.9%) with a mean age of 18.4 years. The majority of students were single, freshmen, and from intact homes (75.1%). The researchers found that children from marriages in which divorce occurred during their childhood had a higher rate of divorce than children from intact marriages. This higher rate of divorce is coupled with the divorced group holding the most favorable attitudes toward divorce. The fact that these children from divorced parents are more likely to divorce indicates that their attitudes about marriage may be somewhat different from those of children from intact families (Marlar & Jacobs, 1992).

In another nationwide study, (Mueller & Pope, 1977) a questionnaire was given to a random sample of 4812 white, ever-married females aged 21 to 45 coming from either intact or divorced homes. This questionnaire investigated the effects a parental death or divorce during childhood may have had on future marital stability as these children became adults. The researchers found that respondents from parental homes that were disrupted by death or divorce during their childhood were shown to have higher rates of divorce or separation in their own first marriages. Therefore, it was concluded that children from divorced families are becoming involved more often in divorce in the next generation than children from families that have remained intact. As shown in the previous study, researchers asserted that the higher likelihood of divorce in children from divorced parents may indicate that their
attitudes about marriage may in fact differ from those of children from intact families. However, these assertions are limited because there were few conclusive results shown to demonstrate this connection, and specific attitudinal variables were not included in the study.

Long (1987) conducted a five-year longitudinal study of 24 undergraduate (mean age 19 years) females to test the hypothesis that perceptions of parental discord and parental separation would have negative effects on attitudes toward marriage and on the courtship progress. Daughters of divorced parents were shown to hold less positive attitudes toward marriage. They were also shown to have married younger, were less educated, and married men with less desirable jobs. On the other hand, the daughters of couples with happy, intact marriages held significantly more positive attitudes toward marriage.

In another similar national study, Ganong, Coleman, and Brown (1981) obtained data from 127 male and 194 female 15-17 year-olds. They found that females held more favorable attitudes toward marriage than males. There were no sex differences in attitudes towards divorce. Further, this suggests that this attitude towards divorce among children from divorced parents is a function of their parent's marital status. No interaction with gender was present.

Additional findings are submitted by Kelly (1981) in a five year study of eighteen 17-23 year olds. The study investigated both differences in attitudes towards relationships and the formation of enduring relationships among subjects coming from divorced versus intact families at both the initial assessment and after the five-year follow-up assessment. At both the initial assessment and five-year follow-up, the children from the divorced families experienced interference with the establishment of enduring ties and formed impoverished,
immature, and ungratifying relationships. In addition to this, the study revealed that a very negative view of marriage remained among those who came from divorced families.

Research investigating possible gender differences among young adults from divorced and intact families concluded that although different behaviors are manifested by males and females who have experienced parental divorce, no difference in attitudes toward marriage has been found among male and female subjects from divorced families. Gabardi and Rosen (1991), with a population of 500 college students, found that a significantly higher number of female students from divorced families had engaged in sexual intercourse, and both male and female students had more negative views of marriage than students from intact families.

Research exclusively with women has reported similar findings. Southworth and Schwartz (1987) found that parental divorce had long-term effects on the female subjects' expectations about their futures in relation to men, work, and marriage. They tested for the possibility that a difference might be attributable to the relationship that these women had with their father. In the final analysis, these effects seemed to be related to the family structure and not a result of the relationship that these women had with their fathers.

The studies discussed in the previous paragraphs seem to substantiate an association between family structure (divorced/intact) and young adult's attitudes towards marriage. No such relationship, however, is reported in other research. Amato (1988) found that the effects of parental divorce on current attitudes of young adults toward marriage were generally weak. "After other possibly confounding variables such as gender were controlled, no significant differences were found between respondents from intact and divorced families in attitudes toward the advantages and disadvantages of marriage, singlehood, and living together"
After reviewing results from a ten-year follow-up study of 113 white, middle-class children coming from divorced families, Wallerstein (1991) concluded that significant numbers of these children experience heightened anxiety in forming enduring attachments in young adulthood. However, although they experienced anxiety in these attachments, the subjects were generally strongly committed to the ideals of a lasting marriage and to a conservative morality.

After analyzing the results of another study, Carson and Pauly (1990) suggested that researchers, clinicians, and educators should not automatically assume that children of parental divorce are going to "differ radically from others in terms of their expectations and ideals about marriage" (p. 34). Their analysis indicated significant differences between the divorced and intact groups on only three of 22 measures provided by the various instruments.

Thus, the literature seems to yield inconsistencies concerning the effects of family structure on young adult's attitudes towards marriage. This may be due to discrepancies in methodology among the studies. Specifically, different attitudinal variables (wording of questions and responses) were used, as well as dissimilar rather than similar samples and varying methods of data collection. Some studies substantiate an association between parental divorce and attitudes towards marriage. However, other studies report that there is little or no significant difference in attitudes toward marriage among subjects coming from divorced and intact families. The same studies suggest that because the findings are weak, automatic assumptions about attitudinal differences among children from divorced and intact families should not be made. These discrepancies among the research findings may be due
to different attitudinal variables that have been used, as well as the use of diverse methodology, samples, and data collection.

**Attitudes Toward Children**

Attitudes toward children includes such variables as a desire to have children and raise a family, expectations about the increased satisfaction the presence of children will bring for the individual, and ideas about the roles future children may have in their lives.

Previous literature on the influence that parental divorce has on young adult’s attitudes toward children is limited, as the majority of related studies focus on attitudes toward marriage. However, the available research findings in this area follows the same contradictory pattern as research findings in attitudes toward marriage.

Holdnack (1992), examined the long term effects of parental divorce on the family relationships of 147 undergraduates. His results suggested that children of divorce experience greater anxiety about having children of their own. They rate the responsibility for meeting the emotional needs of their children as a higher stressor than those from intact families.

Kulka and Weingarten (1979) found that women whose parents had divorced were more likely than other women to rate the role of mother as being more important than the role of wife. This may also suggest that attitudes toward women’s role in a marriage may differ somewhat between the two groups. However, Amato (1988) found little difference between young adult’s from divorced and intact families in terms of their beliefs about the importance of children and differences in family values. This suggests that attitudes toward children may not be affected by a parental divorce. Carson and Pauly (1991) found that attitudes toward
children were not greatly influenced by the experience of a parental divorce in the family. They suggested that parental divorce may have a more long-term effect on the behavioral and emotional development of children and adolescents than on the cognitive appraisals or verbal attributions they make about their own future families.

Again, a possible explanation for these discrepancies may be the different methodological approaches utilized in each study. When reviewing methodologies for these studies, many differences can be found, including the wording of questions, the use of scales, differing samples, as well as the various statistical analyses used. Also, many of the specific attitudes being measured were different in each study.

**Readiness For Marriage**

Readiness for marriage can be defined as a perceived ability of an individual to perform in marital roles, which is regarded by Holman and Li to be an aspect of the mate selection/relationship process (1996). Readiness for marriage is an important variable to assess because a state of perceived readiness for marriage may be correlated to more general attitudes toward marriage.

Research and theory suggest that perceived readiness for marriage is part of a socially constructed developmental transition into marriage for most young adults (Holman & Li, 1996). In other words, readiness for marriage can be used to explain and account for action towards getting married.

