

Generational Difference and Predictors of Variance in Marital Attitudes among Men

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The rise of cohabitation, premarital sex, childbearing outside of marriage, and a higher average age for first marriage allude to changes in the institution of marriage, and perhaps a changing society. According to a 2010 Pew Research Center report, 22% of Millennials are married, while a third of Generation X's and over 40% of the Baby Boomers were married when they were the same age. Much of the literature groups men homogenously, so this study chose to focus on men and the potential differences between them, specifically regarding marital attitudes. Literature suggests that marital attitudes may have changed due to a transformation in gender ideology, and that there are differences between generations regarding marital attitudes. The most talked about difference in the literature is that of between the newest generation of adults, the Millennials, and all previous generations that are still living. The main purpose of this study was to see if there are differences in marital attitudes between the Millennial men, men of Generation X, the Baby Boomer men, and men of the Silent Generation. Using data from the 2010 Changing American Family Survey, statistical analyses were conducted to determine if a real difference exists between men of Millennial generation and men of all previous generations, and to see how marital attitudes may vary between different social groups of men. Bivariate analyses found that the Millennials are evenly divided on how they feel about the institution of marriage, while

multivariate analyses found that the Millennials aren't significantly different from the Generation X's. The significant difference is between Generation X and the combined Silent/Boomer generation. This difference is maintained across all regression models. While gender ideology does predict attitudes about marriage, it does not explain the generational differences in attitudes among men suggesting that other factors are at play.

Generational Differences and Predictors of Variance in Marital Attitudes among Men

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INTRODUCTION

The American institution of marriage has become somewhat of a shell institution in recent years. A marriage once was the foundation upon which a life was built, a cornerstone of adult identity. The Industrial Revolution not only brought changes in the American economy, but changes in the American institution of marriage as well. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, singlehood often forced people to continue living with and working for their family, but the rise of wage work allowed single people to move outside their family homes and gain some economic independence (Thornton and Freedman 1982). The Industrial Revolution brought about an increase in education for women in the elite classes and growth in female labor force participation. The first wave and second waves of the women's movement developed, with equal education, voting, and employment at the center of the movement (Staggenborg 2011). The rise of wage work, increasing individualism, and the movement of women outside of the home into the workplace has displaced the traditional model of marriage (Bellah et al 1985; Cherlin 2004). Marriage partners used to be chosen by family in order to secure a mutual economic arrangement, however after the Industrial Revolution, marriage became based on love and fulfillment (Thornton and Freedman 1982; Campbell and Wright 2010). Although there were still clear gender divisions within marriage, husbands and wives were companions and lovers in a way that was not experienced by husbands and wives in previous generations (Cherlin 2004). While most Americans in today's society believe in this contemporary idea of marrying for love, the increasing rates of divorce, singlehood, and cohabitation indicate that being forever committed is difficult or no longer a goal.

More recently, shift in models of love is also evident. Cancion (1990) writes that the new model of love "combines enduring love and self-development" in a way that is "mutually

reinforcing, not conflicting” (3). Anthony Giddens also notes a transformation of love, which looks at a shift from a romantic love to confluent love (Hull, Meier, and Ortyl 2010). The romantic model of love focuses on permanence and being successful within gender roles, while the confluent model focuses on individual satisfaction within a relationship with dissolution always as a possibility (Hull, Meier, and Ortyl 2010). The romantic model of love is easily seen in the 1950’s nuclear family era, in which the husband work and the women took care of the home and satisfaction in a marriage was based on success within those gender roles (Cancian 1990; Cherlin 2004). The confluent model of love reflects the modern day American individualism to which scholars refer (Bellah et al 1985; Cherlin 2004).

A contrast has emerged between how marriage is conceptualized and how people actually behave in and feel about marriage (Campbell and Wright 2010). It seems that while people are conceptualizing marriage within the romantic love model, they behave and feel within the confluent love model. Although many still believe children should be had inside a marriage (Campbell and Wright 2010), there is a noticeable increase in children being born outside of marriage (Cherlin 2004; Vespa, Lewis, and Kreider 2013), and the newest generation does not find marriage necessary for childbearing nor childrearing (Campbell and Wright 2010). Furthermore, while courtship traditionally progressed to marriage in three steps: dating to engagement to marriage, the progression has become more complex due to the phenomenon of cohabitation (Manning 2007). Cohabitation and having children were once the norm within a marriage; however, both are now occurring outside of marriage (Cherlin 2004; Campbell and Wright 2010). It appears that the Millennial generation as a whole does not feel about marriage and family the same way the Generation Xs and the Baby Boomers did when they were the same age.

This shift may be due to the transformation of gender ideology throughout the years (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Cunningham 2008). While research has examined Millennial women's conceptualization or expectations of marriage compared to those of women of previous generations, very little research has examined how men of the Millennial generation view marriage as compared to men of previous generations. The assumption seems to be that it is changing women's expectations that are changing marriage. However, the Millennials are a whole generation, made up of not only women, but men as well. It is not logical to think that only women of this generation are responsible for all the differences in marital and family attitudes when compared to previous generations.

It is possible that the marital attitudes of Millennial men are distinct when compared to men of previous generations. It is logical as well as vital to take a look into how Millennial men feel about marriage in order to get a more complete understanding of what may become of the American institution of marriage. This study's primary purpose is to look at how this most recent generation of adult men feel about marriage compared to adult men of previous generations and to identify predictors of variations in attitudes among men.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Shifting Attitudes toward Marriage

The “Knot Yet” project run by the National Marriage Institute at the University of Virginia notes that the economic foundation that once secured the institution of marriage for previous generations is no longer in place for the most recent generation of young adults (Hymowitz et al 2013). Both this study and a Pew Research Center study recognize the trend of Millennials waiting to get married after they complete the required education that allows them to receive jobs that make them feel financially stable or put them at least in a middle-class position (Hymowitz et al 2013; Wang and Taylor 2011). For men in previous generations, becoming financially independent was easier than for the Millennials, as most men could obtain jobs in manufacturing and construction industries which did not require a college education. However, in recent years the industries that once heavily employed men are experiencing severe job loss, forcing men of the most recent generation to seek post-secondary education, taking more time to become financially independent and stable (Galinsky, Aumann, and Bond 2011). Researchers at the National Marriage Institute also write that due to the need to become financially stable and independent, today’s generation of adults want to achieve an independent identity before becoming part of a committed relationship, as opposed to earlier generations who viewed marriage as the cornerstone of adult identity (Hymowitz et al 2013). Today’s young adults first seek identities separate from family.

As a result, the age of first marriage has changed over the years. The percentage of people who haven’t married by age 29 has been increasing over time. In 1970, 80% of 25-29 years old had settled down and gotten married, compared to 40% of 25-29 year olds in 2010 (Hymowitz et al 2013). According to Census data, 22% of Millennials are married, while a third

of Generation X's and over 40% of the Baby Boomers were married when they were the same age (Wang and Taylor 2011). Today, cohabitation more often precedes marriage, particularly for younger adults. Cohabitation among the most recent generation of 18-29 year olds is 9.2% compared to the 5.8% in 1997 (King and Scott 2005).

For the Millennial generation, marriage is also no longer a precursor to having a child, nor is it a necessity at all. As the age for first marriage is increasing, so is the age for having a child. According to the most recent Census data, the average age at which a woman gets married is now around 27 years old, compared to about 21 years old in 1970. Census data also shows that while the percentage of women giving birth for the first time under the age of 20 has decreased since 1970, the percentage of women giving birth for the first time over the age of 30 has increased since 1970. In fact, while both have been increasing the average age at which a woman has a child is younger than the average age at which a woman gets married (Hymowitz and Carroll 2013). This pattern underscores the fact that childbearing has become detached from marriage, creating the now common single-parent family structure. These changes in family patterns beg the question of whether attitudes toward marriage have also changed.

The detachment of childbearing from marriage is reflected in the fact that in 2010, 52% of Millennials believed being a good parent was one of the most important things in life, while only 30% reported having a successful marriage as one of the most important things in life (Wang and Taylor 2011). In comparison, in 1997 when Generation X was the same age, 42% of Generation X's believed being a good parent was one of the most important things in life, and 35% reported having a successful marriage as being one of the most important things in life (Wang and Taylor 2011). This means that more Millennials than Generation X's felt that being a

good parent is most important, while slightly more Generation X's than Millennials felt that having a successful marriage is most important.

While research is limited, one study suggests that the perceptions of an ideal marriage for the Millennial generation is different from those of Generation X and the Baby Boomers. A recent study found that 72% of Millennials favor an egalitarian division of household labor (both the husband and wife have jobs and take care of the children and home), compared to 63% of the Generation Xs, and 59% of the Baby Boomers (Wang and Taylor 2011). This same study also found that Millennials also place more importance on women being educated, with over half of the most recent generation feeling that having a wife that is educated is very important, compared to only 38% of Generation Xs and 34% of Baby Boomers. These statistics support the conclusion that gender ideology has changed. However another study found that compared to young Americans in the 1970s, young adults in the 1990s were committed to the importance of marriage and children, and that men specifically preferred and expected marriage more than they did in the 1970s (Thorton and Young-DeMarco 2001). Based on conflicting results, it is necessary to take a look at whether or not a real difference in attitudes toward marriage and family actually exists between generations of men.

The fact that the Millennial generation is more open to alternatives to marriage (such as cohabitation) compared to previous generations may be due to the fact that Millennials are less likely to have grown up in a two-parent household. The Pew Research Center found that 63% of Millennials grew up with married parents, compared to 76% of Generation X's and 83% of Baby Boomers. Given typical custody arrangements, this means that Millennial men were more likely to have been raised by single, working moms than ever before (Wang and Taylor 2011). It is important to recognize that as the parents of the Millennials, Generation X may be responsible

for how Millennials feel about marriage and family formation. Several studies suggest that the Millennials are not the only generation responsible for changes in the institution of marriage. A study from the 1980s found that the young adults during that time (Generation X) were also more accepting of marriage alternatives, as well as marital dissolution (Thornton and Freedman 1982). Also, Gerson (2010) suggests that Millennials are the children of a gender revolution that changed marriage and family formation, meaning that Generation X, or that the parents of the Millennials are the ones who have facilitated this revolution and may not be as different from the Millennials as other research suggests.

While there are numerous scholarly articles that examine gender role attitudes by age, very little literature focuses on generational differences in marital attitudes, and those that do focus on the transformation of women's marital attitudes. It is necessary to look at how generational differences in gender ideology and masculinity relate to how marriage is conceptualized.

Gender Ideology

For the purpose of this study, gender role attitudes will be referred to as gender ideology (although there is some debate about the usage of the phrase). Gender ideology represents the degree to which someone internalizes cultural beliefs regarding gender norms (Levant and Richmond 2007; Fagan 2009). Those who adhere to traditional gender role ideology believe in a division of labor that segregates men into the paid labor force outside the home and women into unpaid labor within the home (Stanik and Bryant 2012; Minnotte, Minnotte, and Pederson 2013; Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, and Izhak-Nir 2008). Under traditional ideology, men are the hardworking husbands who provide for the family financially by working while women

are the stay-at-home housewives who take care of the children, which supports their husbands' ability to develop a career (Fagan 2009). Egalitarian gender ideology and attitudes endorse an egalitarian division of labor within the home and more similar roles for men and women (Minnotte, Minnotte, and Pederson 2013; Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, and Izhak-Nir 2008). Couples that endorse egalitarian gender role ideologies are more likely to share childcare and housework responsibilities, while both husband and wife work outside the home. An egalitarian gender ideology is reflective of the interdependent model of love that endorses more flexible gender roles (Cancion 1990).