There are multiple factors related to young adults’ perceptions of their readiness for marriage (Holman & Li, 1996; Larson, 1988; Stinnett, 1969). These include the nature of
early family relationships, dating experiences, and personality factors. Stinnett (1969) found that happiness in the parent-child relationship was positively related to perceived readiness. He found that if a child experienced parental divorce, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, as well as their emotional readiness and beliefs about marriage were affected. Holman and Li (1996) found that some familial factors may be related to a person’s perception of being or not being ready to get married. But it is not clear how the family influences this perception. Little research has been done on the influence that parental divorce may have on a young adult’s perceived readiness for marriage. This study hopes to address this question directly.

**Realistic Expectations of Marriage**

Realistic expectations of marriage include attitudes and beliefs about marriage roles, divorce, and the perceived satisfaction that married life will bring to an individual (Holman, Larson & Harmer, 1994). “There will be many problems in our marriage” is one example of a realistic expectation of marriage. Another is “marriage will not solve all of my problems”. Theorists suggest that these expectations are formed throughout a child's development, and a break-up in family structure may indirectly affect these expectations (Snarey, 1993).

Findings are inconclusive about whether realistic expectations for marriage differ among those from divorced versus intact families. Many studies suggest that adult (and adolescent) children of divorce hold more realistic expectations (such as the two examples mentioned above) toward marriage and divorce and perhaps less commitment to the institution of marriage (Amato, 1988; Kalter, Riemer, Brickman & Chen, 1985; Snarey, 1993).
The existence of such a trend may have broader implications; several studies have shown a trend for adults who grew up in divorced families to be more likely to divorce than adults who grew up in continuously intact families (Glen & Kramer, 1985; Kulka & Weingarten, 1979). Beliefs, attitudes and intentions about marriage and family life stemming from having grown up in a divorced family may be partly responsible for this difference (Amato, 1988).

Amato (1988) also found that adult children of divorce held less idealized views of marriage than did other respondents. In addition, adult children of divorce were more realistic about and accepting toward alternatives to traditional family forms than were other respondents.

**Summary**

The influence of parental divorce on young adult's attitudes towards marriage and family life is equivocal in scholarly literature. While some studies suggested that parental divorce does affect marital and family attitudes, other more specific studies claimed that little difference in attitudes can be found between young adults from divorced and intact families.
Research Question

The intent of this study was to examine the effect parental divorce may have had on the attitudes young adults hold toward various aspects of marriage and family life. Specifically, this study tested for differences among LDS individuals from divorced and intact families-of-origin in four domains: attitudes towards marriage, attitudes toward children, readiness for marriage, and realistic expectations of marriage.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were generated from the review of literature and the predictions were grounded in intergenerational theory.

1. LDS young adults with parents who are divorced will expect less personal satisfaction from marriage and indicate less desire for commitment and sacrifice toward marriage when compared to young LDS adults from intact families.

2. LDS young adults with parents who are divorced will have more negative attitudes about having and rearing children, the love and enjoyment of children and the need to have children when compared to young LDS adults from intact families.

3. LDS young adults with parents who are divorced will feel less ready for marriage emotionally, sexually, financially and globally when compared to LDS young adults from intact families.

4. LDS young adults with parents who are divorced will have more realistic attitudes about being married and time as a means of solving individual and marital problems when compared to young LDS adults from intact families.
Chapter III

Methods

Participants

Exactly 180 male and female adults (50% male, 50% female) between the ages of 18 and 25 were identified and randomly selected from the sample pool (3508 subjects) of the PREParation for Marriage (PREP-M) questionnaire administered by the Marriage Consortium at Brigham Young University. Specific participants were obtained from the larger sample based on several criteria. First, the participants were selected for age—those who fell within the ages of 18 and 25 were chosen. A second criteria was marital status; participants who reported being married were not included in the subject sample for this study. The majority of the participants were university students, although a few participants were also professionals and service employees. Only those participants belonging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) were selected and used for this sample because no studies of this kind have been done with an LDS population.

After participants were selected based on the above criteria, it was decided that a specific number of subjects (180 total, 45 in each sample group) would be used for the study. This number was determined based on the rationale that too small a sample (less than 30 subjects in each group) would not be effective in showing any statistically significant differences among the groups, nor would too large a sample be useful in determining if any differences were clinically significant. Thus, it was decided that using a number of 45 subjects in each group would adequately meet the clinical and statistical needs of this study.
After participants were obtained based on the above criteria, they were finally categorized and selected according the their parent's marital status. Therefore, from the greater sample pool above (n = 3508), ninety participants (45 male, 45 female) coming from intact families-of-origin, and ninety participants (45 male, 45 female) coming from divorced families-of-origin were randomly selected for this study.

Descriptive statistics were generated in order to describe and summarize the subject demographic data. Table 1 contains a description of the participants according to demographic variables. The age of the participants ranged from 18-25 years, with a mean age of 22.3 years. Ninety-six percent of the subjects were Caucasian, and 68% indicated that they grew up in an urban area. Although all regions of the United States were represented, the majority (77%) of the subjects grew up in the West. Participant educational level ranged from high school to graduate work, with the majority of the subjects (93%) completing some college. The respondents were mostly students (82%). Refer to Table 1 for exact numbers in each category of both intact and divorced participant samples.
TABLE 1

Characteristics of the Samples

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<td>69.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single: not involved</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single: involved</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single: after divorce</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=90 (45 male, 45 female)
Instruments

The PREP-M questionnaire was developed in 1989 from a revision of The Marital Inventories (M.I.) (Yorgason, Burr, & Baker, 1980) and is a 206-item paper/pencil assessment tool designed to measure important attitudes related to marriage and family life. Approximately 13,000 respondents have completed the PREP-M. The questionnaire is designed to be used in both clinical and academic settings and is used by family life educators, therapists, college instructors and clergy in regions throughout the country. Most of the respondents return their completed questionnaire to these family professionals who then send it to a central location where the instrument is scored, the data gathered, and a print-out of the results computed and returned to the respondents. PREP-M is published and distributed by the Marriage Study Consortium, a non-profit group of scholars and family life educators from a number of universities in the United States (Holman & Li, 1996).

The instrument provides couples with a comparison of 1) individual values, attitudes, and beliefs, and 2) individual perceptions of personal, partner, and couple readiness for marriage. Additionally, the instrument contains a background and home environment scale. Research with the PREP-M has shown the instrument to have adequate internal consistency reliability (total PREP-M score, alpha = .83) (Holman, Larson & Harmer, 1994).

The PREP-M questionnaire includes 12 items (questions) on attitudes towards marriage and family life which constitute the dependent variables for this study. For these attitude items, the subjects were asked to indicate their response to the question according to the categories of Disagree Strongly, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Agree Strongly. These categories were encoded from 0-4; a high number indicates a higher degree of agreement.
belief. It is important to note that where necessary, reverse coding was used. Table 2 lists the PREP-M items in each of the four categories addressed this study.
TABLE 2
PREP-M items of attitudes toward marriage and family life

Attitudes about marriage:

1) I expect marriage to give me more real personal satisfaction than just about anything else I am involved in.

2) The whole idea of the commitment and sacrifice involved in marriage is not attractive to me. (Reverse coded item).

Attitudes about children:

1) The whole idea of having children and rearing them is not attractive to me. (Reverse coded item).

2) Although parenthood requires many sacrifices, the love and enjoyment of children make it worth it all.

3) My life would be empty if I never had children.

Readiness for marriage:

1) I feel emotionally ready to get married.

2) With regard to sexual intimacy, I feel ready to get married.

3) I feel financially ready to get married.

4) All things considered, I feel ready to get married.

Realistic expectations:

1) I hope marriage will solve some of the major problems in my life. (Reverse coded item).

2) We will never have any problems in our marriage. (Reverse coded item).