Gender ideology transformed throughout the decades of the mid to late 1900s into the new millennium, becoming generally more liberal and egalitarian over time. This is reflective of the second wave of the women's movement, which emerged in the 1960s. Large scale political and economic changes were occurring during this time, and employment discrimination, as well as women's sexual health and rights were major issues for the second wave of the women's movement (Staggenborg 2011). Studies have found that from the 1970s to the 1990s, gender ideology became increasingly liberal, and male and female roles were no longer rigid (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Cunningham 2008). Cunningham found that women's support for traditional gender roles steadily decreased from 1977 to 1985 and then leveled off from 1985-1993. This shift was reflected in a dramatic increase in women's employment over this time period (Galinsky, Aumann, and Bond 2011).

There is some debate over trends in gender ideology during the following two decades. Some argue there was a shift back towards traditional gender ideology in the late 1980s to early 1990s and then a slow shift back towards the liberalization of gender ideology since 2000 (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011). One study suggests a hybrid of traditional and

egalitarian referred to as egalitarian but traditional gender ideology (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011). This type of gender ideology enforces separate but equal spheres in which men and women work. According to Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman, this type of ideology came about during the mommy wars of the 1990s, and maintained that women “choose” to stay at home with the children for the betterment of the children, not their husbands’ careers. This ideology is reflected in the decline in married mother’s labor force participation and the halt in the narrowing of gender pay gap (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011). However, another study suggests a steady liberalization of gender ideology from 1980 to 2000. Lucier-Greer and Adler-Baeder (2011) found that from 1980 to 2000 the married men and women in their sample became more egalitarian over time, and that men’s gender role attitudes changed at a greater rate than women’s. Indeed a 2012 study of married and unmarried men found that more men endorsed a less traditional gender ideology than traditional gender ideology (Coughlin and Wade 2012). This shift towards egalitarian ideology was more noticeable among individuals who had divorced and remained single (Lucier-Greer and Adler-Baeder 2011). This reflects the change in the institution of marriage and the relationship between marriage and gender ideology; as divorce became more acceptable, egalitarian attitudes increased.

Several studies have identified predictors of gender ideology among men. Researchers note that more education, labor force participation, having an employed mother, and having a father involved in egalitarian division of housework often correlate with egalitarian gender ideology (Davis and Greenstein 2009). It may be logical to assume that those with more education would also have a higher income. However, while higher education has shown to elicit egalitarian gender ideology, one study concluded that income is not necessarily a predictor of gender ideology or predictive of the division of household labor (Cain 2006). Race is also

associated with gender ideology; African Americans some argue, hold more egalitarian gender ideologies compared to Whites due to their higher likelihood of having a mother who participated in the labor force (Carter, Corra, and Carter 2009; Davis and Greenstein 2009.) In contrast, white men are more likely to uphold traditional gender ideology (Carter, Corra, and Carter 2009). While many social and demographic factors have been found to influence a man's gender ideology in the aggregate, the influence of these factors on gender ideology may vary across generations. As higher education and mothers' employment have become more prevalent, their influence on gender ideology may vary.

Although an increasing number of people are reporting a more liberal gender ideology with egalitarian attitudes regarding gendered division of labor, there are conflicting results among scholars about how this gender ideology actually plays out. While people may have more egalitarian ideology in general, this is not necessarily reflected in everyday life; gender-typed divisions of labor and gender norms in general are still internalized and therefore may be enacted even among those who believe they value less traditional gender roles. A study in 2010 found that while men with a liberal or egalitarian gender role ideology anticipated doing more housework, this is not always the case (Erchull et al 2010). Another recent study found a discrepancy between gender ideology and division of household labor, specifically that the gender ideology of men is more egalitarian than their behavior (Cain 2006), suggesting a gap between how men feel about gendered division of labor and how couples are actually dividing labor. Further, how gender ideology relates to conceptualization of the institution of marriage is an open question.

In order to address the gap in the literature, it is necessary to mention how research on women and men has been conducted. While many studies on attitudes towards marriage and

family include both men and women, most look at differences between the sexes, not within sexes (Helwig-Larsen et al 2011; Stanik and Bryant 2012; Erickson 2005; Erchull et al 2009). For example, Kathleen Gerson (2010) found that modern men and women are different in regards to fallback options to marriage. Millennial men would rather participate in neo-traditional form of marriage in which they are the primary, but not the only, breadwinner, while Millennial women would rather be self-reliant than partake in domesticity (Gerson 2010). Other studies focus on just women, often particular groups of women--such as low income women (Cherlin et al 2008), college women (Ellison et al 2011; Martin and Parashar 2006) and specific racial/ethnic groups of women (Cherlin et al 2008). While studies on particular groups of women are not necessarily comparing the group to others, the literature that is available still shows differences among women. Few studies have focused on attitudes or perspectives of just men or particular groups of men. However, there are exceptions. In their 2012 study of married and unmarried men Coughlin and Wade (2012) compared men with traditional ideology to men with a less traditional ideology, but did not examine other group differences among men even to go as far as comparing the gender ideologies of married and unmarried men. In sum the literature has shown that compared to women, men have a more traditional gender ideology (Goldberg et al 2012; Erickson 2005; Vespa 2009), are more optimistic about marriage (Helweg-Larson et al 2011), and also have a strong desire for marriage (Erchull et al 2010). However within-group variations among men have not been examined despite the fact that research in the area of masculinity studies suggests that there are significant group differences in men's experiences, perspectives, and expectations.

Masculinity

As a component of gender ideology, masculine ideology can be defined as the extent to which someone supports or internalizes traditional masculinity (Wade and Donis 2007; Coughlin and Wade 2012). In the United States, a traditional masculine ideology upholds the male in the dominant role and the characteristics associated with that role, such as being the breadwinner, self-reliant, tough, and virile (Ward, Merriwether, and Caruthers 2006; Coughlin and Wade 2012). This form of masculinity is closely tied to traditional gender role ideology and dependent on its enactment.