3) Time will resolve any problems we have as a couple. (Reverse coded item).
Table 3 lists the question from the PREP-M questionnaire measuring the independent variables of parental marital status.

**TABLE 3**

**Independent Variable Questions**

Which best describes the marital status of my father while I was growing up?

- a. Married (first marriage)
- b. Divorced or separated and not remarried
- c. Wife deceased and father not remarried
- d. Remarried after a divorce
- e. Remarried after the death of wife

Which best describes the marital status of my mother while I was growing up?

- a. Married (first marriage)
- b. Divorced or separated and not remarried
- c. Husband deceased and mother not remarried
- d. Remarried after a divorce
- e. Remarried after the death of husband
Design

The dependent variables were twelve items measuring attitudes towards marriage and family life (refer to table 2). The subjects evaluated their own attitudes. All questions except the parent's marital status are in the form of a 5-point Likert scale. For the attitudes items, the subjects were asked to indicate the response to the question according to the following five categories of Disagree Strongly, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Agree Strongly. These categories were encoded from 0-4, so in the graphs a high number indicates a higher importance or degree of belief. The items were also reverse coded where appropriate.

The independent item was the father's marital status, identified from the subject's reports. After reviewing the data, it was found that selecting either parent's marital status would yield the same number of participants coming from divorced families, therefore only the father's status was used in order to simplify the analysis. Specifically, those participants who chose the response (a) that their father was married (first marriage) were selected for the intact families-of-origin group. Those participants who chose the responses (b, d) that their father was divorced or separated and not remarried or remarried after a divorce were selected for the divorced families-of-origin group. Refer to Table 3 for the independent item question.
Data Analysis

Twelve two-sample independent t-tests (Ott, 1993) were used to determine differences in attitudes toward marriage and family life between young adults from intact versus divorced families-of-origin. These t-tests were used to determine the answer to the research question: "Does a parental divorce predict the attitudes young adults hold toward various aspects of marriage and family life?".

The four previously discussed “aspects of marriage and family life” were measured by 12 items (questions) on the PREP-M inventory as shown in Table 2. A decision was made to run 12 separate t-tests on the PREP-M items in order to obtain a more detailed analysis, rather than doing the analysis with the four “scales” of combined items. In order to confirm the wisdom of this decision, a secondary analysis of the correlations among the 12 PREP-M items was done. This analysis showed 12 of 66 possible correlations to be statistically significant (.01 level). All six correlations among the four “Readiness for Marriage” items were statistically significant which indicated that those four items could have been measured by one item. However, because only six of the remaining 60 items were significantly correlated, the original decision to use the 12 items and run the t-tests was maintained. Because the critical assumptions for independent samples, normal populations, and equal variance appeared to be met for all cases, the t-test for determining significant differences between group means was selected (Ott, 1993).
Chapter IV

Results

The first hypothesis stated that young adults with parents who are divorced will expect less personal satisfaction from marriage and indicate less desire for commitment and sacrifice towards marriage when compared to young adults from intact families-of-origin. Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 reveal the results of the independent two-sample t-tests between young adults coming from intact and divorced families-of-origin.

Table 4 shows a significant difference between children from divorced versus intact families for only one of the two attitudes toward marriage items. Therefore, the first hypothesis was partially rejected. Table 4 reveals that one of the two variables in the area of attitudes toward marriage: “The whole idea of the commitment and sacrifice involved in marriage is not attractive to me” is different for the two groups (df = 178, p < .01). For the other variable, comparisons showed non-significant differences exploring the expectation that “I expect marriage to give me more real personal satisfaction than just about anything else I am involved in”. The means, standard deviations and t-values for attitudes toward marriage are provided (see Table 4).
## TABLE 4

A Comparison of the Attitudes Toward Marriage of Young Adults Coming from Intact and Divorced Families-of-Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudinal Variables</th>
<th>Intact Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>Divorced Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>t Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expect personal satisfaction from marriage</td>
<td>3.31 (.79)</td>
<td>3.14 (.99)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment/sacrifice not attractive to me</td>
<td>.28 (.52)</td>
<td>.41 (.85)</td>
<td>6.85*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<.001

The second hypothesis stated young adults with parents who are divorced will have more negative attitudes about having and rearing children; the love and enjoyment of children, and the need to have children when compared to young adults from intact families-of-origin. This hypothesis was rejected. Table 5 reveals that comparisons showed no significant differences between the groups for the three variables measuring attitudes held about children. The means, standard deviations and t-values for attitudes toward children are provided in Table 5.
TABLE 5

A Comparison of the Attitudes Toward Children of Young Adults Coming from Intact and Divorced Families-of-Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudinal Variables</th>
<th>Intact Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>Divorced Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>t Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having children not attractive to me</td>
<td>.27 (.54)</td>
<td>.28 (.62)</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love of children worth any sacrifice</td>
<td>3.69 (.71)</td>
<td>3.74 (.51)</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life empty without children</td>
<td>3.21 (.95)</td>
<td>3.16 (1.09)</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third hypothesis stated that young adults with parents who are divorced will feel less ready for marriage emotionally, sexually, financially and globally when compared to young adults from intact families-of-origin. This hypothesis was rejected. Table 6 reveals that comparisons showed no significant differences between the two groups for the four items measuring perceived readiness for marriage. The means, standard deviations and t-values for attitudes toward children and family life are provided in Table 6.
TABLE 6
A Comparison of Perceived Readiness for Marriage of Young Adults Coming from Intact and Divorced Families-of-Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudinal Variables</th>
<th>Intact Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>Divorced Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>t Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional readiness for marriage</td>
<td>2.78 (1.03)</td>
<td>2.62 (1.07)</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual intimacy readiness for marriage</td>
<td>3.16 (.95)</td>
<td>3.01 (1.03)</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial readiness for marriage</td>
<td>1.43 (1.15)</td>
<td>1.58 (1.19)</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall readiness for marriage</td>
<td>2.78 (1.10)</td>
<td>2.79 (1.13)</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth hypothesis stated that young adults with parents who are divorced will have more realistic attitudes/expectations about being married and time as a means of solving individual and marital problems when compared to young adults from intact families-of-origin. This hypothesis was rejected. Table 7 reveals that comparisons showed no significant differences between the two groups on items measuring realistic attitudes/expectations about marriage. The means, standard deviations and t-values for realistic attitudes/expectations about marriage are shown in Table 7.
TABLE 7
A Comparison of Realistic Attitudes About Marriage of Young Adults
Coming from Intact and Divorced Families-of-Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudinal Variables</th>
<th>Intact Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>Divorced Family (n = 90)</th>
<th>t Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I hope marriage will solve problems</td>
<td>1.37 (1.06)</td>
<td>1.46 (1.24)</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will not have problems in marriage</td>
<td>.84 (.83)</td>
<td>.61 (.68)</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time will resolve problems</td>
<td>1.80 (1.17)</td>
<td>1.84 (1.17)</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter V

Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to determine the association of parents’ marital status with the attitudes toward marriage and family life held by young LDS adults. Two independent sample groups—young adults coming from intact and divorced families-of-origin—were compared on twelve items measuring attitudes toward marriage and family life. With one exception, the item stating that “the whole idea of the commitment and sacrifice involved in marriage is not attractive to me”, comparisons between young adults from intact and divorced families-of-origin did not demonstrate statistically significant differences in attitudes toward marriage and family life. Some previous research demonstrated that parental divorce had little impact on levels of psychological well-being and adjustment in adulthood (Amato, 1988; Cooney, 1986; Nock, 1982). More recent work, however, questioned the conclusion presented in the earlier research (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991; Marlar & Jacobs, 1992).