However, recent research demonstrates that there is not one masculinity. Scholars have referenced R.W. Connell's concepts of multiple masculinities that may shape the male perspective and experience, with hegemonic masculinity being the traditional and normative masculinity upheld in the United States. Within the concept of hegemonic masculinity, men are meant to be in a position of power over others, both male and female (Coston and Kimmel 2012; Smith and Kimmel 2005). Masculinity is not only about men's relationships with women but also with other men.

Hegemonic masculinity is the standard to which all men are held; it assumes men are heterosexual, dominant, mentally and physically tough, anti-feminine, independent, aggressive, and emotionally restrictive (Ward, Merriwether, and Caruthers 2006; Coughlin and Wade 2012; Smith and Kimmel 2005). It is hegemonic because it is the dominant form of masculinity considered to be legitimately normal (Lusher and Robins 2010) and promoted by cultural industries within society. However, clearly not all men are heterosexual, dominant, aggressive, emotionally restrictive, or any of the other aspects that characterize hegemonic masculinity. Scholars recognize that masculinity is not a dichotomous concept i.e. masculine or feminine, but

that it is varying and changing within and between groups of men (Dean 2013; Coston and Kimmel 2012).

R.W. Connell conceptualizes multiple masculinities including complicit, subordinate and marginalized masculinities (Lusher and Robins 2010). Complicit masculinities are those that reinforce or support hegemonic masculinity, subordinate masculinities are those that undermine hegemonic masculinity, and marginalized masculinities represent the intersection of masculinity, social factors, and gender (Lusher and Robins 2010). Marginalized masculinities include masculinities reproduced by ethnic minorities, gay minorities, and the poor. Subordinate masculinities often refer to the masculinities of gay men, whose masculinities undermine the dominant, heterosexual, normative masculinity (Lusher and Robins 2010; Dean 2013; Coston and Kimmel 2012).

Some scholars have moved beyond theory to investigate how masculinity varies among men. Michael Messner (2004) cites a plethora of masculinities, such as gay Black masculinity, white working class masculinity, militarized masculinity and transnational business masculinity, stating that “scholars of the 80s and 90s seemed to find new forms of masculinity under every empirical stone, and also seemed intent on labeling them” (75). Coston and Kimmel’s 2012 study also acknowledges the marginalized masculinities of disabled men, who are physically or mentally unable to meet hegemonic norms of masculinity, and working class men who seem to fit into hegemonic masculinity, but do not wholly fit the mold due to their “intellectual shortcomings” (107). Conforming to hegemonic norms reinforces hegemonic masculinity, which is also reinforced by problematizing other masculinities.

While the concept of multiple masculinities theorizes men are different, few studies show how men enact these masculinities in real life. Kathleen Gerson’s *The Unfinished Revolution*

(2010) is a study of Millennial men and women that focuses on how these men and women are living in a different era of work and family. Due to the increase in women's employment and the decline of the American economy, Millennial men are facing continuing economic uncertainty. This economic uncertainty may be preventing many Millennial men from achieving sole breadwinner status, forcing them to negotiate their masculinity. It seems that Millennials may be negotiating traditional masculinity for a complicit form of masculinity, specifically trading traditional masculinity for neo-traditionalism. Gerson (2010) writes that Millennial men are falling back on neotraditionalism meaning that while Millennial men cannot or struggle to be the sole breadwinner (mostly because they know this is becoming difficult to achieve) they still want to be the primary breadwinner and feel that their role as a primary breadwinner substitutes for time in and care of the home. Millennial men may be open than previous generations to having a partner who works, suggesting generational differences in attitudes towards marriage and family formation.

Research also suggests that this economic uncertainty has impacted racial minorities further, as they face even worse opportunities for jobs (Edin and Tach 2011; Gerson 2010). Because of this, Black and Latino men are falling back on being self-reliant, meaning they would rather focus on supporting themselves and no one else, compared to White men who are more likely to fall back on neotraditionalism and rely on a partner's income (Gerson 2010). Racial minorities are already marginalized in their masculinity, which may be why they are less likely to fall back on neo-traditionalist methods for marriage and family formation. Marginalized masculinity suggests that attitudes towards marriage may also vary by race.

More Millennial men have been raised in single parent or dual earner households compared to previous generations (Wang and Taylor 2011). Because of this, Millennial men may

have different masculine ideals, as they either grew up seeing both parents working inside and outside of the home, or their single parent working both inside and outside of the home.

However, Gerson's study shows that Millennial men vary in attitudes based upon in which family arrangement they grew up in. Men from single-parent households are more likely to fall back on being single and self-reliant compared to those raised in traditional (father at work, mother at home) or dual-earner households (Gerson 2010).

Besides Gerson, other researchers recognize the effect parental marital status may have on attitudes towards marriage. One study found that Millennials who had divorced parents were not only more pro-divorce than Millennials who did not experience parental divorce or separation, but also reported lower levels of wanting to commit to marriage compared to Millennials whose parents remained married (Miles and Servaty-Seib 2010).

Other studies note how income and education may affect masculinity. For example, Rubin (1994) writes that while women have multifaceted identities, men often tie their identity and self-worth to work, so unstable employment or less opportunity for employment is more harmful for men than for women. Lower income men may internalize marginalized masculinity, meaning that while they want to live up to traditional masculine ideals, they are unable to do so. Therefore, lower income men are less able to achieve breadwinner status, marginalizing their masculinity. As Cherlin (2004) writes, marriage is often a symbol of success, and that financial stability is how one arrives to success. Financial success is becoming more difficult for men of newer generations, as obtaining a middle class position requires higher education. Furthermore, it is also noted by Edin and Tach (2011) and Gerson (2010) that low income men and minority men face more obstacles, such as incarceration and less job opportunities, to financial success or stability. These studies show how income and race intersect and may play a part in masculinity

how men may feel about marriage.