Though researchers agreed that parental divorce may have a minor impact on adult well-being, many wondered if it might have a more substantial effect on attitudes towards marriage and family life (Amato, 1988; Carson & Pauly, 1990; Jennings, Salts, & Smith, 1991). Gabardi & Rosen (1991) and Marlar & Jacobs (1992) indicated in their research that the parent’s marital status may in fact be more influential in the formation of young adult’s attitudes toward marriage and family life than previously believed. Unfortunately, none of the above studies founded their research on the specific question of parental divorce and attitudes towards marriage.
The present study isolated the question of whether parental divorce alone influenced attitudes toward marriage and family life in young adults. Results from this study show that, for the LDS sample studied here, and asking twelve questions assessing attitudes about children, perceived readiness for marriage, and realistic expectations towards marriage, parent marital status by itself was not a significant predictor. Only in the case of one question of attitudes toward marriage--specifically the value of commitment and sacrifice in marriage--was parent marital status shown to be a significant predictor of attitudes. Theories used as basis for the research may again be considered when discussing these results.

Although developmental theory predicts that divorce may negatively affect trust in children, the findings from the present study demonstrate that LDS childrens' attitudes toward marriage and family life are not significantly affected by divorce. This discrepancy could be explained by various models. The first consideration may be that Erikson's theory does not explain development adequately. According to Erikson's developmental theory, a stable personal identity may be more difficult for children coming from divorced families to develop because issues of trust, closeness and sharing may have been negatively influenced by this experience. Another possible consideration that might explain the apparent discrepancy between developmental theory and these findings is that while attitudes toward marriage are not affected by divorce in the marriage-of-origin, functioning in the marriage may be greatly impacted by divorce in the marriage-of-origin.

To salvage Erickson's theory, another model would separate the trust issue from the marital attitude issue. According to a more systemic model (Kerr & Bowen, 1988), marriage is the attempt of the individual to recreate the family-of-origin in order to resolve issues of differentiation. Thus, Kerr and Bowen (1988) might even suggest that coupling may be a
more powerful urge, such as the propensity to create fused relationships, in cases where the marriage-of-origin is marked by cut-off or divorce.

Bowen’s theory (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) suggests that the family’s patterns of relating are passed on to future generations. The basic concept of this theory implies that the patterns and processes of relating in one’s family-of-origin become the template over which the individual emerging from that family trace their life. Bowen’s concept of ‘undifferentiated family ego mass’ [refers] to emotional oneness or fusion in families. Lack of differentiation in the family of origin leads to an emotional cutoff from parents, which in turn leads to fusion in marriage. The less the differentiation of self prior to marriage, the greater the fusion between spouses (p. 369).

Following Bowen’s ideas, and using divorce and intactness as markers along the continuum of cut-off and fusion, one should have been able to predict future relating processes from family of origin patterns. This study attempted to use the marker of marriage-of-origin intactness as a predictor of attitudes toward marriage and family life held by young adults. An extreme at either end of Bowen’s cut-off/fusion continuum is viewed as a less functional extreme, either of which could lead to divorce. And according to Bowen’s family projection process, young adults emerging from divorced families should tend to have a similar pattern of relating and consequently varying attitudes.

The results, however, show that the independent variable of intactness in the marriage-of-origin alone is not enough to account for the variation of the dependent variable of attitudes toward marriage and family life. One reason for this may be that other variables, such as the quality of the marriage-of-origin, or the relationship the child has with his or her parents, lends more influence on the formation of these specific attitudes. One or more of
these variables, coupled with the variable of intactness in marriage-of-origin, may have proven to show greater differences in attitudes toward marriage and family life in young adults.

Another reason that a parental divorce alone may not adequately predict attitudes is that young adults might respond less to the specific event of their parent’s divorce, and more to the process of relating that have occurred for years within their families-of-origin. This process that has contributed to the formulation of attitudes throughout the subject’s lifetime may wield greater influence than the singular event of a parental divorce. For example, if a subject’s parents have for ten years verbally stated, as well as shown the subject through example, that marriage brings “more real personal satisfaction than just about anything else they are involved in”, the event of their divorce may not be enough to influence or change a subject’s attitudes toward marriage and family life that have been developing for years.

It is important to consider the population when discussing the results of this study. The sample was exclusively LDS, meaning only those subjects who were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints were selected. Their distinct theology makes this population different and unique from all others, and this could have impacted the results. The LDS religion teaches its members that marriage is a very sacred and important institution that is essential for attaining many of the blessings on earth and in heaven that its members strive for. Within the LDS culture, there exists an extremely strong belief that marriage is a wonderful, blissful and necessary part of life. Therefore, in this context, the cultural attitudes toward marriage and family life may (help to) override the “event” of a divorce. As mentioned, only one item of the dependent variable of attitudes toward marriage showed significant differences between the young adults coming from intact versus divorced families-of-origin. This item asked the subjects whether or not the commitment and sacrifice involved
in marriage was attractive to them. The divorced group showed significantly less attraction towards the perceived commitment and sacrifice that is involved in marriage. One possible reason for this could be that the young adults embrace similar attitudes to their parents, (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991), and their parents may have less favorable attitudes toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage.

Another possible explanation could be that through the experience of a parental divorce, the young adult formed more negative attitudes toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage. Perhaps they learned through their parent’s choices and experience that commitment and sacrifice in a marriage is not as attractive as happiness or strong satisfaction in the marital relationship. In any case, the differences found in the item mentioned above do raise questions both for clinical implications of this study and also for future research which will be further discussed.

**Limitations**

There are limitations to this study which should be mentioned. First, young adults are in the process of forming new identities which may not be consistent with their family-of-origin patterns. Many young adults, once removed from the direct influence of their families-of-origin, attempt to develop new ways of thinking, feeling and interacting. Indeed, through this process, an attempt to develop new attitudes toward marriage and family life may also be taking place.

Second, despite having a large sample of subjects (N=180), the sample remained somewhat homogenous. By design, all of the subjects shared membership in the same religion (LDS). The majority of the subjects were Caucasian, and came from urban areas. Although
studying only an LDS population serves to provide important information for this group, representatives of other religious groups could be included in future research. Also, the inclusion of other ethnic and socioeconomic groups could broaden the generalizability of the findings. Third, the use of college students as the sample of young adults restricts the generalizability of the findings to non-student samples, and does not provide information regarding the attitudes of less educated young adults.

A third limitation may be the large number of t-tests (twelve) run in this study. Typically, the more t-tests run, the more likely it is that one or more “significant differences” will be found in the results. However, because only one item was shown to yield significant differences, this may not be a serious limitation.

An additional limitation that should be noted is that family-of-origin effects are often indirect rather than direct (Larson & Holman, 1994). This makes the influence of parental divorce on young adult’s attitudes toward marriage and family life difficult to measure. Also, self-reports of attitudes may differ from actual attitudes and behaviors of the subjects sampled. However, because actual attitudes and behaviors are difficult to measure, self-reports were deemed as imperfect, yet most appropriate for this study.

It is also important to remember that one factor alone, parental marital status, may not be sufficient by itself to predict young adults’ attitudes toward marriage and family life. There are many other family and individual factors not measured in this study that should be evaluated in future research to determine how they contribute to attitudes held by young adults regarding marriage and family life, e.g. personality factors, poor parental modeling of relationship skills.
Another limitation of this study is that the attitudes of the subjects were not measured longitudinally (i.e. multiple measures of the same subjects at various stages of young adulthood). The formation of attitudes is a process, and thus these attitudes may be shown to change over time. Because this study is based on cross-sectional findings rather than longitudinal findings, variations in an individual’s attitudes towards marriage and family life cannot be measured.