Theories and research of multiple and different masculinities strongly suggest that not all men are the same, which warrants further analysis into how men differentiate in regards to marital attitudes. It is necessary to look at how men are different from one another, rather than studying them as a homogenous group.

RESEARCH EXPECTATIONS

In sum, it is predicted that there will be significant differences in marital attitudes among men of different generations. It is further expected that gender ideology varies by generation among men and that this variation in gender ideology explains at least in part the variation in attitudes about marriage by cohort. It is predicted that gender ideology will vary across education, income, and parent's marital status during adolescence and that the impact of gender ideology on marital attitudes may vary by social group.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study used data obtained from the 2010 Changing American Family Survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the Pew Social and Demographic Trends Project. According to pewresearch.org, the Pew Social and Demographic Trends Project is one of seven projects that comprises the Pew Research Center, and focuses on studying behaviors and attitudes regarding key aspects of American life, including marriage and family. These topics are examined through a combination of opinion survey research and social, economic, and demographic data analysis

Using the data obtained from the 2010 Changing American Family Survey, this study used quantitative analyses to examine and detect potential relationships between generations of men and their attitudes towards marriage and family, generations of men and gender ideology, and gender ideology and attitudes towards marriage and family. Several control variables will also be included in the analyses, including race, income, education, region and parents' marital status during adolescence.

Sample

In order to collect a representative sample of 2691 adults in the United States, Princeton Survey Research Associates International collected data in eight sample segments, oversampling cohabitating parents, divorced or separated parents, and never been married parents.

Telephone interviews were conducted throughout the month of October in 2010 and up to 7 attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. From this sample of 2,691 adults, this researcher selected out all men and saved these data in a separate data set. Thus, the

sample for this study is 1244 adult men.¹

Measures

Marital Attitudes: There is one variable in the 2010 Changing American Family Survey Project that captured the respondents' general attitude towards the institution of marriage. That variable is Question 3a, which asks all respondents: "Some people say that the present institution of marriage is becoming obsolete. Do you agree or disagree?" The *Q.3a* variable was originally coded as 1=Agree 2=Disagree 9=Don't Know/ Refused. It was recoded into the variable *marriageattitude* with 1= disagree (as in marriage is still a relevant institution) and 0= Agree (as marriage is an obsolete institution) and 9=missing.

Generations: In order to identify a generation effect in the analyses, AGE was recoded as 1=18-29 2=30-49 3=50-64 4=65+. This recode essentially looks at generations of men in which 1=Millennials, 2=Generation X's, 3=Baby Boomers, 4=Silent Generation (Becker 2012). Each age range was then dummy coded for use in the regression models.

Gender Ideology: Question 17 in the 2010 Changing American Family Survey captured the essence of gender ideology. The *Q.17* variable asked all respondents: "What kind of marriage do you think is the more satisfying way of life?" This variable was originally coded as 1= One where the husband provides for the family and the wife takes care of the house and children or 2=One where the husband and wife both have jobs and both take care of the house and children. From the literature on gender ideology, it is easy to recognize option 1 as a preference of traditional gender roles and option 2 as a preference for egalitarian gender roles. Question 17 was recoded as a dummy variable called *genderideology* as such: 1= One where the husband provides

¹ See Appendix B for sampling procedures.

for the family and the wife takes care of the house and children or 0= One where the husband and wife both have jobs and both take care of the house and children.

Income: Income was also included in the analyses for this study. The *INCOME* variable in the original survey data set asked respondents: “Last year, that is in 2009, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category.” The response categories were 1=Under \$10,000 2=10 to under \$20,000 3= 20 to under \$30,000 4=30 to under \$40,000 5=40 to under \$50,000 6= 50 to under \$75,000 7=75 to under \$100,000 8= 100 to under \$150,000 9= \$150,000 or more 10=Don’t Know/Refused. Income was then recoded as broader categories, specifically 1= under \$10,000 to under \$30,000 2= \$30,000 to under \$50,000 3= \$50,000 to under \$100,000 and 4= \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Education: Education in the 2010 Changing American Family Survey measured by asking respondents: “What is the last grade or class that you completed in school?” The response categories for *EDUC* are 1=None, or grade 1-8 2=High school incomplete (Grades 9-11) 3=High school Graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate) 4=Technical, trade, or vocational school AFTER high school 5=Some college, no 4-year degree (including associate degree) 6= College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree) 7= Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college. For this study, the *EDUC* variable is recoded as 1=Less than high school graduate, 2= High school graduate or GED certificate, 3= Technical, trade or vocational school after high school or some college including associate degree, 4= College graduate and 5= Post-graduate Training.

Parent's Marital Status: The FAM2 variable in the original data set asks respondents “What was the marital status of your parents during most of the time you were growing up – were they married, divorced, separated, widowed or never married to each other?” This variable is coded as 1=married 2=divorced 3=separated 4=widowed 5=never married 9=Don't Know/Refused. Prior research suggests that having parents who were married is a predictor of expectations for one's own relationships as well as gender ideologies; however sensitivity analyses were conducted to determine if additional marital statuses significantly predict marital attitudes. All significant predictors were included as dummy variables in the analysis.

Race: RACE1 is coded in the original data set as 1=White 2=Black or African American 3=Asian or Asian American 4=Or some other race 9=Don't Know/Refused. Race was then recoded so each option in the original Race variable is dummy coded against all other race options..

Hispanic: Respondents were asked if they identify as Hispanic and the variable was dummy coded 1= Hispanic and 0 = Not-Hispanic.

Description of Sample

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 showed variation in the dependent variable, indicating that the men in this data had varying opinions as to whether marriage is relevant or obsolete. While over half of men felt that marriage is relevant, over a third of men felt that marriage is obsolete. The four generations of men were well represented; however, not surprisingly the oldest generation made up less than 10% of the men in this data. The variation in gender ideology was similar to the variation in marital attitudes, with about a third of men

having reported egalitarian gender ideology. Around 70% of the sample was white, with variation between other races (black, asian, and other). The majority of men in this sample came from families with married parents, with some variation between the other family structures (divorced, separated, widowed, and never married). The average educational attainment in this sample of men was Tech School or some college, while the average income was between \$50,000 and under \$100,000.