Also, the Prep-M questionnaire is limited in terms of the number and variety of questions which tested attitudes toward aspects of marriage and family life. In future research, more questions could be used as items to address specific areas of marriage and family life. For example, attitudes about the importance of marriage and family as a societal institution could be asked, or specific questions regarding sex role expectations could be included to broaden the scope the study.

Lastly, a big limitation of this study is that up to 27% of the participants reported to have been single after a divorce. Therefore, this study may have measured the effects of their own divorce, not their parent’s divorce. If this study were to be repeated, it may be more effective to isolate those single participants who have ever been married.

**Clinical Implications**

With the above limitations in mind, the results of this study have several implications for family therapists. First, by studying effects of parental divorce on young adults, family therapists may gain greater insight into the formation of beliefs and attitudes held by young adults which may in turn influence their relationship choices. Thus, clinicians may use the results from this study to help those who present for issues relating to parental divorce,
premarital relationship counseling, relationship enhancement, or family therapy. For instance, clients who present with anxiety about the negative impact a parental divorce may have on their present or future relationships could be shown these results, and a discussion could ensue suggesting that it is likely that the event of a parental divorce alone is not strong enough to predict attitudes toward marriage and family life.

Second, results from this study allow clinicians to offer hope to individuals who come from divorced families-of-origin. Many clients may fear that their attitudes may have been negatively influenced as a result of their parent’s divorce. This fear might lead the client to believe that they have low chances of having a positive experience in their own marriages and families. Clinicians can address this fear directly during individual, conjoint, or group therapy and give evidence that clients coming from a divorced family do not necessarily have negative attitudes towards marriage and family life. Thus, reassuring the client(s) that there is hope for their future relationships.

Third, this study suggests that other mediators may offer insight into patterns of relating. With this information, clinicians can look at other factors when working with those experiencing difficulty in relationships. They may address other factors besides a parental divorce, such as unhealthy communication patterns, that could be contributing to the client’s struggles. This approach might enhance the clinician’s ability to explore a wider range of issues which may exist for the client.

Finally, the one variable that did prove significantly different--attitude toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage--could be considered when working with clients coming from divorced families-of-origin. First, a clinician may use their knowledge of this potential difference to help the client further explore their attitudes toward commitment in
relationships. Understanding how they have formulated their attitudes toward commitment may give clients further insight into their past and present relationships. Clinicians could also use this as a way to investigate whether the client experiences any difficulties with commitment in their current relationships. For example, if a client has anxiety about making commitments in their relationships, or if they avoid making commitments and sacrifices in their relationships, the clinician may share the results of this study to help the client explore how experiences in their families-of-origin could have influenced this problem. They could be reassured that it may be an attitude that was learned through their experience rather than being an inborn personality trait—knowing that a problematic attitude was learned may give the client freedom to believe that this attitude can also be unlearned.

Specific suggestions for therapists to help young adults coming from divorced families who present with personal and relationship difficulties include first assessing the impact the divorce has had according to the client. Satir (1988) suggests helping the person make an inventory of their current attitudes and beliefs to help assess and allow the client to create some therapeutic goals regarding their intimate relationships. The following questions may be asked to facilitate this process: “What are some of your current attitudes towards relationships, marriage, and family life? Do you see any that are problematic for you? Are there any you would like to change or discard? What new ones would you like to create? What effects did your parents divorce have on you at the time it happened? What effects do you believe still influence your life as a young adult? Has your parent’s divorce effected your own intimate relationships? In what way? What are the issues you struggle with that may be a result of your parent’s divorce? What issues might you struggle with that have to do with other issues or life experiences?”

40
After developing an inventory of current attitudes and beliefs about relationships, therapists should discuss the meaning of these for the clients and discuss how holding on to these attitudes and beliefs have influenced their past and present relationship (Stahmann & Hiebert, 1997). For example, if a young adult comes from non-intact family, she/he may have difficulty committing to marriage due to a fear that this relationship, like that of her/his parents, will not last, and will only result in pain and loss when it inevitably discontinues.

Lastly, in individual therapy, the therapist may implement cognitive interventions intending to help the client challenge and change negative or unhealthy attitudes or beliefs about relationships. Both attitudes and beliefs coming from the experience of a parental divorce as well as other issues should be addressed. This may help clients to activate more healthy and adaptive beliefs about relationships (Larson, 1992). Such changes in beliefs and attitudes will lead to positive changes in behavior (e.g. preparing to make a commitment towards marriage) and affect (e.g. less anxiety about the possible outcome of their relationships).

**Implications For Further Research**

Many questions have been raised through this research that could lead to several potentially interesting studies. First, the one item where significant differences occurred— attractiveness of commitment and sacrifice in marriage—could be further explored. Research could be done to explore the effect a parental divorce may have on young adult’s attitudes toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage. Not only attitudes but potential problems with commitment in their relationships could be tested for. This could further clinical proficiency and understanding of the implications of divorce in the marriage-of-origin.
An important question raised by this study is whether or not differences in attitudes toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage effect differences in actual relationship behavior. This is a potential study that may also lend insight into the effects of parental divorce on children’s future relationships. Additionally, the question of whether there are commitment differences in young couples coming from divorced families-of-origin is also raised and could be another interesting study for further research.

The limitation of using a large number of t-tests that was discussed previously also provides potential for the same study to be done using a slightly different method. The twelve items could be combined into the four attitudinal scales and then only four t-tests would be run. This may yield slightly different results, and be an interesting study used to measure the accuracy of the more simple method used in this study.

Finally, the difference found in the item addressing attitudes toward commitment and sacrifice in marriage could lend helpful insight into factors leading to divorce. For example, studies have shown that those coming from divorced families-of-origin have a higher rate of divorce than those from intact families (Glen & Kramer, 1985; Kulka & Weingarten, 1979). Perhaps some differences in attitudes contribute to those differences in divorce rates.

It was discovered in the present study that a parental divorce alone was not enough to predict marital and family attitudes of young adults. Therefore, the question of what are the most influential factors predicting young adult’s attitudes toward marriage and family life remains. As this question remains, so does the research to be done. This could prove to be both an interesting and invaluable study that has yet to be done.

Limitations of this study also suggest where future research could be done. For instance, the limitation of using such a homogenous population creates potential for other
studies to be done with less homogenous, or completely different populations. Most notably, gender differences were not accounted for in the present study. No studies address this issue, and therefore, the following question--are the attitudes toward marriage and family life of young adult women from intact and divorced families-of-origin different than those of young adult men of similar parental backgrounds--remains unanswered. Also, research could be done with people from a wide range of religious backgrounds, to test whether religiosity has an effect on attitudes toward marriage and family life.

Also, the fact that a large portion of the sample used for this study were had themselves been divorced, (27% from the intact sample, 23% from the divorced sample), may have perhaps confounded the results. A future study could utilize a sample of only single young adults who had themselves never been previously married. Interesting results may also be found when replicating the same study with newly married or older couples, and also with other socioeconomic or ethnic groups. It would be helpful to discover if different populations effect similar or varying results.