Analytical Technique

Preliminary descriptive univariate analyses were conducted to examine variation within and between the selected independent variables, as well as within the dependent variable. Frequency distributions were used to generate descriptive statistics, such as the median, percentages, and the interquartile range.

Bivariate analyses were also conducted in order to examine relationships among the independent variables and between the independent variables and dependent variable. Correlation analyses, cross-tabulations, and independent samples t-tests were used.

Logistic Regression was the main analytical technique used in this study, as the dependent variable is dichotomous. Five regression models were generated in order to view the generational effect on marital attitudes, as well as how this effect changed with addition of variables determined by the bivariate analyses to have a relationship with the dependent variable.

RESULTS

Bivariate Results

Cross-tabulations, independent samples t-tests, and correlation analyses were used to detect relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable, as well as relationships among the independent variables.²

Cross-tabulations showed significant variation in attitudes about marriage among different social groups. The most notable were the generational differences in marital attitudes. While the majority of Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation felt that marriage is relevant, Generation X and the Millennials were more divided. In fact, the Millennial men were almost evenly divided on whether they felt marriage is relevant or obsolete. In regards to gender ideology, the majority of those who reported a traditional gender ideology felt that marriage is relevant, while about a third of them reported they felt it is obsolete. Those with egalitarian gender ideology were more evenly divided between relevant and obsolete. Thus gender ideology did not perfectly predict marital attitudes. As expected, the majority of those who grew up with married parents reported feeling that marriage is relevant. However, more men who grew up with separated parents rather than divorced parents felt that marriage is obsolete.

Correlational analyses also helped to further clarify relationships between the independent variables and marital attitudes. There were also significant relationships among the independent variables. Having married parents was related to having traditional gender ideology ($r=.129$, $p<.01$), and being a minority was associated with having egalitarian gender ideology

² Region was dummy-coded as North, South, Midwest, and West (the original categories in the data set). However, none of the dummy coded regions were significant in the correlations or cross-tabulations. Therefore region was not added to the final bivariate or regression analyses.

($r=-.120$, $p<.01$). As expected, there were more minority group members and Hispanics in the Millennial generation, than in the Baby Boomer or Silent Generation. The Millennials had lower levels of education ($r=-0.147$, $p<.01$) and income ($r=-0.207$, $p<.01$), while being in the Baby Boomer generation was associated with higher levels of both ($r=.079$ and $.113$, $p<.01$). Interestingly, while education and income were correlated with marital attitudes, they were not related to gender ideology.

There were also racial and ethnic differences within the correlational analyses. For example, Black men are more likely to feel that marriage is obsolete, while White men are more likely to feel that marriage is relevant. Black men were also more likely to report an egalitarian gender ideology, while White men were more likely to report a traditional gender ideology. Hispanic men in this sample are more likely to be part of the Millennial generation, and less likely to be part the Baby Boomer or Silent Generation. Men who identified as White or Asian were likely to have higher levels of education and income, while Black men, those who identified as other. Hispanic men were likely to have lower levels of education and income. White men were more likely to have grown up with married parents, while Black men were less likely to grow up with married parents.

Finally, independent samples t-tests showed significant differences in education and income between those who feel marriage is relevant and those who feel marriage is obsolete. Those who reported feeling marriage is relevant had higher levels of education and income compared to those who reported feeling marriage is obsolete.

Multivariate Results

Table 4 shows the five regression models used in the analysis. The Millennial generation was used as the omitted reference category to examine differences between the generations, as

the literature suggests that Millennials are different even from the second most recent generation of adults – Generation X. The cross-tabulations showed very little difference between the Silent Generation and the Baby Boomers. Because of this, the two older generations were grouped together as one cohort for the regression analyses. "Black," "Asian," "Other," and variables were included throughout all the regression models, with "White" as the omitted reference category. The "Hispanic" variable was also included in all the regression models.³

Model 1 showed a significant difference between the Millennials and the Generation X's ($p < .05$), as well as a significant difference between the Millennials and the Silent/Boomer generation ($p < .001$) while controlling for race and ethnicity. According to Model 1, while controlling for race and ethnicity, men of Generation X were 42.1% more likely than the Millennial men to report that marriage is still relevant, while the Silent/Boomer men were 1479% more likely to report that marriage is still relevant compared to Millennial men. Finally, Black men were 33.5% less likely than White men to feel that marriage was still relevant ($p < .05$).

The Education variable was added into Model 2. The addition of Education caused the magnitude and significance of the Generation X variable to decrease with the men of Generation X no longer being significantly different from the Millennial men. The significant difference between the Millennial men and the Silent/Boomer men was maintained with the addition of education. Education itself was significant, suggesting that those with higher levels of education were more likely to feel that marriage is relevant ($p < .001$). While the "Black" variable is no longer significant with the addition of education, the "Asian" variable becomes marginally

³ Parent's Marital Status was dummy coded and added to the Regression Models. However, none of the dummy coded family structures were significant at any point in the regression analyses. Therefore, Parent's Marital Status was not included in the final model.

significant, with Asian men being 50.4% less likely than White men to feel that marriage is relevant. The loss of significance of the "Black" variable and the sudden marginal significance of the Asian variable with the addition of education mirrors the correlation matrix, which shows that Asian men are more likely to have higher levels of education, while Black men are less likely.

In Model 3, Income was added into the regression analyses and was significant, suggesting that higher income resulted in an increased likelihood of feeling that marriage is relevant ($p < .001$). The addition of Income maintained the significant difference between Silent/Boomer generation and the Millennial generation in Model 3, with the Silent/Boomer generation being 1073% more likely to feel that marriage is relevant. The marginal significant difference between Asian men and White men in regards to marital attitudes remains relatively the same.