Finally, the question of whether methodological variations of the same study could yield different results, and provide areas to be addressed in the research. For example, what could a longitudinal study asking some of the same questions find? Or would a study with the same population but asking much more detailed and specific questions produce different results? These variations of method for the same topic may add to the information and insight found in this initial research, and could provide important keys to improved understanding for all family scientists.
Conclusion

The present study explored the influence of parental divorce on the attitudes of young adults toward marriage and family life. The results indicate that in most cases, little or no differences exist in attitudes toward marriage and family life of young adults coming from intact versus divorced families-of-origin. Attitudinal differences were found to exist on only one item—the attractiveness of commitment and sacrifice in marriage. Possible reasons for these results were discussed, and implications for clinical and future research were explored.
References


Psychiatry, 24, 538-544.


APPENDIX A
PREParation for Marriage Questionnaire (PREP-M)
PREP-Paration for Marriage Questionnaire Booklet
PREParation for Marriage (PREP-M)

Developed by:
Thomas B. Holman, Ph.D.
Dean M. Busby, M.S.
Jeffry H. Larson, Ph.D.

PREP-M is primarily designed for couples who are engaged or seriously considering marriage, although individuals who are currently "unattached" may also learn a great deal about their readiness for a long-term relationship. The questions deal with topics that are useful in evaluating your similarity and degree of readiness for marriage.

Each person who completes the PREP-M should have a booklet and an answer sheet. Complete PREP-M alone, and do not talk to your partner or anyone else while you are answering the questions. Hand the answer sheet in and keep the booklet until you get your computer printout.

PREP-M is not a test. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers--only "your" answers. There is sometimes the temptation to give the "ideal" answers, rather than the cold, hard truth. The more honest you are, even if it hurts a little, the more useful the information from the printout you receive will be.

You should be aware that the information on the answer sheets will become part of the PREP-M data bank. These data will be used to update the norms for people like yourself. In addition, research will be undertaken periodically to improve the quality of the questions. The data will only be analyzed in large groups, thus preserving the anonymity of all respondents.

Follow the instructions on the answer sheet. Complete all the information asked for including your name, sex, social security number, partner's social security number, your age, the user number your instructor or counselor will give you, and the follow-up information requested. Then begin answering the questions on the following pages.
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION I

1. It is not important to me to be financially well off.
2. I feel emotionally ready to get married.
3. Religion is an important part of my life.
4. Having a large family is important to me.
5. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for me before marriage even if I don't feel particularly affectionate toward my partner.
6. Even when the child/children are school age a mother's place is in the home, not at a job.
7. "Natural family planning" (periodic abstinence from sexual intercourse) is preferable to the use of artificial/chemical birth control methods (the pill, spermicide, IUD, condom, etc.).
8. Once married, I believe that it is alright to have sexual relations with someone other than my spouse.
9. It is important to have some private space which is all your own and separate from your spouse.
10. The whole idea of having children and rearing them is not attractive to me.
11. If a goal is important, it is occasionally acceptable to use slightly dishonest means to attain the goal.
12. Having enough money to do whatever I want is one of my life goals.
13. With regard to sexual intimacy, I feel ready to get married.
14. I do not see myself as a religious person.
15. Permanent birth control through surgical operation for either the man or the woman is acceptable for couples who have decided they want no more children.
16. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for me before marriage when I am in love with my partner.
17. I expect marriage to give me more real personal satisfaction than just about anything else I am involved in.
18. Husband and children should come before a job or career for a woman.
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
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</table>

19. Legal abortion is an acceptable method of birth control.
20. It is O.K. for spouses to go for long periods of time without spending much time together as a couple.
21. Although parenthood requires many sacrifices, the love and enjoyment of children make it worth it all.
22. Sometimes it is O.K. to fudge a little on things like income tax returns, insurance forms, etc.
23. Having the finer things in life is important to me.
24. I feel financially ready to get married.
25. Going to religious services is important to me.
26. My photograph has been on the cover of five magazines.
27. I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable for me when I am engaged to be married.
28. The whole idea of the commitment and sacrifice involved in marriage is not attractive to me.
29. A mother should feel free to pursue a career/job even when there are preschool children in the home.
30. In marriage, privacy is as important as togetherness.
31. My life would be empty if I never had children.
32. It is important to me to be totally honest in all my dealings with others.
33. All things considered, I feel ready to get married.
Some couples like to share different marital duties or roles, others like to split them up between husband and wife. Who do you think should do the following?

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

- a = husband entirely
- b = husband more than wife
- c = husband and wife equally
- d = wife more than husband
- e = wife entirely

34. Housekeeping
35. Yard work
36. Home repairs
37. Earn a living
38. Decide how money is spent
39. Initiate sexual activity
40. Organize and start family recreation
41. Keep in touch with relatives
42. Care for the children
43. Teach and train children
44. Discipline children

Section II

Please answer the following questions about you and your family background. The answers you give will not appear anywhere on the printout you (or your partner) will receive back. Only a summary score will be provided. When questions ask about your father or mother, answer according to the primary caregiver you had, even if that was not your biological mother or father.

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

- a = Very Dissatisfied
- b = Dissatisfied
- c = Neutral
- d = Satisfied
- e = Very Satisfied

While I grew up, how satisfied was I with...
45. ...my relationship with my father?
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

46. ...the way my parents disciplined me?
47. ...how close I felt to the rest of my family?
48. ...the way we worked together as a family to solve problems?
49. ...the number of fun things my family did together?
50. ...the quality of our communication in my family?
51. ...my relationship with my mother?
52. In the home where I grew up, how satisfied was my father in his marriage?
53. In the home where I grew up, how satisfied was my mother in her marriage?

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Hardly</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Fairly</td>
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While I grew up...

54. ...my father showed physical affection to me by hugging and/or kissing me.
55. ...my father participated in enjoyable activities with me.
56. ...my father and I were able to share our feelings on just about any topic without embarrassment or fear of hurt feelings.
57. ...my father was consistent when he disciplined me.
58. ...my father would explain to me why I was being punished.
59. ...my father was critical about what I did.
60. ...how frequently did my father use alcohol?
61. ...my mother showed physical affection by hugging and/or kissing me.
62. ...my mother participated in enjoyable activities with me.
63. ...my mother and I were able to share our feelings on just about any topic without embarrassment or fear of hurt feelings.

64. ...my mother was consistent when she disciplined me.

65. ...my mother would explain to me why I was being punished.

66. ...my mother was critical about what I did.

67. ...how frequently did my mother use alcohol?

68. ...how often did my mother and father argue with each other?

In my immediate family, while I grew up...

69. ...there were transition strains like moving, changing jobs, or changing schools.

70. ...there were financial strains such as loss of jobs, bankruptcy, large debts, or going on welfare.

71. ...there were physical strains such as a member(s) being physically handicapped, hospitalized for a serious physical illness or injury, or becoming premaritally pregnant.

72. ...there were mental strains such as member(s) being seriously depressed, emotionally unstable, or being hospitalized for a mental disorder.

73. ...we suffered from significant losses like a family member's death or divorce.

74. ...there were legal violations such as member(s) going to jail or being put on probation, using drugs, or dropping out of school.

75. On the average my childhood was:
   a. Very unhappy
   b. Moderately unhappy
   c. Neutral
   d. Moderately happy
   e. Very happy
76. On the average my teenage years were:
   a. Very unhappy
   b. Moderately unhappy
   c. Neutral
   d. Moderately happy
   e. Very happy

77. Which best describes the marital status of my father while I was growing up?
   a. Married (first marriage)
   b. Divorced or separated and not remarried
   c. Wife deceased and father not remarried
   d. Remarried after a divorce
   e. Remarried after the death of wife

78. In the last ten years I have not seen an automobile.
   a. True
   b. False

79. Which best describes the marital status of my mother while I was growing up?
   a. Married (first marriage)
   b. Divorced or separated and not remarried
   c. Husband deceased and mother not remarried
   d. Remarried after a divorce
   e. Remarried after the death of husband

80. How frequently do I attend religious services:
   a. Regular attendance (weekly)
   b. Frequent attendance (at least monthly)
   c. Occasional attendance (several times a year)
   d. Only on special occasions (once or twice a year)
   e. Never

81. My scholastic average (GPA) is (was):
   a. A- to A (3.7-4.0)
   b. B- to B+ (2.7-3.6)
   c. C- to C+ (1.7-2.6)
   d. D- to D+ (0.7-1.6)
   e. F to F+ (0.0-0.6)

82. The region of the country which best describes where I lived most of the time while I grew up was:
   a. Northeast- ME, NH, NY, VT, MA, RI, CT, NJ, PA
   b. North central- OH, IN, IL, MI, WI, MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS
   c. South- DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL, KY, TN, AL, MS, AR, LA, OK, TX
   d. West-MT, ID, WY, CO, CA, NM, AZ, UT, NV, WA, OR, AK, HI
   e. Other-foreign country

83. How frequently would I like to have sexual relations in my marriage?
   a. Once a day or more
   b. 4-6 times a week
   c. 1-3 times a week
   d. 2-3 times a month
   e. once a month or less
While you grew up, did conflicts which led to physical acts like kicking, hitting hard with a fist, beatings, or hitting with objects happen in your home? [REMEMBER, NONE OF YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE OR OTHER QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION WILL APPEAR ON THE PRINTOUT YOU OR YOUR PARTNER RECEIVE, SO PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS HONESTLY.]

a. No (If "No", skip to question 89)

b. Yes (If "Yes", answer questions 85-88)

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Often (over 50 times)</td>
<td>Fairly Often (21-50 times)</td>
<td>Sometimes (6-20 times)</td>
<td>Hardly Ever (1-5 times)</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often, on the average, did things like kicking, hitting hard with a fist, beatings, and hitting with objects happened to you while you grew up?

85. One of my brothers or sisters did things like this to me or I did it to them.

86. My parents or caretakers did this to me.

87. My parents or caretakers did it to each other.

88. I did it to my parents.

89. At times sexual activities occur in families such as touching children in inappropriate places or performing sexual acts with children. Did these things ever happen to you while you grew up?

a. No (If "No", skip to question 95)

b. Yes (If "Yes", answer questions 90-94)

How often, on the average, did things like the above happen to you when you while you grew up?

90. One of my brothers did things like this to me.

91. One of my sisters did things like this to me.

92. My father did things like this to me.

93. My mother did things like this to me.

94. Another person did things like this to me.

95. Everyone gets into conflicts with other people and sometimes these lead to physical acts like kicking, hitting hard with a fist, beatings, and hitting with objects. On the average, during the last twelve months I did these things to my dating partner(s) or fiance(e):

a. More than once a week

b. Once a week

c. Once a month

d. Less than once a month but several times.

e. Never
96. On the average, during the last twelve months my dating partner(s) or fiance(e) did these to me:
   a. More than once a week
   b. Once a week
   c. Once a month
   d. Less than once a month but several times.
   e. Never

97. In your current relationship how often have you been pressured to participate in intimate behavior (such as petting or intercourse) against your will?
   a. Very often
   b. Fairly often
   c. Sometimes
   d. Hardly ever
   e. Never
   f. I'm not currently in a relationship.

98. I lived during most of my life in:
   a. Farm/ranch
   b. Rural-not farm or ranch
   c. Town-2,500 people or less
   d. Town-2,500 to 25,000
   e. Small city-25,000 to 100,000
   f. Large city-over 100,000

99. My race or ethnic origin is:
   a. African (Black)
   b. Asian
   c. Caucasian (White)
   d. American Indian
   e. Hispanic (Mexican American, Latin American, etc.)
   f. Polynesian

100. My present relationship status is:
    a. Single-not going with anyone (Skip to question #103)
    b. Single-going with one person (but not cohabiting)
    c. Single-after being divorced or widowed and not going with anyone (Skip to question #103)
    d. Single-after being divorced or widowed and going with one person (but not cohabiting)
    e. Engaged
    f. Living with someone of the opposite sex to whom I am not married (cohabiting)
    g. Married

101. How long have my partner and I been going together (dating each other exclusively)?
    a. Less than 1 month
    b. 1 to 3 months
    c. More than 3 months but less than 6 months
    d. More than 6 months but less than 12 months
    e. 1 to 2 years
    f. More than 2 years
    g. Don't know or doesn't apply
102. How many months will elapse between our engagement (or the time at which both of us had a definite understanding that we were to be married) and the date of our marriage?
   a. Less than 1 month
   b. 1 to 3 months
   c. More than 3 months but less than 6 months
   d. More than 6 months but less than 12 months
   e. 1 to 2 years
   f. More than 2 years
   g. Don't know or doesn't apply

103. Here is a list of things (in alphabetical order) that many people look for in or want out of life. Please study the list carefully, then choose the one that is most important to you.
   a. Being well-looked-up-to
   b. Fun-enjoyment-excitement
   c. Security
   d. Self-fulfillment
   e. Self-respect
   f. Sense of belonging
   g. Sense of belonging
   h. Warm relations with others

104. My religious affiliation is:
   a. Catholic
   b. Protestant (Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopalian, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc.)
   c. Judaism (Semitic)
   d. Latter-day Saint (Mormon)
   e. Moslem (Shiite, Sunnite, Druse, etc.)
   f. Eastern Religion (Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)
   g. Other
   h. None

105. For most of my life I was reared by:
   a. Natural father and mother
   b. Natural mother only
   c. Natural father only
   d. Natural mother and step father
   e. Natural father and step mother
   f. Grandparent(s)
   g. Other relative(s)
   h. Adopted parent(s)
   i. Foster parent(s)

106. My birth position in my family is:
   a. First
   b. Second
   c. Third
   d. Fourth
   e. Fifth
   f. Sixth
   g. Seventh
   h. Eighth
   i. Ninth or more
107. How many children (including me) were in my family?
   a. One
   b. Two
   c. Three
   d. Four
   e. Five
   f. Six
   g. Seven
   h. Eight
   i. Nine or more

   RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below
   a. Elementary School
   b. Some high School
   c. High school diploma
   d. Some College/technical school
   e. Associate's degree
   f. Bachelor's degree
   g. Master's degree
   h. Doctorate degree (Ph.D., Ed.D)
   i. Professional (M.D., J.D., D.D.S.)

108. How much education have I completed?

109. How much education has my father completed?

110. How much education has my mother completed?

   RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below
   a. Trade (plumber, carpenter, electrician, farmer)
   b. Homemaker
   c. Professional (doctor, lawyer, executive)
   d. Sales
   e. Farm worker
   f. Service employee (clerical, custodial, technician)
   g. Other professional (teacher, engineer, manager, nurse, business person)
   h. Student
   i. Unemployed

111. Which best describes my current occupation?

112. Which comes the closest to describing my father's primary occupation while I grew up?

113. Which comes the closest to describing my mother's primary occupation while I grew up?
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. None</th>
<th>f. $25,000-$34,999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Under $5,000</td>
<td>g. $35,000-$49,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. $5,000-$9,999</td>
<td>h. $50,000-$69,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. $10,000-$14,999</td>
<td>i. $70,000-more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. $15,000-$24,999</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

114. My current individual yearly income is:

115. My father's current individual yearly income is:

116. My mother's current individual yearly income is:

SECTION III

Answer the following items about yourself and about your relationship with a partner such as a boyfriend or girlfriend. If you do not currently have a boyfriend or girlfriend, answer the relationship items according to how you currently interact with an important person in your life.