Gender Ideology was introduced in Model 4 and was significant, suggesting that those with traditional gender ideology were 46.3% more likely to feel marriage is relevant while controlling for generation, race/ethnicity, education and income. In Model 4, the difference between Millennials and Generation X's became even less significant while the significant difference between Millennials and the Silent/Boomer generation was maintained ($p < .001$), although the magnitude of the difference decreased slightly. The marginally significant difference between Asian men and White men was also maintained.

Literature on masculinity discussed earlier provides clear evidence that masculinity varies across social groups and that the meaning of masculinity may also vary. For this reason it was expected that the relationship between gender ideology and marital attitudes might differ among

various groups of men. To test this possibility interaction terms were computed between gender ideology and each of the other variables in the model (generations, education, income minority, and Hispanic). A significant interaction term would suggest that the impact of gender ideology on marital attitudes is modified by generation or social-demographic characteristics.

The final model included all variables and the interaction variable which represented the interaction between Education and Gender Ideology ($p < .01$). The “educgenderid” variable represented the only significant interaction among the independent variables. The significant interaction suggested that the impact of traditional ideology on marital attitudes increased with education. In other words highly educated men with traditional gender ideology were even more likely to feel that marriage is relevant than those with less education. The addition of this interaction variable had little impact on the difference between Millennials and Generation X (which remained insignificant), as well as the difference between Silent/Boomer and Millennial men (which remained significant; $p < .001$).

DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that the majority of men in all generations believe that marriage is still relevant. However the younger generations are more likely to believe marriage is obsolete. Millennial men are not as different from the Generation X men as the literature suggests. Table 2 shows both generations are less likely to feel marriage is relevant, and the loss of any significant difference in the regression analyses also supports this suggestion. However, it should be noted in Table 2 that the Millennial men in this data set are the most different from one another in regards to marital attitudes. They are almost evenly split in feeling that marriage is relevant (50.2%) or obsolete (49.8%). So while they may not be significantly different from the Generation X's, there is certainly variation within the group. This finding in the data reflects the theory of multiple masculinities and the literature that suggests that men are in fact different and not a homogenous group.

Overall, it appears that there is a generational divide in this data set. While Millennial men are significantly different from the Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation, they are not significantly different from Generation X. Therefore, the generational divide regarding marital attitudes occurs between Generation X and the Baby Boomers. This is first shown in Table 2, where the majority of Baby Boomer men (72%) and Silent Generation men (70.4%) feel that the marriage is relevant and Generation X men become more split, with 57.2% saying marriage is relevant and 42.8% saying marriage is obsolete. Although the Generation X men are not as evenly divided on the relevance of marriage as the Millennial men are, their divide is a huge jump from the previous generations. The difference between Millennial Men and the Silent/Boomer generation is maintained and significant in the regression analyses throughout all five regression models at .001 level. This suggests that even while controlling for race, ethnicity,

education, gender ideology and income, the men of the Millennial Generation are significantly different than the Baby Boomer men and men of the Silent Generation.

The effect of Education on the difference in marital attitudes between the Millennials and Generation X also deserves mention. In the Model 2, the addition of Education completely negated any significant difference between the generations. As it was found in this study that higher levels of education meant a higher likelihood of feeling marriage was relevant, it makes sense that education would negate a significant difference between the Millennials and Generation X's. Because of this result, a longitudinal study of these same generations in the future would be helpful to see how having more education would affect the differences between the Millennial men and the Generation X men.

Another interesting implication of this study comes from the positive correlation between Education and Marital Attitudes, as well as Income and Marital Attitudes. These correlations, as well as the regression analyses, confirm that higher levels of education and higher incomes are associated with feeling marriage is still relevant. These results reflect the literature that says people are delaying marriage until they are able to be financially independent or in a stable class position. It is logical to think that the men in the data set with more education and more income are in a better position to get married or are married, and are therefore more likely to feel marriage is relevant. There is a possibility of a curvilinear relationship between education and marital attitudes. This potential relationship should be taken into consideration in future research. Conversely, Gender Ideology is not correlated with education and income, which is not reflected in the literature that suggests education and income are associated with egalitarian gender ideology.

Finally the significant differences between races in regards to marital attitudes and gender ideology should be noted. While in the correlations Asian men do not appear to have significantly different marital attitudes Asian men are marginally different from White men in regards to marital attitudes. On the other hand, while Black men were significantly associated with feeling marriage is obsolete, Black men were not significantly different from White men from in regards to marital attitudes. As the Asian men only made up 2.8% of the sample and the Black men made up about 17% of the sample, this finding is surprising. Perhaps a future research could address this finding.

One limitation of this study is the issue of assuming that differences between groups of men by age mean that generations have changed over time. While one might interpret this to reflect generational differences, it is possible that men change their attitudes towards marriage as they age. The only valid way to test this theory would be to follow the generations over time to see whether perspectives on marriage remain stable. If not, it may be that these results reflect the aging process rather than generational differences.

Another limitation of this study would be the dependent variable of marital attitudes. The chosen dependent variable was the only variable available in the data set to measure attitudes towards marriage. Unfortunately the dependent variable only measures one general attitude towards marriage. To improve upon this, it would be preferable to have a scale to measure attitudes on a broader perspective.