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>b. Hardly Ever</th>
<th>c. Sometimes</th>
<th>d. Fairly Often</th>
<th>e. Very Often</th>
</tr>
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</table>

117. I have lived (or will have lived) away from my parents' home before getting married.

118. I get into difficulties because of impulsive acts.

119. I have a tendency to say things to my partner that would be better left unsaid.

120. I feel I have a number of good qualities.

121. In most matters, I understand what my partner is trying to say.

122. How frequently do I use illegal drugs (Marijuana, Cocaine, Heroine, etc.)?

123. I let my partner know when I am displeased with him/her.

124. I feel useless.

125. I sit down with my partner and just talk things over.

126. I feel sad and blue.
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

<table>
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<th>a</th>
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127. My parents encourage me to be independent and make my own decisions.
128. I have trouble controlling my temper.
129. I sulk or pout when I'm with my partner.
130. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
131. I understand my partner's feelings.
132. How frequently do I smoke or use chewing tobacco?
133. I fail to express disagreement with my partner because I am afraid she/he will get angry.
134. I think I am no good at all.
135. I talk over pleasant things that happen during the day when I am with my partner.
136. I feel hopeless.
137. My parents try to run my life.
138. I nag my partner.
139. I feel I am a person of worth.
140. I am able to listen to my partner in an understanding way.
141. How frequently do I use alcohol?
142. I have a tendency to keep my feelings to myself when I am with my partner.
143. I'm inclined to feel I am a failure.
144. I discuss my personal problems with my partner.
145. I feel depressed.
146. I get really caught up in my family's problems and concerns.

SECTION IV

The questions in the next two sections (Section IV and Section V) should only be answered if you are engaged, seriously considering marriage, or living with someone. Those not currently in a serious relationship should skip to Section VI, the optional questions section. If the person you received PREP-M from does not
have any optional questions for you to answer, you are finished and should turn in your answer sheet for scoring.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>a  Never</td>
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<td>b  Hardly</td>
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<td>c  Sometimes</td>
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<td>d  Fairly</td>
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<tr>
<td>e  Very</td>
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<tr>
<td>f  Often</td>
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</table>

147. My partner has lived (or will have lived) away from his/her parents home before we get married.

148. My partner has trouble controlling his/her temper.

149. My partner has a tendency to say things to me that would be better left unsaid.

150. I believe my partner feels he has a number of good qualities.

151. My partner is able to listen to me in an understanding way.

152. How frequently does my partner use illegal drugs (Marijuana, Cocaine, Heroine, etc.)?

153. My partner fails to express disagreements with me because she/he is afraid I will get angry.

154. My partner feels depressed.

155. My partner feels useless at times.

156. My partner sits down with me just to talk things over.

157. My partner gets really caught up in his/her family's problems and concerns.

158. My partner's parents encourage him/her to be independent and make his/her own decisions.

159. My partner sulks or pouts when I'm with him/her.

160. My partner takes a positive attitude toward him/herself.

161. In most matters, my partner understands what I am trying to say.

162. How frequently does my partner smoke or use chewing tobacco?

163. My partner lets me know when she/he is displeased with me.

164. My partner feels hopeless.

165. My partner thinks she/he is no good at all.

166. My partner discusses his/her personal problems with me.

167. My partner's parents try to run his/her life.

168. My partner gets into difficulties because of impulsive acts.
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<td></td>
<td>Ever</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
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</table>

169. My partner nags me.

170. My partner feels she/he is a person of worth.

171. My partner understands my feelings.

172. How frequently does my partner use alcohol?

173. My partner has a tendency to keep his/her feelings to him/herself when with me.

174. My partner feels sad and blue.

175. My partner is inclined to feel she/he is a failure.

176. My partner talks over pleasant things that happen during the day with me.

SECTION V

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<th>e</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We’ve never discussed this</td>
<td>Never agree</td>
<td>Seldom agree</td>
<td>Usually agree</td>
<td>Always agree</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Most people have some areas where they agree and others where they disagree. How much agreement do you and your partner have in the following areas?

177. Leisure activities

178. Handling finances

179. Religious matters

180. Demonstrations of affection/intimacy

181. Ways of dealing with parents/in-laws

182. Amount of time spent together

183. Number of children to have
RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<th>a</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Once</td>
<td>Two to three times</td>
<td>Four to six times</td>
<td>More than six times</td>
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184. How often have I thought our relationship might be in trouble?
185. How often have I thought seriously about breaking off our relationship?
186. How often have my partner and I discussed terminating our relationship?
187. How often have we broken up and then gotten back together?

RESPONSE CHOICES for questions below

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Strongly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

188. I hope marriage will solve some of the major problems in my life.
189. We will never have any problems in our marriage.
190. The male’s parents are in favor of the marriage.
191. Time will resolve any problems we have as a couple.
192. The female’s parents are in favor of the marriage.
193. Our friends approve of our marriage.
194. We have prayed/meditated about our relationship and deep down we feel good about it.
195. How much do I like my future mother-in-law?
   a. I dislike her very much.
   b. I dislike her.
   c. I have mixed feelings about her, or I don’t know her.
   d. I like her.
   e. I like her very much
196. How would I rate my own physical attractiveness?
   a. Very plain looking
   b. Plain looking
   c. Not sure
   d. Good looking
   e. Very good looking

197. How similar are we in our mental abilities (IQ)?
   a. Very dissimilar
   b. Dissimilar
   c. Not sure
   d. Similar
   e. Very similar

198. How satisfied am I with my relationship with my partner?
   a. Very dissatisfied
   b. Dissatisfied
   c. Neutral
   d. Satisfied
   e. Very satisfied

199. How much do I like my future father-in-law?
   a. I dislike him very much.
   b. I dislike him.
   c. I have mixed feelings about him, or I don't know him.
   d. I like him.
   e. I like him very much.

200. How much money will the two of us have saved when we get married?
   a. 0-$500
   b. $500-$1500
   c. $1501-$3000
   d. $3001-$5000
   e. More than $5000

201. How would I rate the physical attractiveness of my partner?
   a. Very plain looking
   b. Plain looking
   c. Not sure
   d. Good looking
   e. Very good looking

202. What will be our combined indebtedness at the time we get married? (Include charge accounts and amount owned on loans.)
   a. 0-$1000
   b. $1001-$3000
   c. $3001-$5000
   d. $5001-$10,000
   e. More than $10,000

203. Am I, or is my partner, currently pregnant?
   a. Yes  b. No

204. I have personally discussed foreign policy issues with several world leaders.
   a. Yes  b. No
Unless you have been given additional questions to answer in Section VI of the answer sheet, you are now done with PREP-M.

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE THAT YOU ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT APPLY TO YOU. MAKE SURE YOUR MARKS IN THE ANSWER CIRCLES ARE DARK AND COMPLETELY FILL IN THE CIRCLE. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN AN INCORRECTLY SCORED ANSWER SHEET.

IN ORDER TO GET AN ACCURATE AND COMPLETE PRINTOUT, YOUR SEX, NAME, SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, AND PARTNER'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER MUST BE CORRECT. PLEASE CHECK THEM BEFORE TURNING IN YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

MAY YOUR MARRIAGE BRING YOU JOY AND HAPPINESS!

PREP-M
/o Marriage Study Consortium
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Brigham Young University
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