Despite these limitations, this study still has important implications. There are differences between the generations in this data set, specifically between the Millennial men and the BabySilent/Boomer Generation. These differences show that not all men are the same in their

attitudes towards marriage. The significance of Gender Ideology, Education and Income in the Table 3 and Table 4 also show that men vary not only in how they feel about marriage, but how this variation is influenced by factors other than age. This study supports the theory that men in general are part of the generational differences in attitudes towards marriage and is a step towards expanding the literature on Millennial men.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	%	Median
Marital Attitudes		
Relevant (1)	62.00%	
Obsolete (0)	38.00%	
Generation		
Millennials (1)	20.50%	
Generation X (2)	37.50%	
Baby Boomers (3)	33.50%	
Silent Generation (4)	8.40%	
Gender Ideology		
Traditional (1)	62.50%	
Egalitarian (0)	29.50%	
Education		
		Tech/Some School
Less than HS (1)		
HS diploma/GED (2)		
Tech/Some College (3)		
4year/Bachelors (4)		
Post Grad (5)		
Income		
		\$50,000 to under \$100,000
> 10 to under \$30,000 (1)		
30 under \$50,000(2)		
50 to under \$100,000 (3)		
100 to \$150,000(4)		
Parents' Marital Status		
Married (1)	78.00%	
Divorced (2)	11.70%	
Separated (3)	3.10%	
Widowed (4)	1.40%	
Never Married (5)	5.10%	
Race		
White	69.10%	
Black	16.9%	
Asian	2.8%	
Other	9.6%	
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	14.50%	

Table 2: Cross-Tabulations

	Marital Attitudes	
	Relevant (1)	Obsolete(0)
Millennials	50.20%	49.80%
Generation X	57.20%	42.80%
Baby Boomers	72.00%	28.00%
Silent Generation	70.40%	29.60%
<i>Chi-Square</i>	38.635**	
Gender Ideology		
Traditional (1)	68.70%	31.30%
Non Traditional (0)	57.50%	42.50%
<i>Chi-Square</i>	12.562***	
Parents' Marital Status		
Married	64.00%	36.00%
Divorced	60.30%	39.70%
Separated	31.20%	61.80%
Widowed	56.20%	43.80%
Never Married	52.50%	47.50%
<i>Chi-Square</i>	14.447**	
Education (mean)	3.28	2.83
<i>t-statistic</i>	t(1003.944) =6.574***	
Income (mean)	2.73	2.33
<i>t-statistic</i>	t(1082)=5.781***	

p<.01 *p<.001

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Marital Attitudes (1)														
Millennials (2)	-0.122**													
Gen X (3)	-0.075**	-0.394**												
BabyBoom (4)	0.149**	-0.361**	-0.551**											
Silent Gen (5)	0.052	-0.154**	-0.235**	-0.216**										
Gender Ideology (6)	0.107**	-0.076**	-0.058	0.067*	0.094**									
Education (7)	0.185**	-0.147**	0.027	0.079**	0.032	0.015								
Income (8)	0.173**	-0.207**	0.058	0.113**	-0.001	0.055	0.444**							
ParentsMarried (9)	0.080**	-0.153**	-0.049	0.139**	0.071**	0.129**	0.126**	0.180**						
White (10)	0.107**	-0.113**	-0.046	0.098**	0.078**	0.120**	0.173**	0.230**	0.170**					
Black (11)	-0.083**	0.048	0.010	-0.025	-0.044	-0.113**	-0.165**	-0.194**	-0.159**	-	0.674**			
Asian (12)	-0.042	0.058*	0.009	-0.038	-0.034	-0.018	0.104**	0.067*	.020	-	0.255**	-0.077**		
Other (13)	-0.036	0.077**	0.062*	-0.094**	-0.060*	-0.031	-0.113**	-0.140**	-0.056*	-.489**	-.147**	-0.056*		
Hispanic (14)	-0.018	0.104**	0.053	-0.094**	-0.084**	-0.048	-0.221**	-0.180**	-0.048	-	0.240**	-0.039	-0.070*-	0.436**

Table 4: Marital Attitudes regressed on Generation, Education, Income and Gender Ideology Controlling for Race and Ethnicity

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	Logged Odds	Logged Odds	Logged Odds	Logged Odds	Logged Odds
Generation X	1.421*	1.285	1.196	1.201	1.170
Silent/Boomers	2.479***	2.220***	2.073***	2.022***	1.977***
Education		1.343***	1.252***	1.261***	1.154*
Income			1.223***	1.217**	1.216**
Gender Ideology				1.463**	0.519
EducxGenderId					1.423**
Black	0.665*	0.774	0.844	0.887	0.874
Asian	0.599	0.496+	0.483+	0.500+	0.495+
Other	0.741	0.791	0.850	0.875	0.863
Hispanic	1.112	1.303	1.360	1.378	1.376
Constant	1.034	0.436	0.336	0.294	0.394
-2loglikelihood	1298.454	1274.050	1265.547	1259.026	1252.277
Nagelkerke R	0.052	0.083	0.094	0.102	0.111

+p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 *.**p<.001

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL

From: Social/Behavioral IRB

To: Chloe Lampert

CC: Marieke Van Willigen

Date: 3/23/2015

Re: UMCIRB 15-000413
Generational Differences and Predictors of Variance in Marital Attitudes Among Males

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 3/22/2015. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #4.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

The UMCIRB office will hold your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit an Exemption Certification request at least 30 days before the end of the five year period.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

Notification of Exempt Certification

APPENDIX B: SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Sample segments 1 and 2 consisted of landline random-digit dialing (RDD) samples drawn using standard list-assisted methods, where telephone numbers were drawn from all active blocks in the continental US. Cell sample from segment 3 was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers. These RDD samples, both landline and cell, were disproportionately-stratified by county based on estimated incidences of African-American and Hispanic respondents. The landline and cell callback samples used for segments 4-8 were drawn from recent PSRAI surveys (Changing American Family Survey Methodology 2010).

Segment	Sample Type	Population	n=
1	Landline RDD	All adults	405
2	Landline RDD screened	Adults 18-64	1,056
3	Cell RDD	All adults	1,010
4	Landline callback screened 1	3 target groups	53
5	Cell callback screened 1	3 target groups	116
6	Landline callback screened 2	NMP	6
7	Cell callback screened 2	NMP	24
8	Cell callback screened 3	COP	21

Methodology. 2010 Changing American Family Survey. Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International or the Pew Social Trends & Demographics Project

